

# **Institutional Response: Civil Society**

By

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## I. Introduction

Most Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) addressing the impact of the armed conflicts and promoting peaceful alternatives evolved during the post-Marcos democratic transition period. During this period, the need for national unity, reconciliation and an end to political violence became felt by the public at large, and government opened up negotiations with the different Moro and communist insurgent groups. Among these new CSOs' early membership (late 1980s and early 1990s) are the individuals, sectors and groups who were part of the left anti-dictatorship struggle and have moved on to organize various political organizations and developmental NGOs. They also include people who opened up new "peace programs" in their institutions (dioceses, church councils, academe). At the grassroots, they include people who initiated new forms of "peace organizations" – notably the peace zones -- to respond to the violence in their midst; and those who sought to revive or strengthen indigenous mechanisms for peaceful settlements in highland communities. In Mindanao, former Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) combatants or support bases were transformed into "peace and development" cooperatives in order to undertake developmental projects. These peace advocates came from different ideological leanings and included those who espoused armed struggle as the means for change or utilized military action as a last resort. Historical differences in their ideological traditions have caused dissension. However, those who have shifted perspective more strategically in favor of a negotiated political settlement and a comprehensive peace process have struggled to build a third-party peace constituency. This constituency engages both the state and armed groups to stay on the peace track and to institute social and political reform through non-violent means.

It may be said that both state- and non-state-led attempts at building a national consensus on a peace agenda alongside intermittent escalation of violence in the last 18 years (since 1986) have spurred the rise of more CSOs vertically and horizontally. Grassroots or community-based interventions have been linking up with partners, and altogether are building bigger formations at the provincial, regional and national levels. The rise in peace CSOs within and cutting across Muslim, Christian and *lumad* (indigenous) sectors is particularly phenomenal in Mindanao, where significant peace agreements have been reached between the government and the Moro groups led by the MNLF and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) but where nonetheless an unstable peace prevails.

For the purposes of this study, the term *CSOs* is used to include organizations, institutions and other collectivities working and organized autonomously from the state to respond to societal and political issues. *Peace CSOs* refer specifically to a segment of this broad range of Philippine CSOs who have adopted a focused peace agenda – meaning they frame their campaigns, services and other activities within a peace perspective or advocacy for peace, or at the least undertake peace-related activities and consider themselves peace organizations. Like most CSOs, "peace CSOs" generally undertake any or all of three roles in society – guardians of or watchdogs over the state, service-provider, and advocates of alternative policies.

The concept of civil society is used relative or in contrast to the state (from which it is autonomous), and secondarily to the market (which is profit-oriented in contrast to the supposedly non-profit and voluntary character of civil society). In some categorizations, CSOs can include social movement organizations, which in our country, could mean to include armed revolutionary groups, or legal organizations who are ideologically and/or organizationally affiliated with these armed revolutionary organizations. Since CSOs are best and often understood "as organizations autonomous from the state," organizations affiliated with or aligned to the armed communist left and Moro separatists certainly meet the qualifications of being CSOs. They engage the state on

various policy issues, including peace issues. However, peace CSOs operating in the context of domestic armed conflicts involving non-state armed opposition groups engage not only the state but also the armed non-state actors. Such a role is often described as a “third-party role” because they come in as mediators, interlocutors, cooperators (as the case may be) of both the state and the armed state challengers (referred to as the “first parties” to the conflict, or sometimes as the “first and second parties”).

Most peace CSOs in the country adopt a holistic perspective on peace, manifested in concepts or slogans like “a just and lasting peace” and “food and freedom, jobs and justice” (taken from former Senator Jose W. Diokno), or “just peace” (a concept articulated by peace scholar and practitioner John Paul Lederach of the Mennonites Conciliation Service). This broad perspective on peace is founded on the recognition of the roots of the armed conflicts in societal inequities and poor governance. The same comprehensive message is also reflected in the “Six Paths to Peace,” a document that was produced from the series of provincial, regional and national consultations conducted by the National Unification Commission from 1992-1993, and the “Social Reform Agenda” that came out of various consultations conducted during the Ramos administration.

In general, Filipino peace advocates adopt pioneering peace scholar Johan Galtung’s definition of *peace* as made up of both negative and positive dimensions. Negative peace refers to the absence of direct, physical conflict and positive peace refers to the presence of justice and wellbeing – in effect, the absence of structural violence. A *peace process*, meanwhile, has been defined as “persistent peace initiatives involving the main protagonists in a protracted conflict” (Darby and MacGinty, 2003:2). Such initiatives may be formal or informal, private or public, subject to public endorsement or restricted to elite-level agreement, sponsored by external parties or can arise from internal resources (*ibid.*). In practice in the Philippines where the armed conflicts are deeply rooted in social and political inequities, the *Philippine peace process* has been defined more comprehensively. An example of a broad definition of the Philippine peace process is “(T)he totality of structures and processes, actors, roles and relationships, strategies, programs and activities involved, created and pursued in a non-violent manner by various sectors of Philippine society in response to armed conflicts, political violence and social unrest” (Palm-Dalupan 2000). In practice, the Philippine peace process thus includes but is not limited to the “peace talks” between the government and the different armed groups. It includes instituting the needed political, social and economic reforms in order to eradicate the causes and manifestations of armed conflict and political violence. The comprehensive view of a peace process that aims to find long-lasting solutions to our domestic wars also gives importance to the building of a culture of peace, the healing of wounds and dissolving of prejudices in communities and families torn apart by the conflicts, and the transformation of social, political and economic relationships based on justice and human dignity. At the same time, it recognizes the need to respond to situations of direct, political violence that give rise to indiscriminate violence victimizing civilians, internal displacement, and massive psycho-social trauma of communities, including the women and children. In brief, the Philippine peace process seeks to address both the absence of *negative* and *positive peace* in the country.

This broad operationalization of the peace process in the country naturally flows from an equally comprehensive perspective of what peace-building has come to mean in the country. Certainly, this broad conceptions of peace, peace process and peace-building hew closely to the equally broad conception of human security. The goals of human development and human security equally find congruence with goals of peace-building and the peace process. In most foreign literature, *peacebuilding* refers to activities in the post-conflict phase needed to prevent the resumption of conflict. It is conceived as flowing from or a necessary undertaking after a

successful peace process. But in the Philippine context of protracted conflicts, cycles of relatively high and low levels of political violence even after the forging of peace agreements, and difficulties in consolidating democracy, it has been difficult to define conflict and post-conflict phases. Peacebuilding in the present context is thus construed as the different programs, and activities undertaken by individuals and groups (governmental and non-governmental) to support and sustain the peace process. Collectively, these peace organizations and individuals have succeeded in generating a nationwide consciousness and campaign networks supportive of the goals of the peace process. They have brought about a nascent Philippine peace movement.

Part I of this paper provides an overview of the types of civil society responses to peace and human security concerns in the country. Part II gives an overview of Philippines peace CSOs using three categories: people's organizations like the peace zones, coalitions, and institutions/NGOs/programs. Part III surveys the phenomenal rise of peace CSOs in Mindanao alongside the growth of Bangsamoro civil society. Then it will provide an initial assessment of civil society's institutional response. Factors that have supported or constrained CSOs' peacebuilding were identified, and three areas of impact were examined, namely:

- Impact on the policy issue – how interventions affected the policies of both the state and the armed groups.
- Impact on the ground-level situation – how interventions mitigated direct violence and provided means to build peace and reconstruct affected communities
- Impact on the perception, attitudes, behavior and perspective of other stakeholders, including the community, other civil society groups, elements of the state and the non-state armed groups – how interventions changed their attitudes, behavior and perspectives on war, its impact, and non-violent alternatives.

For most parts, the discussion on impact assessment is based on an ongoing UNDP-funded study called Learning Experiences Study (LES) on Philippine Civil Society Peacebuilding where this author serves as project coordinator.

## II. Overview Of Civil Society Response

### A. Approaches and Strategies

In general, Peace CSOs perform the same functions as most other Philippine CSOs, namely, to provide social and other services; to monitor state (and the armed groups') actions and guard against abuse; and to advocate alternative policies, programs and paradigms. Compared to other CSOs, peace CSOs give equal significance to relating with the state and the non-state armed groups.

**Table 1. Roles of Peace CSOs**

Civil Society's Roles	Peace CSOs' Interventions	Activities	Illustrative Examples
<b>Service-provider</b>	Relief and Reconstruction  Training programs  Program development  Other forms of assistance	Alleviation/mitigation of violence and impact of violence thru psychosocial trauma healing, relief operations, etc.  Capacity building  Fact-finding, documentation, legal services)  Developmental projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of integrated programs for societal reconstruction</li> <li>• Support for peacebuilding programs like spaces for peace/peace zones, housing and livelihood programs</li> <li>• Training programs on mediation , organizing, leadership, community development, and psycho –social trauma rehabilitation skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Watchdog of state &amp; NSA</b>	Engagement Campaigns Mediation	Campaign for forging of ceasefires or respect of ceasefire agreements  Campaigns and support activities for continuity of peace negotiations, and observance of agreements  Informal dialogues and creation of various consultative mechanisms  Responses to specific concerns in the context of continuing conflict  Promotion of observance of human rights and international humanitarian law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The MILF's unilateral suspension of military offensives after the series of violence in February 2003 was partly a response to the civil society calls including the CBCP and the Bishop-Ulama League of the Philippines.</li> <li>• President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's resumption of talks in 2001 was partly in response to public outcry over the humanitarian consequences of the 2000 offensives launched by former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).</li> <li>• The participation and presence of women, children, Moro , lumad and civil society groups in general in the peace agenda, processes and structures have become institutionalized (e.g, women and lumad representatives were included in the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) panel and technical working committees; civil society representatives sit in panels and other committees in the formal bodies).</li> <li>• Peace CSOs exerted pressure to operationalize the GRP-MILF Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee and</li> </ul>

			<p>Local Monitoring Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peace CSOs have instituted parallel third party monitoring/promotion mechanisms such as the Bantay Ceasefire (to monitor the GRP-MILF Ceasefire Agreement) and the Sulong CARHRIHL (to promote observance of the GRP-NDF Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law).</li> <li>• Peace CSOs, and religious leaders in particular, facilitate the release of detained suspects, bodies and personal belongings of rebels killed in operations; of AFP soldiers taken by the NPA; and the withdrawal of troops in certain areas.</li> <li>• Campaigns directed at the two parties for more respect for the rights of people doing justice &amp; peace work.</li> </ul>
<b>Advocates of alternative policies, programs or paradigms</b>	<p>Policy advocacies Peace education Interfaith dialogues</p>	<p>Policy change/reprioritization  Institutional reforms  Growth of peace consciousness, &amp; of peace organizations/programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful lobby for the creation of the National Unification Commission (NUC), the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) and National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). The NPIC formation was preceded by exposes which pushed government to act on cases and outbreak of violence, e.g., it put up Task Force 63 to deal with conflicts arising from development projects in IP communities. The Task Force's responsibilities were later transferred to the NCIP.</li> <li>• Successful lobby for the adoption by the National Government of the Six Paths to Peace and the Social Reform Agenda</li> <li>• Lobby for the passage of related laws (e.g., Anti-Rape law, creation of NAPC and NCIP laws)</li> <li>• Influencing how media writes about peace and conflict and helping generate greater peace awareness among media people and institutions.</li> <li>• Institutionalizing peace studies, and peace and conflict research in the academe</li> <li>• Holding interfaith dialogues at the national and local levels to promote interreligious harmony, tolerance and ecumenism</li> </ul>

The different dimensions of conflict and peace-building have required different interventions. Peace CSOs may be involved in one or more of several types of activities, and aim to achieve certain articulated goals or meet identified needs. Explicitly or implicitly, they have responded to the different dimensions of human security. Philippine

civil society peace-building strategies, efforts or peace action can be further particularized based on type of activity or goals. One such categorization of activities or interventions of Philippine peace CSOs based on types of activities was done in 1997, based on a survey of more than 100 peace groups in the country at that time:

**Table 2. Types of CSO Peace Interventions**

PEACE ACTION	DESCRIPTION
Peace Constituency-Building	Advocacy work, campaigns, organizing, networking, peace education, inter-faith dialogues and other activities aimed at promoting a peace agenda, and/or culture of peace, and organizing constituencies united or mobilized along these goals.
Conflict-reduction efforts	Activities aimed at de-escalating the level of political violence and addressing the negative impact of violence on affected communities and individuals, with the end view of enhancing the conditions for sustainable peace, seeking respite from violence, receiving justice and reparation for human rights violations, and healing wounds of war inflicted on war-torn communities.
Conflict-settlement efforts	Activities geared toward achieving a non-military solution to the major armed conflicts, including facilitating, mediating and advocating political negotiations and meaningful reconciliation.
Peace Research & Training Programs	Research efforts and studies on impact of war, peace, conflict resolution, etc, and training in skills important to peace-building, thereby supporting and building capacities for peace action.
Social Development Work	Economic, livelihood/development, environmental projects and implementation of actual social and economic reforms aimed at reconstruction and bringing about social redistribution of wealth, popular empowerment and sustainable development.

Source: Coronel Ferrer (1997)

The deepening and broadening of the peace constituency (or *peace constituency-building*) stem from the acknowledged need to expand reach and influence all sectors in order to have an impact on both state and rebel policy and on the situation on the ground where the people affected by the conflict live. Such a broad peace constituency is crucial to generating the national consensus on the needed reforms and the process of achieving peace by way of peace. The peace constituency accompanies the gradual process of reconstructing society, mending the social fabric torn by protracted conflict, and bringing about sustainable development and governance reforms. In this categorization, peace education is part of peace constituency-building. An increasing number of schools are initiating awareness development programs on the values of peace and social responsibility. At least eight schools have declared themselves “peace zones”. School activities have included ceremonial burial/burning of war toys, the creation of peace gardens, peacemaking trainings, setting up of a “reconciliation tent” in school as an exercise in conflict management and resolution, public protests against violence in television, candlelight vigils for peace (e.g., during the Gulf War) and for dialogues with soldiers, police, evacuees and other affected sectors.

Some peace CSOs, meanwhile, focus on addressing the impact of violence in communities (*conflict-reduction efforts*). War weighs heavily on civilians, especially in non-conventional warfare where enemy lines are not clear and civilians are not easily distinguished from combatants. Peace groups have thus campaigned hard for the observance of human rights (e.g., rights against arbitrary arrests, torture, execution) and international humanitarian law principles in the conduct of war (e.g., stopping forced evacuations, pillage, and the use of child soldiers and landmines); and the cessation of hostilities through unilateral declarations or bilateral agreements. Faced with direct

violence, they have taken on the task of mobilizing and providing (physical, mental/psychological, and material) relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance to war-torn communities.

Significantly, communities on their own have taken steps to keep the peace in their localities and regain control over their own lives. A good example is the creation of peace zones – or zones barring entry to armed groups and demanding respect for the community’s right to peace – in their localities. Bantay Ceasefire is another type of citizen initiative aimed at stopping direct violence. It actively sustains the observance of the ceasefire between the GRP and the MILF. A newer, similar initiative is the Sulong CARHRIHL (Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law) formed in October 2004 which seeks to promote compliance with the CARHRIHL of both the government and the National Democratic Front (NDF).

To achieve the specific goal of achieving a peaceful settlement of the conflicts (*conflict settlement*), peace groups have put pressure on all parties to the conflict to stay on the negotiation track, and to sustain the process through confidence-building measures and firmer commitment to the peace process. In this way, civil society groups act as “third party” to the conflicts. They follow through the negotiations, and provide critiques and alternatives. Third-party intervention at the national level are more directly attuned to the dynamics of the official political negotiations but are supplemented by similar perhaps more informal third-party mediation that take place at the lower levels that address specific incidents of violence or negotiate concerns important to the community. In remote Abra municipalities like Tubo, Lucub and Malibcong, for example, community folk through their local leaders have exacted accountability from both government and rebel forces for certain human rights violations.

Religious leaders and diocesan Social Action Centers in the provinces play active citizen mediation roles. Bishops and priests in conflict-affected areas are asked to facilitate the release of rebel/AFP soldiers or officers taken into custody by the other party, or to allow the safe passage of people retrieving bodies and/or personal belongings of dead soldiers/rebels. In the Cordilleras, the traditional *bodong* associations or the council of tribal elders have also performed citizen mediation roles. Notable among these indigenous leadership formations are the Kalungaya elders in Tinoc and the Kalinga Bodong Council composed of tribal peace pact holders. The *bodong* is an indigenous conflict resolution mechanism to settle tribal conflicts, but it has been transformed to address the presence of armed conflict between the state and anti-state forces. Peace zone communities also operate as mediating bodies engaging both the state and the rebel groups. Mediating bodies include the barrio peace councils, municipal peace committee and liaison team put up in the Sagada peace zone; and the inter-peace zone committee in the Bituan Zone of Life .

The attainment of peace is a goal that requires continuing research and training (*peace research and training*) of practical and analytical value. Database gathering, descriptive and comparative analyses of local and foreign experiences, and theorizing on peace and the ways to peace – all these guide everyday action and contribute to the world body of knowledge and learning essential to local, national and world peace. On the other hand, trainings equip leaders, activists, and community residents with skills needed in conflict prevention, management, resolution and transformation. In the last two decades,

several research and training institutes and programs have been formed to undertake these goals.

Developmental work, reconstruction of communities and provision of alternative livelihood projects (*social development work*) are increasingly being integrated as part of peacebuilding, especially in areas affected by the conflict. They involve activities beyond provision of relief or temporary shelter to displaced communities toward generating greater self-reliance and attainment of more sustainable livelihoods and harmonious communities. They contribute to the more strategic need to address the economic roots of armed conflict and secure social wellbeing.

A different set of categorization based on aims may help to illuminate further the links between human security, peace and conflict.

**Table 3. Types of CSO Interventions According to Aims**

Type of Intervention	Aims
Intervening directly in conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preventing escalation of violence</li> <li>- Enabling a settlement (e.g., confidence-building, facilitating dialogue, negotiation, mediation)</li> <li>- Maintaining a presence (e.g., unarmed protection and monitoring)</li> </ul>
Addressing the consequences of conflict/violence	e.g., post-war physical and social reconstruction, psychosocial counseling and trauma relief, reconciliation and rebuilding social relationships, truth commissions, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants
Working on the social fabric	e.g., institutional reforms, promoting participation in decision-making, developing good governance, education for peace and justice.

(Fisher et al 2000 cited in Palm-Dalupan 2000)

While broad enough, these two categorization schemes (Tables 2 and 3) may not capture the richness and diversity of efforts that have been reflected in context-specific or concern-specific sets of strategies. To see this richness, we draw out samples of interventions representing three different (but related) areas of peacebuilding: Mindanao-focused interventions, peace education with emphasis on formal education, and psycho-social trauma rehabilitation.

One will find that a group’s peace-building strategy in Mindanao would stress components like enhancing Muslim-Christian relations and inter-faith dialogues. For example, see Annex 1 for the range of activities of the Peace Advocates Zamboanga (PAZ). With the dispersal of Muslim populations to different provinces including in Luzon and the Visayas, interfaith organizations such as the Metro Manila-based Peacemakers’ Circle are sprouting in urbanized cities and town centers outside of Mindanao. The Peacemakers’ Circle supported the construction of the prayer room at the Greenhills Shopping Center in Metro Manila when the plan was opposed by influential residents in the upscale subdivision.

Meanwhile, school-based peace education advocates have employed strategies based on their vision of a “culture of peace” and the need to develop the youth into peacebuilders. They have naturally emphasized, but have not limited themselves to, school-based programs (see Annex 2 for a matrix of activities undertaken by member-schools of the Peace Education Network).

A psycho-social approach to conflict and violence gives stress to the psychological well-being of individuals and communities. Interventions along this line have proven effective precisely because they employed a comprehensive perspective of human security, and correspondingly advocated a total or holistic approach – in effect, “healing of the less visible wounds of war, integrating it in the process of transforming the violent nature of the conflict into a more positive atmosphere amenable to the resolution of the root causes of the armed conflict” (Protacio-De Castro, p.2). Peacebuilding in the Philippines from the psychosocial trauma rehabilitation perspective involves a wide range of responses including physical, psychological and social reconstruction (see Annex 3 for a matrix of the types of interventions built into psycho-social rehabilitation work).

## **B. Range of CSO Formations Addressing the Armed Conflicts/Promoting Peace**

This section will provide an overview of the (a) people’s organizations, notably the peace zones; (b) coalitions and networks; and (3 )NGOs and programs that were or are actively involved in the Philippine peace process. Peace CSOs may be of two types. Focused Peace CSOs are organizations whose members use the catch-phrase “peace” to distinguish and describe themselves (“peace activists”), their organizational agenda (“peace agenda”), and their philosophy (“peace philosophy”). A secondary peace organization, meanwhile are those groups whose primary identification is set in other frames (e.g., diocesan Social Action Centers which undertake diverse functions, the Mabolo Mothers’ Organization in Camarines Sur which is a basically a woman’s organization, or a trade union or student organization). But they nonetheless see their particular advocacy as interconnected to the quest for peace, and consider themselves peace activists or a peace organization (Coronel Ferrer, 1997:11).

It should be noted that while Philippine civil society is relatively strong and dynamic, the Philippine peace movement is fairly young – compared, for example, to the human rights and the women’s movements. Thus, government had tended to rebuff organized civil society pressure, saying they make up a small constituency with presumably the bigger population in favor of war. The armed groups, with their respective constituencies, also vary in their acceptance of third parties from the people’s ranks as legitimate interlocutors.

### **1. Peace Zones and Other People’s Organizations for Peace**

This category is the particular manifestation of what are usually referred to as “people’s organizations” (POs), a common type of CSO in the Philippine setting. A PO may be defined as “an organization of individuals drawn from among grassroots communities, sectors or other groupings, committed to advance their shared rights and welfare” (Coronel Ferrer, 1997:21) . POs are usually considered “solid” or “mass-based” organizations. They are “solid” because they are fairly tightly organized groupings of ordinary citizens banded together as a territorial (barangay, sitio, city, province), group or sectoral (women, workers) unit for a common cause (community, environment, human rights, peace). In contrast, broader and looser networks undertake “sweeping” work addressed to the public at large. NGOs, dubbed “service-providers,” are also distinguished from POs who are effectively recipients of NGO services. In general, NGOs are made up of hired or voluntary staff who are accountable to their board and

fundings, while POs are composed of individual members with a set of officers or leaders who are accountable to the mass membership.

The most solid manifestation of a focused peace PO are the “peace zones”. Peace zones can be considered as the generic name for community-based initiatives to stop and prevent violence, and to gradually restore and enhance community peace and wellbeing. They are a concrete initiative coming from the people to regain control and normalcy in their lives. The peace zones were usually formed in response to an upsurge of traumatic violence. In Sagada, Mt. Province, these were the 1988 killing of two children by drunken soldiers in the town center followed by the death of a pupil in an attack waged by the New People’s Army (NPA) on AFP soldiers encamped on the grounds of the town’s public high school. The formation of the Tinoc Peace Zone in Ifugao Province was precipitated by the NPA raid on the municipality’s cache of arms. The Cantomanyog Peace Zone in Negros Occidental was put up by people returning to their communities after forcible evacuation resulting from the AFP’s “Operation Thunderbolt” in 1989. With the help of the parish priest, the community firmed their resolve to return to their community. To ensure their safety, they asked the AFP and the NPA to respect their decision.

Peace zones rely largely on moral persuasion to impose their declaration and the strength of their community organization to be able to negotiate with the parties in conflict. A Coalition for Peace primer defined a peace zone as “a geographic area within which war and any other forms of armed hostility may no longer be waged, and where peacebuilding programs will address roots and manifestations of the conflict in the community” (cited in Garcia and Hernandez, 1989:226).

From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, more than 10 communities have declared themselves peace zones. These early peace zones ranged from sitio, to barangay, to town or city in coverage. The city-wide Naga Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) that was declared in 1988 is the country’s first peace zone. Although not the actual battleground, armed encounters in the city’s suburbs and the spate of NPA bombings on bridges and main roads in Bicol during those years caused uneasiness in the urban populace. Most of these first wave of peace zones are in areas directly affected by the conflict between the government and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)-NPA, namely, in the Mt. Province, Kalinga, Abra, Bicol, Negros Occidental, and North Cotabato. During the Ramos administration, some of these peace zones became “Special Development Areas” and provided with development funds by government. In some areas, government infusion of funds produced conflict within the organization.

**Table 4. First Wave of Community Peace Zones (1988-1994)**

<b>Peace Zone</b>	<b>Date Founded/Declared or Approximate Period of Formation</b>	<b>Coverage</b>
Naga Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality	September 1988	City, in Camarines Sur Province (Bicol Region)
Sagada Demilitarized Zone	November 1988	Municipality of Tabuk in Mt. Province in Northern Luzon
Tabuk, Kalinga Matago-an (“Zone of Life”)	1989	Municipality in the Province of Kailnga in Northern Luzon/Cordillera
Cantomanyog Peace Zone	October 1989/Feb 1990?	Sitio in Barangay Haba, Candoni, Negros Occidental
Tulunan Zone of Life	1989-1990	Two barangays (Bgy. Bituan and

- Bituan Peace Zone - Miatub Peace Zone - Nabundasan Peace Zone - New Alimodian Peace Zone		Nabundasan) and two sitios (Sitio Miatub in Bgy. Tuburan;, and Sitio New Alimodian in Bgy. Banayal) in Tulunan, North Cotabato Province, Mindanao
Cadiz City*	Late 1980s/Early 1990s	City in Negros Occidental (declared by the incumbent mayor)
Tinoc Peace Zone*	1991	12 bgy's in the Municipality of Tinoc in Ifugao Province, Northern Luzon (Cordillera)
Irosin Peace Zone	July 1992	Municipality in Sorsogon Province (Bicol Region)
Tamlang Valley Demilitarized Zone	1991	Tamlang Valley in Negros Oriental
Bangilo, Abra	1993	Gubang tribal community in three barangays (Bgy's. Buanao, Umap and Lat-ey in Malibcong) in the district of Bangilo, Municipality of Malibcong, Abra province
Barangay Mahaba, Marihatag Peace Zone	January 1994	Barangay, in Marihatag Municipality, Surigao del Sur province in Mindanao

\**dormant or moribund*

There has been a new wave of peace zone-building, mostly but not exclusively in areas affected by the GRP-MILF hostilities. "Sanctuaries of Peace" and "Spaces for Peace" are their more recent variations. The aim of stopping and preventing violence and building the infrastructure for peace remains, but the process for their formation may have been different. For example, their formation may have been facilitated by government and other CSOs (church, NGO) and not largely by the community acting on its own. Also, there might have been a more realistic attitude on the part of the community that even as armed men (soldiers, rebels) or a degree of militarization remain in their communities, it is possible to start building "spaces for peace," starting with the rehabilitation of the affected populace. The Spaces for Peace were declared by several communities (13 sitios in 5 barangays) in Pikit, North Cotabato, a predominantly Muslim town, with the support of the local parish office, after the 2000 wave of violence. The same was done by 370 Christian and Muslim communities from Bgy. Panicupan, Pikit, as conflict once more escalated in the area in February 2003.

Sanctuaries of Peace were declared in some 56 communities in Maguindanao, North Cotabato and Lanao del Sur, with the help of Tabang Mindanaw, a coalition of various organizations that have been providing relief and rehabilitation to areas in Mindanao affected by natural and man-made disasters. The process of forming a Sanctuary for Peace begins in evacuation centers through community organizing and education. Once consolidated in the desire to return to their community, a peace declaration is made, followed by negotiations with both national and local defense and army officials of the government as well as the MILF leadership. Upon their return, the community is given rehabilitation funds to rebuild their homes and install basic services such as potable water and roads. Tabang Mindanaw calls this approach, the Integrated Return and Rehabilitation Program (Tabang Mindanaw, 2004)

Another cluster of peace zones was put up with the help of the Community Organizaing-Multiversity (CO-Multiversity) and funding from the Canadian government. The peace zones in this cluster are located in seven barangays in Maguindanao, Lanao del

Sur and Sultan Kudarat, all in the vicinity of the former MILF Camp Abubakar. In Lanao del Sur, the barangays are Bgy. Barorao in Balabagan, and Bgy. Daguang in Kapatagan. In Maguindanao, these are Bgy. Makir in Datu Odin Sinsuat; Sitio Cagarawan, Bgy. Tugaig in Barira; Bgy. Matay in Buldon; and Bgy. Bayanga Norte in Matanog. Bgy. Chua in Bagumbayan is in Sultan Kudarat. In June 2003, these peace zones organized an inter-area alliance called Sindaw Ko Kalilintad (light of peace).

Independent “peace zones” have also been put up in other places. The peace zone in Bgy. Bual in Isulan, Maguindanao was a community response in 1998 to a Christian-Muslim feud, that was eventually institutionalized in a barangay resolution in 2001. Other peace zones have been declared in Bgy. Dinas in Zamboanga del Sur; and Bgy. Maladeg in Sultan Gumander, Lanao del Sur. Each one has its unique circumstances, leadership, and combination of catalysts, as well as size, coverage and specific conflicts being addressed (inter-tribal wars, tri-people or Moro-migrant hostilities, communal conflicts, family feuds, and/or the insurgencies). Those in indigenous communities such as in the Cordillera, notably the Kalinga Matago-an (first wave) and the Baguio-Benguent Matago-an (second wave), are founded on traditional conflict resolution practices such as the inter-tribal *bodong* or *pagta* (pacts). While more attuned to address inter-tribal feuds, they are also responsive to insurgency-related violence that erupts in their communities.

**Table 5. Second Wave of Peace Zones (1998-2005)**

Name	Date Founded or Formed	Coverage
<b>Clusters (Mindanao)</b>		
<i>Pikit Spaces for Peace</i> (initiated and led by the Immaculate Conception Parish in Pikit)	2000 2003	Several communities (13 sitios in 5 barangays including Nalapaan) in Pikit, North Cotabato Bgy. Panicupan, Pikit <i>(Note: currently made up of 7 barangays and collectively called the GINAPALADTAKA Spaces for Peace)</i>
<i>Sanctuaries for Peace</i> (assisted and networked by Tabang Mindanaw)	2000-2003	56 communities spread out in the municipalities of Matanog, Datu Montawal (previously Pagagawan), and Pagalungan in the province of Maguindanao; the municipalities of Kabacan, Matalam, and Carmen in the province of (North) Cotabato; the municipality of Kaptagan in the province of Lanao del Sur
<i>Sindaw Ko Kalilintad</i> (Light of Peace) (a network of peace zones supported by the CO-Multiversity with assistance from the Canadian government; formalized in June 2003)	2002-2003	Seven barangays in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur in the vicinity of the former MILF Camp Abubakar (Barangay Barorao, Balabagan, Lanao del Sur; Bgy. Daguang, Kapatagan, Lanao del Sur; Bgy. Makir, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao; Sitio Cagarawan, Bgy. Tugaig, Barira, Maguindanao; Bgy. Mataya, Buldon, Maguindanao; Bgy. Bayanga Norte, Matanog, Maguindanao, and Bgy. Chua, Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat.) <i>Note: the peace zones in each barangay were organized earlier</i>
<b>Solo Variations (Mindanao)</b>		
Bgy. Maladeg, Sultan Gumander, Lanao del Sur Peace Zone (led by local leader Manuel “Bob” Anton)	1998	1 sq.km. zone in Bgy. Maladeg, Sultan Gumander, Lanao del Sur led by Bob Anton. Expanded later to include Liyangan, Pindulunan, Turayas, Sambayanan, Malico, Malalis, Mapialupa, Bolocaon, and Kaludan for a total of 15 sq.km zone.
Bgy. Lipas, President Roxas, North Cotabato	March 2000	A peace agreement between the Manobo and the Moros in the the barangay formed with the assistance of the Tribal Filipino Apostolate of the Diocese of Kidawapan & maintained by a peace council called Task Force Kalilintad.
Bgy. Bual, Isulan, Maguindanao Peace	2001	Bgy. Bual, Isulan, Maguindanao (passed by a barangay resolution)

Zone (initiated by the Muslim NGO, Kadtuntaya)		
Bgy. Dinas, Zamboanga del Sur Peace Zone		Bgy. Dinas, Zamboanga del Sur
Peace Zones in Sulu	Dec 2004	Jolo town, Sulu province; and Indanan (Old Poblacion), Sulu
Datu Piang Buffer Zone (supported by the Kadtuntaya)	2004/2005	Four barangays of Datu Piang and two barangays of Datu Saudi, both in Maguindanao province
Outside Mindanao		
Mountain Province Peace Zone Cluster	Nov 2003	Municipalities of Sabangan, Bauko, Tadi-an, Sandanga, Besao and Bontoc plus Sagada peace zone, in Mountain Province
Infanta and General Nakar Zone of Peace, Freedom and Development (ZOPFAD)	Sept 2004	Infanta and Gen. Nakar towns, Quezon Province
Benguet and Baguio Matago-an ("Zone of Life")	20 Feb 2005	Municipality of Benguet and Baguio City; declared by elders of the Guina-ang and Lubuagan tribes of Kalinga in Baguio City as peace zone areas among tribal members
Baras Peace Zone	?	Two barangays on Negros Island: Bgy. Bantayan in Kabankalan, Negros Occidental; and Bgy. Baras in dacu, Negros Oriental

Jolo town in Sulu province was reportedly re-launched as a peace zone last 16 December 2004 by local government officials led by Mayor Hadji Suod Tan, in partnership with the Philippine-Canadian Local Government Support Group for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the Center for Peace and Development of Western Mindanao State University, the Reach Out to Others Foundation Inc., and the Justice, Peace and Integrity program organized by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (Mustafa 2004). However, fighting between government and MNLF/Abu Sayyaf groups intensified in February 2005 in Jolo, in total disregard for the peace zone declaration.

Although sparse, new peace zones in GRP-CPP/NPA affected areas have also sprouted in Quezon and several towns in Mt. Province in 2004. In September 2004, according to a *Philippine Daily Inquirer* report, at least 10,000 residents of Infanta and General Nakar towns in Quezon Province declared their towns a "zone of peace, freedom and development" and asked that their towns be left alone by in peace by communist guerillas and government soldiers. The signing of the declaration was attended by local government and church officials. Unfortunately, Fr. Chat Coendres, chancellor of the Prelature of Infanta who co-led the initiative, died in the wake of consecutive typhoons and massive floodings that devastated parts of Quezon in early December 2004. Tribal leaders of the Guina-ang and Lubuagan tribes of Kalinga also declared the municipality of Benguet and Baguio City as a zone of peace among them, meaning the two tribes may not attack any member of the other tribe in these places.

**Table 6. Peace Zone Formation**

Precipitating Factors	Period or incidents of violence (clashes between government and rebel forces, tribal wars, inter-ethnic conflicts, forced evacuation, various acts of aggression) <i>First wave:</i> mostly in areas affected by the communist insurgency <i>Second wave:</i> mostly in areas affected by the Moro insurgencies
Catalysts	Local community leaders (elders, religious, individuals, local government, local community groups, charismatic individual) External groups (NGOs, funding agencies)

Leadership Mechanisms	Peace councils, tribal councils, task forces, local coalition, council of stewards
Territorial coverage	A defined zone, a village/sitio, barangay, cluster of families or sitios, cities, municipalities, (schools)
Variations in name	DMZ, Matago-an/Zone of Life, ZOPFAN, ZOPAD, Free Zone, Neutral Zone, Spaces for Peace, Sanctuaries of Peace
Types of Activities	<p><i>Mitigating Direct Violence</i> – calling for/monitoring the ceasefire/peace pact, pullout of armed personnel, ban on firing and/or display of guns, ban on detachments and troop deployment, ban on recruitment into the armed group, providing sanctuary for the wounded and other humanitarian assistance, addressing specific incidents of violence (investigating and extracting accountability), including criminal activities.</p> <p><i>Promoting Community Processes and Participation</i> – dialogues and various activities, enhancing local dispute-resolution mechanisms, promoting respect for customs, traditions and rights, organizing and building solid peace constituency</p> <p><i>Developmental activities</i>- promoting/mobilizing relief, rehabilitation, and development initiatives</p>

Unlike the consolidated and grassroots-based peace zone initiatives in villages and barangays, the peace zones declared in schools (see Table 7) and bigger territories such as cities and provinces tend to function only as symbolic peace zones, whose constituency and mechanisms are not firmly rooted, institutionalized and therefore not sustained. This is especially true for peace zones that were declared by local government officials, instead of the community and their other supporters from civil society. Some such government-initiated peace zones such as President Estrada’s declaration of 20 towns and 1 city in Central Mindanao as peace zone after the AFP overran MILF camps in 2000, and President Arroyo’s declaration of portions of Pikit (near the Liguasan Marsh) after AFP offensives in February 2003 – have been criticized as distortions of what otherwise should be people-initiated peace zones (Santos, 2005:9-10). In any case, local government and AFP support for community-initiated peace zones – support for the suspension of fighting being more tenable if confined to small spaces – was also important for the functioning of the peace zones (ibid., pp. 17-22) Of course, rebel cooperation was also crucial. On this matter, the MILF tended to be more supportive of the peace zones, than the CPP-NPA-NDF who have maintained an ambivalent if not negative position against this type of initiatives in areas where they operate. The latter has expressed the view that peace zones are counter-revolutionary, anti-people, divisive, and out-of-step with the national level peace agreements.

**Table 7. Schools That Have Been Declared as Peace Zones in the Early 1990s**

<i>Peace Zone</i>	<i>Coverage</i>
Miriam College	School in Quezon City, Metro Manila
Jose Abad Santos Memorial School	School in Quezon City, Metro Manila
Polytechnic University of the Philippines	University in Manila
Assumption College in San Lorenzo	College in Makati City
Ateneo de Manila University	University in Quezon City
Quezon City Science High School	Public school in Quezon City
St. Scholastica’s College Grade School	Grade School in Manila
Saint Bridget’s College	College in Quezon City
San Beda College	College in Manila
Colegio de Sta. Isabel	College in Naga City, Camarines Sur
Naga Parochial School	School in Naga City, Camarines Sur

## 2. Peace Coalitions

Coalitions and networks correspond to what has been called the “network of effective actors” or a “collection of representative actors from the political, social and structural fields concerned with peace-building in a specific conflict, whose purposes are to enhance effectiveness through fostering a holistic approach to peace-building and to foster the development of new ‘theories of action’ that necessitate collaboration.” (Ricigliano 2002) The primary function of such a network is “to supplement the limited theory of action of any one organization by fostering opportunities for diverse organizations to learn from one another, bring different information for planning and analysis and thus expand the range of possible action that can be taken to advance peace-building” (Ibid.) They have also been referred to as “unofficial supplements to negotiation” or those among the broader population who comprise the civil society in the country in conflict; normally not part of the negotiation process and yet part of the conflict and its potential solution; includes organizations, groups (religious institutions, business and labor interests, peace groups) and individuals who have their own processes, communication channels and expertise of which negotiators can avail themselves; and can function as supports for, or alternatives to the talks process itself (Harris and Reilly 1998).

Various peace coalitions, some short-lived, some sustained or configured into the next one, have been set up to pull together efforts at reviving and sustaining political negotiations with the CPP-NPA-NDF. The earliest was the Coalition for Peace (CfP), set up by leaders of 22 Metro Manila-based organizations from several ideological formations in December 1986 shortly before talks between the NDF and the Aquino administration broke down. The CfP aimed to serve as a vehicle of citizen participation in the peace process. The CfP participated actively in the National Peace Conference (NPC) in October 1990, which issued a seven-point National Peace Agenda that was presented to the GRP and NDF. The NPC joined government-initiated national consultations which resulted in the 1993 Social Pact for Empowered Economic Development and the 1995 Social Reform Agenda.

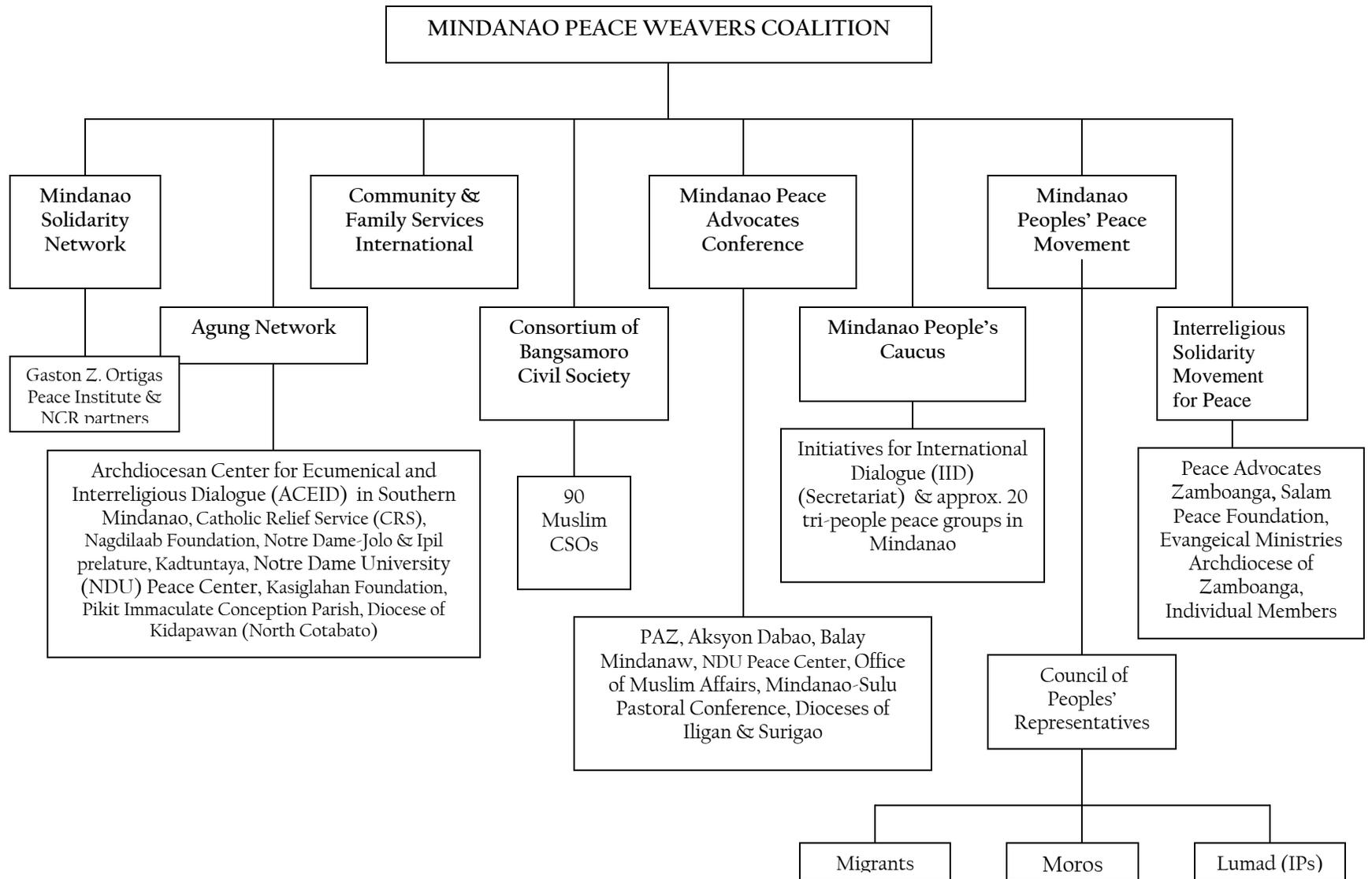
The People’s Caucus led by former Senator Wigberto Tanada was launched in 1990. It drew up its own agenda for peace and supported the formation of a democratic coalition government. In 1992, a gathering of 120 organizations constituting itself as the People’s Congress drafted a “People’s Agenda for the First 100 Days of the New Government” addressed to newly elected President Fidel Ramos. Among others, it called on the new leadership to pursue the abandoned process with the NDF and to give it a high policy priority. The People’s Congress, along with the NPC, were the national coalitions consulted by the National Unification Commission. They asked to undertake their own consultations, the outcome of which they submitted to the NUC. In the end, the People’s Congress criticized the NUC report.

The respective foundations of most of these early coalitions have for large parts depended on the left ideological stream its organizers belonged, notably social democratic-democratic socialists (in the case of the CfP and NPC), or national democratic (in the case of the People’s Caucus and later the People’s Congress). Among these coalitions, only the NPC is operational. It is focused on institutionalizing reforms through its participation in the National Anti-Poverty Commission.

Counterpart coalitions at the provincial level like the Hearts of Peace (HOPE) in Bicol, Paghiliusa sa Paghidaet in Negros Occidental the Peace Advocates Zamboanga (PAZ) and the Cordillera Peace Forum address pressing concerns, sustain peace initiatives within the community, and link up with national efforts. Their respective memberships are drawn from the active and politicized sectors of the community and are expanded to include a broader range of community people and existing institutions in the locale (NGOs, academe, religious institutions, community organizations).

In Mindanao, various coalitions have sprung up in the last two decades. The Kusog Mindanao umbrella covers the Mindanao Caucus of Development NGOs Network (MINCODE), the Mindanao Business Council and associations of local government officials and professionals. More recently, they have converged into an even larger umbrella called the Mindanao Peaceweavers. Organized in 2003 and publicly launched in October 2004, the Mindanao Peaceweavers brought together eight peace networks, namely, Agung Network, Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society, Mindanao Peace Advocates' Conference, Mindanao People's Caucus, Mindanao People's Peace Movement, Community and Family Services International, Mindanao Solidarity Network (a loose network of Metro Manila groups supporting the peace campaigns in Mindanao) and the Zamboanga-based Interreligious Solidarity Movement for Peace. It aims to promote people's participation in the peace process, consensus-building, joint campaigns, and dialogues. They lobby for peace and development in Mindanao (see flow chart). Meanwhile, the national democratic Initiatives for Peace in Mindanao (InPeace Mindanao) works closely with protestant church leaders of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the Inglesia Filipinas Independiente (Aglipayan Church), and organizations like Bayan and Karapatan.

Flow Chart 1. Mindanao Peace Weavers (next page)



An example of a Moro coalition is the Muslim Multi-sectoral Movement for Peace and Development, organized in Lanao del Sur at the height of the debate in 1999 on the Visiting Forces Agreement. It is composed of some nine sectors including the ulama, traditional leaders, youth, women, professionals, madrasah.

In mid-2002, the Program on Peace, Conflict Resolution and Democratization of the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) initiated a series of meetings that sought to resuscitate coalition initiatives on the peace front. The meetings brought together the peace institutes and other campaign groups, NGOs and individuals concerned with the floundering of political negotiations and the ascendancy of the militarist line in government. They adopted the name, All-Out Peace Groups (AOPG), as a vehicle to publicly advocate for support to the process and privately engage the different state and non-state actors or parties concerned. The network advocated for a national peace policy that will bind all administrations to pursue the peace process. At the height of the conflict in Mindanao, the AOPG, together with other groups and parties like Akbayan and Kilusang Pambansang Demokratiko alarmed by the resumption of conflict as a result of renewed AFP offensives in MILF areas, it launched the NOWARGAMES (National Outrage of Women Against Angelo Reyes and Gloria Arroyo's Militarism and Erosion of Sovereignty), which called on then Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes to resign.

The Pilgrims for Peace, a formation of advocates from various sectors aligned with the national democratic bloc, campaigns against the labeling of Jose Ma. Sison and the New People's Army as "terrorist" and supports the resumption of peace talks. Secretariat support is provided by the Philippine Peace Center which was established in 1992 to assist in the GRP-NDF negotiations.

The deployment of American troops in conflict areas in the Philippines in 2002 and 2003 purportedly to train Filipino soldiers and the US campaign to attack Iraq also saw the anti-US campaigners organized into formations like the Gathering for Peace interfacing or converging with the peace process advocates. Gathering for Peace linked their opposition to the war on Iraq to the war on Mindanao waged in 2003 by the Arroyo administration. This networked was coordinated by the Nuclear-Free Philippines Coalition and the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement chaired by former senator Wigberto E. Tanada.

A number of NGOs and campaign groups are linking gender, human rights, children's rights, disarmament, environment, foreign policy, education and social reform issues to the peace process. The Peace Education Network (PEN) brings together schools, institutions and other programs and alliances committed to develop the field of peace education and conflict resolution in the country. The Coalition Against the Use of Child Soldiers campaigns against recruitment of children in armed forces. The Philippine Campaign to Ban Landmines engages both the government and the different rebel groups to stop using anti-personnel mines and has successfully secured the commitment of the MILF and CPP breakaway armed groups to observe the ban on use and production of anti-personnel mines. The Philippine Action Network on Small Arms, campaigns against the proliferation of small arms. These issue-specific humanitarian coalitions support the work of Bantay Ceasefire and Sulong CARHRIHL. The Peace Vote launched in 1992 was more of a promotional campaign than one that expected to influence the electoral outcome.

Various alliances have been put up to serve as mechanisms for citizen mediation and the conduct of dialogues with the parties directly in conflict. The earliest was the Multi-Sectoral Peace Advocates (MSPA) which drew together several personalities like former constitutional commission member Edmundo Garcia who is now with the International Alert, then NCCP president Dr. Feliciano Carino, Fr. Frank Vargas of the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines, then Senator Wigberto Tanada, House Representatives Bonifacio Gillego and Florencio Abad, former peace negotiator and academic Ma. Serena Diokno, former Ambassador Howard Dee, and CFP organizer and ex- Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita “Ging” Quintos Deles. From 1990 to 1992, the MSPA held informal dialogues with government, military and rebel representatives to convince them of the merit of resuming political negotiations, to no avail. Both Ambassador Dee and Dr. Carino eventually became members of the government negotiating panel.

Other attempts to bring together personalities with capacity to broker talks, like the Peace Initiators (of former NDF chair Horacio Morales, House Representative Aping Yap and lawyer Romeo Capulong), and the People’s Independent Peace Advocates (PIPA, conceptualized by lawyer-advocate Soliman Santos, Jr.) did not prosper. In late 2002, the Citizens’ Council for Peace (CCP), made up of personalities acceptable to both the government and the rebel groups like former president of the Cotabato-based Notre Dame University Fr. Jun Mercado, businessman-philanthropist Vicente Jayme, former GRP negotiator representing civil society Zenaida Bridget Pawid, and former MSPA members Tanada and Diokno, was formed. It chose to be a purely private initiative rather than a government appointed body, as originally conceived by government when it convened the body.

Bantay Ceasefire and Sulong CARHRIHL are other types of citizen-mediation focused on implementing ceasefire/partial peace agreements between the government and rebel groups. The Mindanao People’s Caucus provides the backbone of the Bantay Ceasefire which promotes and monitors the GRP-MILG ceasefire, and supplements the work of the GRP-MILF Joint Monitoring Committees and Local Monitoring Teams at the provincial level. The Bantay Ceasefire organized four missions in 2003, submitted findings and recommendations, and coordinates closely with the GRP-MILF Joint Monitoring Committee and Local Monitoring Teams. Groups that joined the missions include the Initiatives for International Dialogue, Mindanao Peace Advocates Conference, Balay Rehabilitation Center, Balik-Kalipay in Pikit, Immaculate Conception Parish in Pikit, and United Youth of the Philippines (UNYPHIL), Suara Kalilintad and IMAM. The Program on Peace, Democratization and Human Rights of the University of the Philippines serves as national secretariat of Sulong CARHRIHL which brings together, peace, human rights, religious and academic institutions. A Bicol Chapter of Sulong CARHRIHL was launched by the Bicol Social Action Centers on 10 December 2004.

### **3. NGOs, Centers and Other Programs**

The churches, through its regular organizations like the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and the protestant National Council of Churches of the Philippines (NCCP), have been staunch and influential peace advocates. They were key participants in major peace undertakings such as monitoring the 1986 cease-fire agreement and the NUC consultations. Through various statements read and disseminated to the faithful in Sunday masses or released to the press, the CBCP and

NCCP made known their support for the peace process and put pressure on concerned parties to pursue the track. Various programs and offices were put up to attend to the peace campaign, including a CBCP-NCCP Joint Peace Committee to coordinate local, national and international efforts. The CBCP's National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace (NASSA) remains an important coordinating/campaign body for most of the CBCP's social action concerns, ranging from anti-corruption, the environment and peace. In the 1990s up to the present, however, many members of the Catholic clergy, the NCCP and United Council of Churches in the Philippines were drawn into the divisive conflict within the national democratic movement, wherein the peace strategy continues to be debated. In Mindanao, interfaith dialogues continue to be undertaken through the Bishops-Ulama Forum and many other local counterparts (see section on Moro and Mindanao civil society response).

NGOs also play facilitative and coordinative role in peace undertakings. The Metro Manila-based Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZOPI) was put up in 1991 to document, support and sustain these peace initiatives. The GZOPI continues to be one of the most active and networked NGO providing coordination services and secretariat support to various peace projects and campaigns. The Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID) with head office in Davao City provides similar functions to Mindanao peace coalitions and various local, national and international projects. The Assisi Development Foundation provides managerial support for Tabang Mindanaw, a high-powered relief and reconstruction program led by former Ambassador Howard Dee, businessman Fernando Zobel de Ayala, and publisher Alexander Prieto-Romuladez. The Catholic Relief Services has extensive peacebuilding education and developmental programs in Mindanao.

Various other collaborative efforts have prospered, brought together by various agents like the UNDP-Philippine office, International Alert, the UNICEF Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Inter-Agency Committee, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the World Council of Churches, the Southeast Asian Conflict Studies Network, Asia Foundation, the UP CIDS, the Philippine Council of Islam and Democracy, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), USAID, Asian Peace Alliance, and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP). The Philippine Peace Consortium, an early and now defunct network of institutes working closely with the Philippine-based Mennonites Central Committee, organized jointly or separately conflict resolution training programs and published books on the peace process in the early to mid-1990s. (For similar initiatives in Mindanao, see next section). In collaboration with other groups, the GZOPI has organized several "Waging Peace in the Philippines" conferences – in 1997, 2002, 2003 and again in December 2004, where the state of the peace processes are reviewed and analyzed, and corresponding action points are strategized by participating civil society organizations.

The high human, financial and environmental cost of continuing conflict have inspired more and a variety of initiatives in the last decade. More schools are introducing peace education in their curricula and universities are instituting peace research centers. The Peace Education Network provides an umbrella for teachers and NGO workers interested in advancing peace education and conflict-resolution skills. Miriam College's Peace Education Center serves as its secretariat. PEN has members in different universities and they include organizations like Pax Christi, AKKAPKA and the Children for Peace. In Mindanao, the pioneers in peace education include the Zamboanga-based Silsillah, Cotabato-based Notre Dame University Peace Center and the Reconciliation

Center, Ateneo de Davao and de Zamboanga, and the Mindanao State University campuses in Marawi, Iligan and General Santos, and the Western Mindanao State University in Zamboanga. All of these universities have their peace or inter-cultural studies centers. The Catholic Relief Services conducts annual training on peace and conflict resolution in Mindanao.

Psycho-socio trauma services and programs are being made more available to survivors of the armed conflicts, with the Balay Rehabilitation Center and the UP CIDS Program on Psycho-Socio Trauma as the pioneers in the field. Many diocesan organizations and NGOs such as the Nagdilaab Foundation in Basilan, have incorporated these services in their programs.

On the whole, however, the active and organized third-party peace constituency watching over the peace process with the NDF in particular remains small, in contrast to the groups interfaced with the Moro peace processes (See Section C). The combined influence of civil society personalities and institutions brought to the dialogue table allow them to exert some influence in the policy direction, the process and the substance of the discourse, but unfortunately not always the outcome. The latter it seems is more a product of the interaction of government and rebel policy, in turn determined by their respective organizational interests, strategies and dogmas.

### **C. Phenomenal Growth of Moro and Mindanao peace groups in recent decades**

This section traces the growth of Moro and Mindanao peace groups in recent decades, with focus on initiatives to address the Moro, lumad and Moro-Christian (migrants) issues in the context of the Moro insurgencies. Although the general elements of these civil society responses were already reflected in the previous sections, this part zeroes in on Mindanao as a place where a phenomenal rise in peace-building activities focused on the “tri-people” dimensions of the conflict has been witnessed in recent decades. It provides a brief historical overview of the evolution of key peace initiatives such as the inter-faith dialogues and Bangsamoro and lumad civil society organizing with its strong peace and development/peace and self-determination components. Due to limited time and research, it is unable to integrate the other dimensions of the conflicts and corresponding civil society response in Mindanao, notably initiatives addressing the CPP-NPA-NDF insurgency which also takes place in Mindanao provinces.

#### **1. Moro CSO Formation**

It should be noted that in the 1960s, there were already the beginnings of Moro civil society interfacing/engaging the Philippine state. These nascent civil society groups generally adopted either a secular or faith-based perspective. Several young Muslims were prominent in secular organizations like the Kabataang Makabayan (e.g., Nur Misuari), and the National Union of Students of the Philippines (e.g., Macapantos Abbas). Muslim student/youth and professional organizations, mostly espousing equal rights in the context of the Philippine nation-state, arose and networked with each other. Prominent among these were the Muslim Association of the Philippines which was founded way back in 1926 by Indian Muslims; the Union of Islamic Forces and Organizations led by Abbas; the Muslim Progress Movement led by Dr. Alunan Glang; the Philippine Muslim Nationalist League led by Nur Misuari; the Muslim Students Association of the Philippines; the Muslim Lawyers’ League; the Al Muslimin Fraternity; Sulu Muslim League; and the Muslim Youth Assembly which elected Nur Misuari as

their candidate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention (Jubair, 1999:145-149). Members usually included children of the Moro traditional aristocracy and but also Moros from the non-aristocracy who entered college, for some, made possible with government (Commission on National Integration) scholarship. Another group of rising counter-elites were the Middle East-educated Muslim youth of the 1950s and 60s, also from the ranks of both the Moro elites and non-elites. In particular, the Philippine Muslim community in Egypt “became a center for the development of activism in pursuit of social and political change n the Muslim Philippines, but unlike that in Manila, student activism among Philippine Muslims in Cairo was explicitly and exclusively Islamic in character” (McKenna, 1998:144). Salamat Hashim was one of the leaders of the Philippine Students’ Union in Cairo (Che Man, 1990:77). Ansar-Islam founded in 1969 by Domacao Alonto had the objective of establishing Islam in all walks of life (Jubair, 1999:145)

The martial law years saw Moro organizing channeled to war efforts. The MNLF emerged as the dominant politico-military organization that led Moro separatist quest until the late 1970s. It continued as a revolutionary organization with control over certain territories. The 1996 GRP-MNLF Peace Agreement paved the way for the transformation of the MNLF mass base into cooperatives and Peace and Development Centers led by local commanders. Women combatants and organizers transformed into women’s groups and developmental activists; and ex-combatants into Peace and Development Advocates. This was largely precipitated by the infusion of development projects as part of the terms of the 1996 Peace Agreement. To implement economic and development assistance projects, 16 MNLF states (North and South Palawan; Zamboanga del Norte and del Sur; Basilan; Tawi-tawi; Lupah Sug; Ranao Central, Norte and del Sur; New Utara; Western, Sebangon, Central and Selatan Kutawatu; Saratan Davao) were recognized and organized into several cooperatives. In 1999, 355 cooperatives with 52,035 members were reported (cited in Abubakar 2000:152). Among the new MNLF NGOs formed were the Bangsamoro Women Foundation, and the Federation of United Mindanawan Bangsamoro (Busran-Lao, 2003).

It can be posited that the evolution of the MILF (which broke away from the MNLF in the late 1970s) as a prominent revolutionary organization in the late 1980s and 1990s was already conditioned by the prevalence of “mass action discourse and praxis” alongside Islamic revivalism in the national and global contexts. The MILF worked closely with ulamas, religious communities and institutions, Islamic welfare organizations, as well as Manila-educated professionals. Together they formed the backbone of the MILF’s mobilization network (McKenna, p. 213-214). It was also able to mobilize support among Muslim students and the urban poor in Mindanao. Its Bangsamoro People’s Consultative Assembly is a more organized formation of MILF supporters/mass base compared to the MNLF’s Bangsamoro Congress. The Assembly has a newsletter and website, offices that are accessible to the public, allied institutions like the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies, and a set of officials and spokesperson. In effect, it is operated and structured as a “modern” CSO organization.

The first Muslim (unarmed) mass action in Cotabato was staged in 1985, alongside the parade for the opening of the 1985 Dawah Conference. Muslim college students marched and displayed banners criticizing militarization, exalting Allah and supporting Islamic resistance (e.g., in Afghanistan) (McKenna, pp.215-216). In March 1986, shortly after Aquino assumed the presidency, the MILF mobilized for a three-day mass prayer rally attended by 50,000 to 100,000 each day, to show its strength to the new government (McKenna, pp. 243-245).

The First Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly was held on 3-5 December 1996 at the Da'wah Center, Simuay, Sultan Kudarat and reported 1.07 million participants, including representative of indigenous non-Muslim highland peoples. The Second Assembly was held on 1-3 June 2001 in the same place and reported to have been attended by 2.6 million delegates. The chair of the secretariat was Prof. Adillah Hashim. Among the resolutions passed in the Second Assembly was for the MILF to represent them in negotiations provided it does not deviate from their demand for complete independence. In between the two assemblies, a series of Rally for Peace and Justice was held in October 1999 in Cotabato City, Davao City and Marawi, and in December in Isabela City, Basilan with allegedly 500,000 people in attendance in Cotabato and Marawi and 5,000 in Davao.

Mass rallies of "Bangsamoro civil society" continued to be held every now and then. In April 2004, a rally in Marawi city led by the Coalition of the Moro Youth Movement called for "independence as the final solution to the Bangsamoro Problem" (Gutoc 2004).

Bangsamoro NGOs multiplied in response to the 2000 intensification of violence. They engaged in relief, psychotherapy, trauma de-briefing, relocation, housing, livelihood and community rebuilding, eventually bonding together under the Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society in 2002 (Busran-Lao 2003). These groups have collaborative relations with other activist, non-Moro groups, notably those coming from the national democratic (especially its splinter groups) and social democratic traditions. They are part of Mindanao-wide alliances, some of whose epicenters are in non-Muslim areas like Davao City. They have also cooperated well with Christian institutions (churches/dioceses, schools, programs) in their communities.

Various peace groups are also being put up among Muslims, such as the Muslim Multi-sectoral Movement for Peace and Development chaired by Haji Abdullak Dalidig. Together with other Moro organizations in the Lanao provinces, they held a two-day peace camp from 6-7 November 2004. The Young Moro Professionals is a loose network of well-educated Muslim youth who are involved in various peace initiatives in different capacities.

The heightened presence of international organizations and infusion of funds for very focused, community-based programs have sustained the peacebuilding work initiated in the late 1990s despite continuing lack of peace and intermittent escalation of conflict. Examples of such external assistance are the UN Multi-Donor Program with an allocation of \$8.3million in 1999 for agriculture and livelihood, vocational training, human resource capacity building, and program coordination and support; AusAid P7 million assistance to cooperative projects; various donations in money or in kind from CIDA, USAID, JICA, the World Bank, ADB, and EU. Community-based projects have also been undertaken by groups like the British Voluntary Service Organization, A World Bank Mindanao Trust Fund for Mindanao is being put up.

## **2. Muslim-Christian Interfaith Dialogues**

Muslim-Christian interfaith dialogues were already being undertaken by churches and religious congregations in the late 1960s. Peter Gowing, a United Church of Christ in the Philippines minister, established in 1968 the annual seminar on Islam in the Philippines

and Asia which later became known as seminars on Mindanao and Sulu cultures. The seminars, held in different universities of Mindanao-Sulu, were managed by the Asian Studies Program at Silliman University in Dumaguete, Negros Occidental. An offshoot of the 1975 seminar was the creation of the Mindanao-Sulu Conference for Justice and Peace chaired by Bishop Francisco Claver (Larousse 2001:360). Also, in 1974, Peter Gowing moved to Dansalan College in Marawi where he organized the Dansalan Research Center which educated Christians about Muslim Filipinos (Larousse, p. 361). Another early initiator was the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) in Cotabato and Sulu which operated the Notre Dame University. The OMI schools and programs are open to both Christians and Muslims (an imam handled Islam religion classes); their health clinics did not discriminate on the basis of religion and trained Muslim health workers; and their radio programs promoted the virtues of dialogue and interfaith understanding.

Bishop Antonino Nepomuceno through the diocesan Social Action Center initiated the formation of the first Muslim-Christian Religious Leaders Association to protect civil rights assaulted by the Marcos regime in the 1972 (Mercado 2003; Larousse 2001:366). Also in the early 1970s, the NCCP formed the Muslim-Christian Reconciliation Study Committee. An offshoot was NCCP's formation of Christian education program on Muslims. In a 1978 workshop with the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference Muslim-Christian desk, they conceived of the Duyug Ramadan, which aimed at educating Christians on Islam (Larousse, pp. 3768-370).

In 1974, a national Muslim-Christian dialogue was convened in Zamboanga by Fr. Jose Anter, OMI and Datu Michael Mastura as preparation for an international dialogue. Another national dialogue took place in 1976 supported by the NCCP in Marawi; and again in 1978 in Tagaytay sponsored by the Muslim community in Manila, in 1981 in Marawi, in 1984 in Jolo, in 1986 in Cotabato, and in 1987 in Zamboanga City (Larousse, pp. 363-365). In 1978, the Kahayag Foundation was put up in Davao City. It gathered Muslim and Christian women together to reflect on their concerns as Filipinas (Larousse, p. 362). The Mindanao State University Southern Philippines Center for Peace Studies in Marawi, set up in 1979, also brought together Muslim and Christian youth (Larousse, p. 361-362). Other early initiatives were undertaken by the Claretian Fathers in Basilan, the Dansalan Research Center of the United Churches of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), the Prelature of St. Mary in Marawi City. It is said that many Bangsamoro staunch advocates of peace got their peace orientation from these interfaith dialogues, notably people like Piang Albar of Jolo, Zeny Lim and Amilusin Jumani of Zamboanga, Guiamel Alim of Cotabato and Moctar Matuan and Hamid Barra of Marawi City (Busran-Lao, 2003). In the late 1970s, when Basilan was heavily militarized, Bishop Querexeta and Ustadz Galib Jundam formed the Moslem and Christian Brotherhood for Justice and Peace which responded to human rights abuses, organized assemblies of reconciliation between communities, and undertook self-help projects (Larousse, 2001:358). Dialogues were both informal (through immersion programs such as the duyog Ramadhan) and formal (as in the Mindanao-Sulu pastoral conferences, and later the Bishop-Ulama Forum) (Busran-Lao, *ibid.*). the Cotabato-Jolo-Basilan approach of the Catholic religious had two forms: running programs to help the Muslim and Christian poor, and leaning about and living with Muslims (Larousse, p. 375).

The violence that took place in the 1970s caused deep wounds within and among communities; moreover, Islamic revivalism in the 1980s preached avoidance of contact with Christians thereby weakening the impact of these initiatives (Larousse, p. 376).

Bangsamoro energies were engulfed in the shift to armed separatism. The Philippine state's armed might, martial law and the failure in implementation of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement made armed resistance the primary mode of organization in Bangsamoro society up to the late 1980s.

Interfaith dialogues saw a revival only in the 1990s, when peace seemed so near and yet so far away. In the late 1980s the Catholic church hierarchy was experiencing a renewal in its perspective on the Muslim Mindanao conflict and its relationship to the Islamic faith. A landmark event was the creation of the Episcopal Commission on Interreligious Dialogue in 1990 and the holding of the Second Plenary Council in 1991 by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines which gave mention of Muslim Filipinos and the importance of inter-religious dialogue as an integral part of the Church's mission. Events in the 1990s – the 1994 kidnapping of Fr. Nacorda with 36 other people, the GRP-MNLF peace negotiations in 1996, the 1997 murder of Bishop Benjamin de Jesus in Jolo, the 1998 kidnappings of church people -- also spurred letters from the CBCP. The letters distinguished Islam, peace-loving Muslims and legitimate pro-independence groups from the vigilante and criminal groups like the Abu Sayyaf, and commended the Bishop-Ulama dialogue process. The dioceses held a ZAMBASULI (Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu, Ipil) Peace Consultation in 1994. In October 1996, the national Seminar-Workshop on Interreligious Dialogue took place, with 29 dioceses nationwide represented, of which 19 came from Mindanao. This was followed by a Mindanao regional seminar which recommended the introduction of peace education and interreligious dialogue in all schools. The first Bishop-Ulama Forum was held in 1996 in Cebu, and subsequently in different parts of Mindanao with financial and other support provided by the Catholic Relief Service. Provincial and other local inter-faith dialogues and programs have since multiplied. These include the Interfaith Forum for Peace and Solidarity in Pagadian City, the Lanao Muslim-Christian Movement for Dialogue and Peace, the Concerned Citizens of Muslims and Christians in Jolo initiated by the Vicariate, the Archdiocesan Center for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue (ACEID) in Davao, the Desk for Muslim-Christian Relations of the Prelature of Isabela, the Week of Peace organized annually by the Peace Advocates Zamboanga in close cooperation with the Social and Literacy Agenda for Muslims Foundation (SALAM), and the Local Government, Community and Church Organization (LOGCCO) initiated by the Prelature of Ipil. In 1999, the Archdiocese of Cotabato began to promote the integration of the interreligious dialogue ministry into the Basic Ecclesial Communities. The BUF would eventually move to include the lumad in the dialogue process (Larousse, pp 330-410). Meanwhile, the Maranao-led Ulama League of the Philippines bonds together an otherwise loosely organized sector of Muslim religious leaders.

Prior to this, in 1984, its own survey of pastoral priorities put ecumenism and relating with Muslims last nationwide, and number 15 out of 22 in Mindanao (Larousse, 2001:335) The Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference (MSPC) as a forum for pastoral sharing of the local Catholic churches in Mindanao-Sulu, began in 1971. Its subsequent conferences in 1977, 1980, 1992 and 1995 always advocated Church dialogue with Muslims but a survey in 1980 showed that this was not prioritized (Larousse, pp.367-368). The change in regime in 1986, several tragic incidents involving Church people, and the national negotiation process provided the context for the renewed importance given by the church hierarchy to inter-faith dialogues. The limits to the Christian-Muslim dialogue framework would later be addressed with the articulation of a tri-people framework giving visibility to needs and rights of the lumad/IPs.

### 3. Mindanao-Wide Peacebuilding Momentum

Relief, rehabilitation and development efforts with strong national linkages through foundations like the Tabang Mindanaw and the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), and anti-war advocacies linked with Metro Manila-based civil society coalitions/alliances became important components of peacebuilding work because of the 2000 and 2003 escalation in conflict, resulting from massive AFP operations in MILF areas and the consequent retaliatory violence. The context of war and its immediate and harshly negative impact on human security also provided the conditions for the rise of a new wave of peace zones (and variations like the sanctuaries for peace, spaces for peace, and zones of peace) in small barangays affected by the war between the GRP and MILF or inter-group feuds (see earlier section on peace zones). Muslims initially exhibited reluctance in receiving services from Christian-dominated NGOs and programs due to fear of being subjected to religious conversion but, over time, these fears were lessened. Mix Christian-Muslim organizations like the Pakigdait, Inc. in Lanao del Norte and partnerships like the Mindanao Week of Peace celebration jointly organized by the Catholic PAZ and the Muslim SALAM have done well.

Counterpart organizing is also taking place among lumad/indigenous peoples to ensure they will not be further marginalized with the resolution of the Moro conflict, and to assert their own separate stake in governance, development and peace processes. Efforts to bring together indigenous peoples in Mindanao and gather their voices include:

- The April 2004 Tribal Governance Conference held in Davao City and attended by representatives of 22 tribes in Mindanao (conference organizers were the IID, MPC and Panagtagbo). The Conference issued a Declaration asking for respect of indigenous governance and conflict settlement customs, rights, practices and lands. The Declaration was addressed to local and national government bodies, religious institutions, the AFP/PNP, rebel groups, business corporations, NGOS and other peoples.
- The October 2003 Mindanao Indigenous Peoples Congress for Peace and Development held in Davao City with the active support of the National Anti-Poverty Commission.
- The February 2001 Mindanao Indigenous Peoples Peace Forum held in Davao City where a final statement identified land and culture/way of life as the main peace issues, and development projects as posing the main threat to both their ancestral land and culture (Alejo 2004).
- In 1998, some Lumads from Mindanao attended the National Roundtable on the Impact of Development Projects on Philippines Indigenous Peoples organized by the Cordillera Peoples Alliance and held in Baguio City. The conference, attended by 34 organizations mostly from Northern Luzon criticized the Indigenous People's Rights Act (IPRA) as a divide-and-rule scheme of government intended to hasten the privatization and commercialization of ancestral domains (Alejo 2004).

The lumad have also met with the MILF to ensure their own claims to ancestral domains are not marginalized in the GRP-MILF talks which have identified ancestral domains as the third agenda (after cessation of hostilities and rehabilitation). In November (2003?), a group led by Datu Al Saliling, an Erumanen Manuvu, presented to the MILF and MNLF leaders their resolution stating their group has not intention to separate from the government nor to fight the Bangsamoro and Christian settlers so long as these groups respect their right to self-determination (Abreu 2004). In December 2003, a consultation of non-Muslim NGO leaders met with the MILF, including Antonio P. Kinoc, a B'laan who heads a newly formed alliance of non-Moro IPs in Mindanaw, the

Mindanawi Talainged, Inc. He asked the MILF to attend to land conflicts democratically once the MILF's claims to ancestral domains are recognized.

Conscious of the importance of not being left out in negotiations, the Nasobakaan Torigonay Dot Kalindaan (NATABUK), a federation of lumads in Bukidnon, in its identified solutions, asked that a task force be created to facilitate the conduct of local peace processes at the grassroots, especially when the national-level talks and ceasefire are suspended (Alejo 2004).

There is a growing interest in studying indigenous conflict resolution practices, concepts of peace and violence. IPs are also generating new literature reflecting their conflict experiences and aspirations for peace, land and justice. A silent "culture of peace" revolution is also taking shape through various "peace education" initiatives in schools and communities, and among NGOs, children and the youth. Many universities are sending their teachers to get higher degrees in Peace Education. A Consultation-Workshop on Peace Education Mindanao first took place in 1996 and a Culture of Peace Manual was produced in 1998.

Mindanao women-professionals are also working on a "Mindanao Agenda for Peace and Development" with a gender perspective. Led by the Mindanao Commission on Women, Inc. a group of professional women of different faiths, many of whom occupied elective or government career positions in various parts of Mindanao, organized conferences like the Bangsamoro Women's Assembly in October 2002 in Marawi City; the Lumad Women's Assembly in November 2002 in Bukidnon; and Mindanao Women's Peace Conference in December 2002 in Davao City. The Commission Chair is Irene M. Santiago, who used to sit in the GRP panel for talks with the MILF; vice-chair is Margie Moran-Floreindo, a former "Miss Universe" title-holder who married into an elite Mindanawan family in Davao. The group drafted a Mindanao Women's Position Paper on the GRP-NDF Peace Negotiations. They asked for representation in GRP peace panel advisory bodies and technical working committees. The group is also instrumental in forming the Mothers for Peace, which undertook a series of campaigns in 2003. Maranao women elites, most of whom belong to aristocratic families and are engaged in commerce, have also banded together and organized peace-related gatherings. A newer group is the Muslim Women Peace Advocates Council led by former senator from Sulu, Santanina Rasul.

Other Moro and Mindanao elites are also taking initiatives. The 22 February 2003 Summit of Mindanao Muslim Leaders was held in Davao City, and was immediately followed by another meeting on 11 March 2003, shortly after March 4 Davao airport bombing. The First Mindanao Muslim Leaders Forum held in Davao City was attended by 130-plus Muslim governors, mayors and consultants who asked for a ceasefire and continuation of peace negotiations between the GRP-MILF, the creation of an independent body to investigate Mindanao bombings and the AFP assault on Buliok, and authority from President Arroyo to talk to top MILF leaders. In 1995, there were a series of regional conferences of ulamas and imams (Zamboanga City for Tausug, Yakan and Samal religious leaders; Davao City for Maguindanao and Kalagan religious leaders; and Marawi for Maranao religious leaders) that culminated in a National Congress of Ulamas of the Philippines; conferences facilitated by Abdul Azid Lomondot, MPAC convenor and manager of the Maranao Alliance for Rural Development, thru the Ijtihad Bangsa Moro Al Wahtami (National Union). Lihok Federal is a group advocating the shift to federalism, a campaign which has Senator Aquilino Pimentel as a leading figure.

It is coordinated by the Technical Assistance Center for Development of Rural and Urban Poor (TACDRUP), an NGO headed by former congressional sectoral representative Rey M. Teves in Davao City. Federalism has been adapted as a platform by other sectors like Union of Youth of the Philippines (UNYPHIL). From the business sector, we have the Davao-based Mindanao Business Council who sees war as counterproductive to economic progress, the ARMM Business Council, and the Cotabto-based and General Santos-Based Mindanao Business Forums.

In all, the 1990s up to the present witnessed a vibrant civil society response to the promise of ceasefire and peace agreements, alongside a situation of protracted conflict punctuated by periods of high levels of political violence (e.g., the 1997, 2000 and 2003 wars that erupted in the midst of promising negotiations) and the threats of greater conflict posed by 9/11 and its aftermath, including the presence of US troops in Mindanao under the purview of “joint training exercises”.

### **III. Assessment Of Civil Society Institutional Response**

Given that the present stumbling blocks to the peace process have to do with the ambivalent policy of both the state and the insurgent groups, the obtaining conditions on the ground that sustain the conflict, and the lack of national consensus on the way to move forward to achieve the needed social and political change as well as the peaceful settlement of armed conflicts, the ongoing UNDP assessment of Philippine civil society peacebuilding proposed to evaluate civil society-peace building on the ff. aspects:

- Impact on the policy issue
- Impact on the ground-level situation
- Impact on the perception, attitudes, behavior and perspective of other stakeholders (community, other civil society groups, elements of the state and NSAs) (Coronel Ferrer 2004)

The three areas for assessment of impact were deemed specific enough to be relevant in informing present initiatives as well as the immediate future. The peaceful resolution of the armed conflicts, eradication of the roots of insurgencies, and just and lasting peace are the long-term goals of the Philippine peace processes/civil society’s institutional responses. The areas of impact identified allow measurement of progress toward these goals but at the same time, they are a tacit recognition that there is still a long way to go. Thus what can be seen as outcomes of civil society responses are the incremental progress at the level of policy, at enhancing conditions on the ground, and at transforming thinking, behavior and perspectives. This approach jibes well with a more recent observation that “civil society has less impact promoting a broad peace agenda than when it is articulating specific demands” (Rood, 2005:34).

Quantitative impact assessment is very difficult to achieve. At best, examples and case studies have helped highlight the gains made by civil society. The matrix below provides a listing of impacts that can serve as indicators of civil society successes. They were culled from the various case studies under the UNDP project as well as from other writings.

**Table 8. Impact of CSO Peace Interventions**

Areas of Impact	Illustrative Outcome
On the Policy Issue/Environment	
- Agenda or Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption by the National Government of the Six Paths to Peace, Social Reform Agenda</li> <li>• Passage of related laws (e.g., Anti-rape law, creation of NAPC and NIPC laws)</li> <li>• Influenced resumption of PTs and end to military operations; put pressure on two parties to sustain political negotiations and move on to substantial agenda. Examples: the MILF's unilateral suspension of military offensives after the series of violence in February 2003 was partly a response to the civil society calls including the CBCP and the Bishop-Ulama League of the Philippines. Also, GMA' resumption of talks in 2001 was a response to public outcry on the 2000 AFP offensives and resultant humanitarian disaster.</li> <li>• Heightened visibility of women, children, Moro , lumad and civil society in general in the peace agenda, processes and structures (e..g, women and lumad representatives were included in the GRP panel and technical working committees; civil society representatives sit in panels and other committees in the formal bodies; an all-Mindananawan government panel for talks with the MILF was appointed by President Macapagal Arroyo in 2001 headed by a civilia).</li> <li>• Influenced how media writes about peace and conflict and helped generate greater awareness among the media.</li> <li>• Declaration of Eid il-Fitr as a national holiday.</li> </ul>
- Creation of Formal Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of the National Unification Commission, the National Anti-poverty Commission and National Indigenous Peoples Commission (latter preceded by exposes which pushed government to act on cases and outbreak of violence, e.g., it put up Task Force 63 to deal with conflicts arising from development projects in IP communities. The task force's responsibilities were later transferred to the newly created National Commission on Indigenous People).</li> <li>• Operationalization of the GRP-MILF Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee and Local Monitoring Teams , and instituted parallel third party monitoring (Bantay Ceasefire).</li> <li>• Various consultative mechanisms</li> </ul>
- Specific Peace/Conflict Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Release of detained suspects, bodies and personal belongings of rebels killed in operations; release of AFP soldiers taken by the NPA; withdrawal of troops in certain areas.</li> </ul>
Impact on the Ground Level Situation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human rights violations were mitigated &amp; addressed thru fact-finding missions &amp; relief missions</li> <li>• Less cases of illegal detention</li> <li>• Reduction in direct violence through extended local ceasefires even if short-term only</li> <li>• Continuing dialogues</li> <li>• Delivery of integrated programs to alleviate the impact of violence &amp; assist in societal reconstruction</li> <li>• Gave empowerment/enabled people to regain control over their lives through peacebuilding programs like spaces for peace/peace zones,</li> </ul>

	<p>housing and livelihood programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helped people resume economic activities, schooling, and build unity and develop mutual trust.</li> <li>• Helped people to have options/alternatives to joining either armed group, or from becoming victims to becoming actors, thus lessening fears and insecurities, enhancing wellbeing.</li> </ul>
Impact on the Attitudes, Behavior, Perceptions of Primary Stakeholders	
- On the State/Rebel Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both parties were convinced to engage in dialogues &amp; are developing receptiveness to campaigns for ceasefires &amp; settlement</li> <li>• Military more careful/conscious re behavior in communities &amp; with political detainees</li> <li>• More respect for &amp; less suspicion over church people doing justice &amp; peace work; stronger credibility of the church</li> </ul>
- On the Community & Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helped broaden people’s consciousness towards a peace constituency:</li> <li>• More peace organizations &amp; peace advocates on the ground ; established a wide and deep network of peace advocates that can mobilize and influence ground –level situation and top-level policy</li> <li>• More human rights advocates</li> <li>• More awareness of people of their human rights &amp; justice &amp; peace issues</li> <li>• Growing interest in peace studies in the academe</li> <li>• More attendance in peace activities</li> <li>• Less young people joining rebels</li> <li>• More respect for &amp; less suspicion over church people doing justice &amp; peace work; stronger credibility of church    Students have greater awareness, understanding of, &amp; positive attitude toward peace issues</li> <li>• More learned mediation skills.</li> <li>• People have better understanding of other people’s or groups’ perspectives.</li> <li>• Growing preference for non-violent conflict settlement practices in communities (based on reflections on peace zone in Bual)</li> </ul>

Civil society input to government policy making has brought about laudable policy frameworks such as the “Six Paths to Peace” and the “Social Reform Agenda”; noteworthy legislation such as those creating the National Anti-Poverty Commission and the National Indigenous Peoples Commission, and the other examples cited in the studies and listed the table above. With pressure put to bear by the peace coalitions, the negotiation track between the government and the different rebel groups has been pursued. However, continuing governance problems cited in the previous section have not brought about the thorough reforms demanded by a comprehensive peace agenda. Also, policy-making is a process that is not only affected or determined by inputs or interventions coming from civil society, which may in fact be the weakest factor in some cases.

Different administrations have different strengths (including political will) and priorities, and the lack of unanimity within government on a peace policy as against the more orthodox anti-insurgency approach has not provided the needed continuity and single line of march.

In terms of representation, lobby work undertaken by peace advocates has put in the government negotiating panels women and indigenous peoples. Specific concerns like the release of political prisoners (held by both sides) were also effected with civil society pressure.

Peace groups continue to exert pressure to sustain the peace process through supportive policies of all parties, implementation of reforms and agreements since government priorities change from time to time and peace negotiations have been marred by suspensions and long periods of recess. At the least, they have sustained the high visibility of the peace process in the national consciousness, including at the level of government policy and the mass media.

Even as national policy and reform implementation remain problematic, peacebuilding efforts directed at addressing the needs of the people on the ground where the conflict takes place have been significant and essential. Campaigns have supported the holding and maintenance of ceasefires. Human rights violations were mitigated and addressed through fact-finding missions and relief missions. NGO and church intervention along the lines of psycho-social rehabilitation work have helped restore a measure of peace needed to start the rebuilding of lives and communities. Gains in specific communities include improvements in health, sanitation and housing conditions; provision of educational services and other facilities; and the healing of wounds and the bridging of divides (e.g., Christian-Muslim-lumad relations in Pikit, Cotabato). Consequently, the empowered communities themselves are taking a proactive role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and have enhanced their own capacity to respond to human rights violations and emergencies.

Peacebuilding is long-term norm-transformation and norm-building. Indicators of positive changes in norms (as reflected in perceptions, attitudes, behaviors) on the part of government and armed groups include a perceive greater consciousness on the part of the conflict parties to respect and observe human rights and international humanitarian law over and above their military objectives. However, these are just incremental changes in some areas and instances. On the whole, human rights/IHL violations continue.

While still an uphill climb there is a growing number of active peace constituencies. Indicators are the increasing number of peace organizations being formed; the holding of more peace/conflict resolution trainings; the generation of more human rights advocates and more awareness of people of their human rights and concern for justice and peace issues; growing interest in peace studies in the academe; and more attendance in peace activities.

Admittedly attempts at identifying, and more so measuring impact, have been very preliminary. Most CSOs do not have built-in monitoring and evaluation components. More thorough studies including the use of quantitative methods would need to be undertaken to measure successes and impact. One bone of contention, for example, is whether or not less children are joining the armed groups as a result of the campaign against child soldiers. The absence of statistics and the impact of other factors like continuing poverty and injustice make definite statements difficult. At the least, peace and human rights organizations working on this issue have pushed the recognition of the problem, pushed for a stricter ban, and the creation of special mechanisms to aid arrested and/or wounded child-soldiers.

### **A. Enabling and Hindering Factors**

Based on a reading of several researches and primary documents on civil society peacebuilding in Mindanao, I have extracted the ff. factors that supported the phenomenal growth of Moro and Mindanao peace CSOs.:

- The availability of funds, resources and capability building projects which were the offshoot of the 1996 peace agreement; and the consequent wide networking of civil

- society groups locally, regionally and nationally, all made peacebuilding activities possible. Funds came from government agencies, foreign governments, and international NGOs.
- The Catholic Church's revitalized interest in interfaith dialogues and peacebuilding in Mindanao has brought in an influential and resource-rich institution in the process. It is said that this renewal largely emanated from the NUC process in 1992 "which set off a chain of events that all became forces promoting dialogue" because it enabled Christian and Muslim groups to talk together, and later on led to the formation of the BUF (Larouse, p. 407-408). "Dialogue, peace and reconciliation are seen as the overarching concerns of the Mindanao-Sulu Church in the 1990s" as against its primary concerns over social issues, and justice and peace in the 1970s and 1980s, indicating that the current preferred approach is not opposition (to the state and the armed NSAs) but towards the resolution of the armed conflict, the changing of attitudes, the healing of wounds, and full human development. The Catholic Church leadership has defended the peace process with the Moros even though they faced disagreement from many Christians; and interreligious dialogue although a good number of clergy are not very receptive (Larousse, p. 408, 414, 418).
  - The MILF welcomes and respects "third party" civil society intervention and has exhibited real interest in attaining peaceful settlement. It has avoided taking a partisan stance in elections which complicates political dynamics with all the attendant interests, including that of the MNLF which has assumed the ARMM governorship (until the 2005 election). It is receptive to public sentiment – for example, it issued an apology for its violent acts in Siocon and expressed willingness to go back to the ceasefire, in reply to the calls made by the CBCP and other peace CSOs. Also, the MILF respects the new peace zones/sanctuaries of peace/spaces of peace initiatives in Mindanao. It is said to have welcomed peace zones for providing relief from war (Lee). It has also taken steps to express its adherence to international humanitarian law, through various statements showing IHL principles' congruence with Islamic teachings, and adherence to the campaign to stop the use of anti-personnel mines. It has forged a cooperative agreement with government to curtail activities of criminal and other violent groups operating in MILF territories. It is said that the MILF is taking keen measures to avoid being listed as a terrorist organization by foreign governments.
  - The many-sided interventions – grassroots to elite, taking various shapes and forms, and utilizing diverse strategies – have provided an array of tools to address the many aspects of the conflict. The gradual institutionalization of peace-related programs (peace education, interfaith, tripeople advocacy) in schools/university, religious organizations, NGOs and POs, local governments, and professional organizations have sustained the peace initiatives, providing a multiplier and deepening effect.
  - The gross impact of several high-level hostilities from 1997 to 2003 – despite the 1996 GRP-MNLF peace agreement – mobilized people to act for peace, and achieve a deeper understanding of the nature of the conflict and the need for alternative approaches. Also continuing violence in IP communities have pushed church/diocesan organizations, the NGOs and academe to respond to specific cases such as in areas where the NPA operates, and communities, including lumad people are subjected to recruitment by both the AFP and the NPA.
  - Government support was present/crucial in key cases, e.g., the barangay council or mayor in promoting/upholding peace zones, interfaith dialogues of the Bishop-Ulama Forum, and cooperative undertakings especially in relief and rehabilitation with agencies like the DSWD, NAPC, and OPAPP.

- People are increasingly “owning” the process through active intervention/participation in various mechanisms. This is a far different situation in 1996 when the GRP-MNLF Peace Agreement was forged and Moro and Mindanao peace coalitions were almost non-existent.

Nonetheless, a workshop of experts and practitioners in the Mindanao peace process identified the following hindering factors (The Asia Foundation, 2003):

- Capacity – skills and capabilities to sustain mechanisms, getting information, not being suppressed by patronage politics
- Resources – lack of financial resources to sustain peace efforts
- Diversity of groups – hinders united movement to pursue effective solutions; some are ignored by local governments/face unfavorable environment, particularly the human rights groups, and suspected of collusion with rebel groups and subjected to harassment/HR violations.

Another study on Mindanao civil society noted that while civil society peacebuilding is important and should be developed, Mindanao civil society’s inherent weakness and the national and local conditions have made their impact “indirect, limited and of little consequence to the macropolitical process” (Rood, 2005: vii, 3-4). It observed that Muslim civil society remains less developed than the Christian counterpart, and that in Mindanao, CSOs are overwhelming intra-communal (that is, exclusively Muslim or Christian), the networks are transitory, and the CSOs among themselves are divided ideologically (ibid., pp. viii, 7-9, 22-23). The peace stance of the Christian groups also do not reflect the sentiments of the majority of the Christian population who prefer more aggressive policies against the Moro insurgents; only a limited section of the Catholic clergy are involved in interfaith dialogues; and public opinion, in general, remains conservative on the issue of American troops in Basilan and the sympathetic stance towards “independence” of some CSOs (ibid, p. 19-20, 22).

In addition, some groups are still critical about the extent of participatoriness of the whole process. For example, the peace negotiations were deemed high-level and exclusive to leaders of armed groups and excluded the vast majority of Bangsamoro, lumad and Christian settlers; not community-based (even done abroad) and did not involve consensus-building; not fully reflective of the needs and aspirations of stakeholders; without sense of ownership by the people of Mindanao; no sustainability since communities uninformed and cannot be vigilant; women are not represented in the MIFL panel; women do not occupy decision making positions in the armed movement; women’s particular needs and experiences in armed conflict are not reflected nor addressed; and women’s contributions to peace are not recognized and promoted. (Busran Lao 2002)

A study of peace zones identified the following problematic features:

- Dissipation of policy and policy environment
- National political instability which benefit some local interests
- Recurrence of conflict
- Saboteurs, intrigues
- Lack of trust
- Militarist view of resolving conflict

- Lack of sustaining mechanisms
- Limited capacities and self-interest of leaders (Lee 2004)

These themes also find similarity with the synthesis of supportive and enabling factors identified in the ongoing UNDP study on civil society peace-building, the lessons from which were drawn from experiences in different places (Bicol, Metro Manila, Mindoro. Basilan), where the reference is the communist insurgency:

**Table 9. Facilitating and Hindering Factors in CSO Peace Interventions**

<b>FACILITATING FACTORS</b>	<i>Presence of initiating, sustaining &amp; capable core</i> – Samples of such effective cores are the various Social Action Centers in the dioceses, and the NGOs, Centers and Desks that serve as secretariats for coalition initiatives or undertake programs themselves. Such people/offices also possess certain desirable qualities like being efficient, skilled, culture-sensitive, aware of the issues and processes, process-conscious, and are multi-cultural or diverse in composition. Their leaderships are able to mobilize and inspire/
	<i>Nature of the institution</i> – E..g., the church has moral authority and has thus served as effective mediators; academe has the expertise to do peace research and peace education module development; CSOs have legitimacy to participate and intervene
	<i>Tapping networks &amp; social capital</i> – To draw in various participants or organizations to activities or networks, initiators tap their networks and use their social capital to facilitate, joint, coordinative, complementary and supplementary action.
	<i>Availability of resources</i> – Financial resources to undertake the work are usually secured from the mother organization of the organization serving as the core or secretariat (church, school), funding from local and international NGOs or governments, or through sharing or contributions from coalition members. Resources inherent in or sourced from the community are also available. Access to ICT/internet was also identified as an important resource.
	<i>Use of appropriate &amp; multi-pronged strategies &amp; approaches</i> – As can be seen in the discussion in Section 2 on approaches and the various tables, various strategies are employed to address different goals and needs.
	<i>Supportive environment</i> – These include the mother organization of peace programs/desks/centers and secretariats whose vision/mission are compatible; the immediate external environment such as the local government and community leaders (elected or traditional); the openness and willingness of both combatant forces and their commanders to peace interventions in some localities; and also family and the community’s overall bayanihan spirit.
	<i>Building on successes</i> – Institutional track record of organizations/coalitions enhances their capacity to network, mobilize and influence policy and other stakeholders; success in mediation adds to the credibility of the mediators; the growing network of people being mobilized or developing interest in peace concerns has a multiplier and deepening effect on the movement; these successes sustain hope, inspire and stimulate members to carry on.
<b>HINDERING FACTORS</b>	<i>Lack of/Weaknesses in human &amp; material resources</i> – <u>People</u> : Human resources remain insufficient, there are limited or no full time staff/peace educators/etc.; people are overworked there is always conflict in schedules; key people (school administrators, priests, NGO workers) are reassigned to different posts; and some lack knowledge and understanding of the dynamics and the diversity in cultural and religious practices, and are not adept at the local languages. <u>Material Resources</u> : most CSOs suffer from budgetary constraints; some donor agencies don’t want to fund projects in perceived high conflict areas; and people have poor or inadequate facilities.
	<i>Lack of support &amp; cooperation from other sectors of society</i> – <u>Level of Perception</u>

	<p><u>or Attitude</u>: Leadership of key institutions may be conservative (churches, schools); people have varying perceptions on what peace is, the intentions of different parties, and what are morally right or wrong; the community may have traditional views on leadership selection (reflected e.g. in their electoral behavior which results in poor/unsupportive leadership) or maybe apathetic; and many biases and prejudices deter harmonious relationships, campaign or project implementation (e.g, Muslim-Christian biases). <u>Organizational or Process Constraints</u>: Includes lack of mandate of person from organization, protectiveness of superiors; lack of resources and lack of resourcefulness on the part of the other sectors</p>
	<p><b><i>Continuing Governance Problems</i></b> –Disappointment over failure of government assistance to rebel returnees and continuing threats they face from both sides; implementation lags in government reform and delivery of services causes cynicism and hopelessness on the part of the people; despite passage of laws (e.g., child protection laws including ban on child soldiers), there is lack of information and government is not capable of implementing these laws; some leaders of the local government are inaccessible or apathetic; “goons, guns and gold” phenomenon still pervasive; lack of support from the national government.</p>
	<p><b><i>Threats posed to peace work &amp; affected communities</i></b> – Indiscriminate acts of violence on civilians by armed groups; the military continues to harbor suspicion against religious and other CSO workers; rebels may disagree with or hamper conduct of peace programs; continuing displacement of people in the uplands due to threats posed by the armed conflict; presence of armed groups and/or powerful people with vested interests intimidate the people in the communities.</p>
	<p><b><i>Difficulties in Engagement of Armed Groups</i></b> – The NDF does not support localization of peace negotiations thus hampering local initiatives; CSOs lack knowledge of current policies, dynamics, leadership and changes in ideology inside the rebel organization; some rebel contacts are low-level and do not have enough clout or authority; CSOs are unclear how to go about engagement; there is fear by former rebel supporters or combatants of being stigmatized or subjected to retaliation.</p>
	<p><b><i>Other Environmental Factors</i></b> - These include the cyclical and /or seasonal nature of conflict which grossly disrupt post-war physical and psycho-social reconstruction; unstable “peace and order” situation; occurrence of natural calamities and other disasters; and the distance between the affected communities and centers and difficulties in delivering services/ undertaking initiatives.</p>

## IV. Conclusion

In the final analysis, the peaceful settlement of the armed conflicts cannot be detached from or is integral to the national democratization process which includes social restructuring, cleaning up of the military and police, combating corruption, poverty alleviation, healing and reconstruction of war-weary communities, and the transformation of the Philippine state to make it more autonomous from private interests, efficient, inclusive and developmental. Democratization of the whole system also allows for greater parameters to liberalize and introduce corrective mechanisms in the political, economic and socio-cultural spheres applicable both to the national and local polities. Failure of the democratization process to move forward substantially can only mean a prolonged life span to the violent armed conflicts that have been searing the fabric of Philippine society.

CSOs will continue to play important roles in the democratization project, notwithstanding the diversity, conflicts, and different capacities among CSOs themselves (including those among Muslim, Christians and lumad). Peace CSOs in particular have played

the distinct role of framing, analyzing and addressing developmental, environmental, foreign policy, justice and human rights concerns within the context of the continuing armed conflicts. They were distinctly aware of the need to address and engage both the state and the armed NSA in line with their advocacy for the just and peaceful settlement of the armed conflicts and an end to the orthodox approach to counter-insurgency and the use of political violence. They are particularly involved in ensuring the progress of peace negotiations and observance of ceasefires and other agreements between the direct parties to the conflict. They are also culture activists who seek the transformation of societal norms, values and practices.

CSO capacities and effectiveness of intervention are however limited by the policies, attitudes and behavior of the state and the armed NSAs. In this regard, peace CSOs have campaigned for a national peace policy that will ensure continuity of a comprehensive and peaceful approach to the armed conflicts. As it is, the peace process suffers from the structural infirmity of being dependent on the political leadership, namely the Philippine president, who in turn has a short-time frame and narrow political agenda. As it is, the different government administrations have exhibited varying interest and understanding of the armed conflicts. The adoption of a “peace and development” state policy and a deeper rootedness of the human security framework in government, civilian and military institutions are thus important intervention points being pushed by civil society. As Santos (2003) said, “There is a need for a counter-hegemonic framework for governance and development that would better address rebellion and its root causes”. Corollarily, the scrapping of peace negotiations in favor of military offensives must be challenged.

Protection and security of civilians and people working in conflict areas must be guaranteed by both parties. It is in this regard that peace CSOs are campaigning hard for the enforcement of human rights and international humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict.

The vibrancy of peace CSOs exhibited in Mindanao should be replicated in other parts of the country where armed conflict continues to persist, and no ceasefire agreement prevails. “Peace-zone” building or similar initiatives in other parts of the country should be given support to allow for the blossoming of consolidated peace constituencies in the grassroots nationwide. Capacity-building, funding support, and horizontal and vertical networking can provide the effective mechanisms to sustain these peacebuilding efforts in Mindanao and the rest of the country. Working with local governments and with policy elites are necessary to be able to reach the greater public and have more impact in governance and legislative processes. Specific assistance can be given to develop the underdeveloped sections of civil society (e.g., Muslims and lumad as against Christian-dminated NGOs, people’s organizations as against NGOs). Peace initiatives likewise should draw in the support of institutions and networks outside of the focused peace CSOs. These include the human rights, environmental, development, women and sectoral organizations. Engagement of armed groups should be enhanced through various mechanisms where feasible and needed.

While the role of foreign mediators in the negotiation process can also be constructive, a strong domestic peace constituency is the best “third-party” mediator to the armed conflicts. These conflicts after all are battles for the hearts and minds of the people, in other words for legitimacy of the protagonists; organizations/parties, programs and processes. As organized formations of the citizenry, peace CSOs should ensure that that the interests of peoples’ organizations and communities are upheld, their participation in the process respected, and their autonomy respected.

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[www.cbcp.net](http://www.cbcp.net) - website of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines

[appr@yahoogroups.com](mailto:appr@yahoogroups.com)

[mindanao-alert@yahoogroups.com](mailto:mindanao-alert@yahoogroups.com) - forwards letters, statements and reports of major Mindanao peace organizations; hosted by the IID.

**ANNEX 1 Peacebuilding Activities of the Peace Advocates Zamboanga (PAZ) (Source: Calvo, 2004)**

<b>ISSUE/ CONCERN</b>	<b>PAZ ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>MAIN PARTNERS</b>
<p>Enhancing Muslim-Christian Relations</p> <p>Raising awareness and providing for venues for more informed analysis of peace and development issues</p>	<p>Organizing convergence activities/forums for religious and community leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Secretariat for Zamboanga- Basilan-Sulu Bishops-Ulama Forum</li> <li>○ Convenor for the Inter-religious Solidarity Forum involving Muslim, Christian, and Protestant religious leaders in Zamboanga</li> <li>○ Convenor of multi-sectoral forums and dialogues on such peace and development issues:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● GRP-MNLF Talks: Independent Fact-Finding Committee re the GRP-MILF</li> <li>● Services for the Basic Sectors (Urban Poor, women, labor)</li> <li>● The People’s Agenda: A Covenant with Potential Elective Officials of Zamboanga City</li> <li>● Balikatan and the VFA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Salam Peace Foundation</li> <li>● Salam Peace Foundation</li> <li>● CAMACOP</li> </ul>
<p>Peace Advocacy</p> <p>Promotion of the Culture of Peace</p> <p>Peace and Development</p>	<p><b>The Mindanao Week of Peace</b></p> <p>In November 1997, PAZ launched the Week of Peace Project in Zamboanga City as lead partner with SALAM Peace Foundation, Inc., a Muslim peace advocacy group. It has since become a yearly series of activities involving a week of multi-sectoral participation in peace advocacy. It usually includes an opening day parade, art exhibit, a Festival of Peace, poetry reading, discussion forums on peace-related issues of the day, a poster-painting contest, mural painting, oratorical contests, round-table discussions with the media, peace sessions at hospitals, and reformatory centers, “Peace Weaver” awarding rites in recognition of significant contributors to peace, and a closing torch parade.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SALAM Peace Foundation, Inc.</li> <li>● Those who were involved included the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National government agencies</li> <li>● Various LGUs in Mindanao</li> <li>● Universities and schools (private and state)</li> <li>● NGOs</li> <li>● POs; Community (Urban poor groups, tricycle drivers, and street kids)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Muslim and non-Muslim religious leaders</li> </ul>
	<p>In 1999, the Week of Peace was adopted by the Mindanao Bishops-Ulama Forum for Mindanao-wide celebration. In 2000 and 2002, the same Week received national government recognition in a presidential proclamation officially following the last Thursday of November as the Week of Peace. The Week has thus been popularized in every parish in Mindanao</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Various Mindanao dioceses, prelatures, vicariates, parishes</li> <li>● Artist groups and individual professional artists</li> <li>● Socio-Civic Organizations</li> <li>● Tri-Media professionals and outlets</li> <li>● International agencies (CRS, UNDP, etc)</li> </ul>

Peace education and conflict transformation	<p>Capability Building/ Training for the Culture of Peace and Conflict Transformation</p> <p><u>For MNLF Integreees:</u> Ongoing conduct of a series of COP trainings for about 500 MNLF integreees into the Philippine Army's First Infantry Division, Tabiawan, Isabela City, Basilan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Armed Forces of the Philippines</li> <li>• Christian Children's Fund</li> <li>• Salam Peace Foundation API (Ateneo) PCPDI (WMSU)</li> </ul>
	<p>For MNLF Peace and Development Advocates: September 1999: Conducted two Culture of Peace Trainings for MNLF Combatants/Peace and Development Advocates, Zamboanga City and Kidapawan, Cotabato (Together with two Muslim peace advocacy groups)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Multi-donor Assistance Programme</li> <li>• SALAM Peace Foundation, Inc.</li> <li>• Kaduntaya Foundation</li> </ul>
	<p><u>For Children and Youth:</u> (May 1999/2000/2001/2002): Within the summer breaks, PAZ brings together facilitators from various institutions to manage a peace camp. With an attempt to involve a Muslim-Christian children's participation, the experiences basically include cooperative learning activities with an appreciation for the environment, self-expression, and collaborative action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Education</li> <li>• PCPDI (WMSU)</li> <li>• Ateneo Peace Institute</li> <li>• Sarang Bangun Learning Center AGAPE and World Vision Development Foundation</li> </ul>
	<p>For Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ College Student Coordinators and Guidance Counselors of the Western Mindanao State University, Zamboanga City</li> <li>○ High School Teachers of the Ateneo de Zamboanga University</li> <li>○ Teachers of the Claret High School, Zamboanga City</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCPDI (WMSU)</li> <li>• API (Ateneo)</li> </ul>
	<p>For NGOs and POs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ COP-CT for NGO partners of the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP)</li> <li>○ Cultural Solidarity for Community Partners of Katilingban Para sa Kalambuan, Inc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PBSP</li> <li>• PCPDI (WMSU)</li> <li>• Zambo Life Care Services, Inc.</li> </ul>
	<p>For Media Professionals:</p> <p>Four successive yearly trainings and discussions on Responsible Peace Reportage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Center for Media Freedom &amp; Responsibility</li> <li>• Mr. Conrado de Quiros</li> <li>• Peace Media Association Zamboanga</li> <li>• Zambo Press Club</li> <li>• Zambo Columnists Club</li> </ul>
Peace promotion through Media	<p>Peace Promotion and Regular Information Dissemination through Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Issuance of "PEACE WORKS", a weekly publication on issues and events related to peace and development</li> <li>○ Production of "QUETAL ZAMBOANGA", a one-hour radio programme to tackle local basic peace and development concerns (DXRZ, "Radyo Agong", every Tuesday, 6:30 to 7:30 pm)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catholic Relief Services</li> <li>• Peace Media Association</li> <li>• Individual media professionals</li> </ul>
Peace and Development	<p>Support to Urban Poor Organizing:</p> <p>In 1999, a non-government organization assisting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katilingban Para sa</li> </ul>

<p>(Basic Human rights; dignity)</p>	<p>urban poor communities called Katilingban Para sa Kalambuan, Inc. (KKI) began a project for building homes for 200 beneficiary households at Barangay Sinunuc, Zamboanga City. With PAZ and other partners at close call to assist KKI, this project emerged from over three years of community organizing in about fifteen communities throughout the city, involving various social preparation and training activities on Basic Human Rights, Cultural Solidarity, Culture of Peace and Values Formation, Training for Vocational Skills, Project Development on Community Based Health for Women and their Families, etc., Project Management including management of the federation of urban poor communities.</p> <p>Special Care for Children in Difficult Situations:</p> <p>The Akay Kalinga Center, another facility run by the KKI, is an alternative home for street children. To date, the Center serves up to 40 children daily whose ages range from 9 to 17, and who usually engage in begging, sidewalk vending, and car watching. PAZ supports the Center's programmes through consultancy, resource sharing, project development, and values formation activities such as training for the culture of peace through summer peace camps, etc.</p>	<p>Kalambuan, Inc. with its institutional and individual partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WMSU (People's Center for Peace and Devt Initiatives, the Physical Plant Office, the Colleges of Law, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Home Economics)</li> <li>• KKI</li> <li>• WMSU (PCPDI)</li> <li>• Zamboanga Lifecare Services, Inc.</li> </ul>
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**ANNEX 2. Peace Education Strategies (Source: Castro and Galace, 2005)**

GOALS	SCHOOL-BASED STRATEGIES	BEYOND SCHOOLS
<p>Advance a culture of peace Develop leaders &amp; agents of social transformation To put into action social responsibility, working for peace, justice &amp; development To teach skills of conflict/ To further develop &amp; promote peace education, theory &amp; practice</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. institutionalized courses</li> <li>2. schools as zones of peace</li> <li>3. creation of peace centers; associates</li> <li>4. various other campaigns &amp; activities (burning of toy guns; sister-schools in conflict areas)</li> <li>5. research, publication, training module development</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. non-formal trainings</li> <li>2. The Peace Education Network (PEN) as facilitative network and base for various partnerships</li> <li>3. Holding conferences, seminars, exhibits</li> <li>4. Holding mass actions</li> </ol>

**ANNEX 3 Addressing the Consequences of Conflict (From the perspective of Psycho-Social Rehabilitation Work)**

<b>CONSEQUENCE OF VIOLENCE/ARMED CONFLICT</b>	<b>CATEGORY OF ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS CONSEQUENCE</b>
Deprivation of, and limited or no access to basic services Social restrictions on mobility and communication Economic dislocation and disruption of livelihood source Breakdown of traditional socio-political institutions	Post-war physical and social reconstruction
The interrelated experience of loss, separation and exploitation leading to chronic uncertainty and increased vulnerability Trauma	Psychosocial counseling and trauma relief
Lack of confidence, mistrust and hatred for other ethno-linguistic groups, and the destruction of social relationships	Reconciliation and rebuilding social relationships
Prolonged sense of injustice and restriction on information	Fact-finding, mercy, and ceasefire monitoring missions
Recruitment into the armed group	Demobilization and reintegration of former combatants
Deepening of pre-existing conflicts and generation of new ones	Pre-conflict prevention efforts

*(Source: Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights Program, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, 2005)*