

# Chapter 15

## Peacebuilding Model in Diverse Conflict Lines Southern Philippines

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### 15.1 Introduction

The twentieth century is controlled by the legacy of distressing worldwide wars, colonial struggles, and ideological conflicts, including efforts to establish international systems that would foster global cooperation, peace and prosperity. In Southern Philippines, there are areas in which peace and security condition is very unstable due to the presence of conflict drivers and varied conflict lines. Peacebuilding is the never ending effort to create a peaceful environment that challenges the actors and sectors at all levels from grassroots to national and transnational levels. The immediate implication is how peacebuilding variously and discursively practiced within the country or region, specifically its attribution to the attainment of the millennium development goals (MDGs) targets in 2015 and conclusion of armed conflict in Southern Philippines.

Peacebuilding is often context-bound and can vary among actors such as the government, non-government organizations (NGOs), communities, policy and decision-makers, politicians, business sector, donor agencies, among others. Different actors pursue different practices and approaches to peacebuilding as revealed in various literature, which frequently do not agree on the path to follow that produce further confusion about the concept. There have been significant numbers of peace and development frameworks and paradigms, both Philippine government and donor agencies working, in Southern Philippines. However, despite the experiences in using different models and approaches, it is still directed to major gaps and challenges. Apparently, the different frameworks and paradigms of donor agencies and government extending assistance to conflict-affected and

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vulnerable communities have strengths and weaknesses, which may affect the just conclusion of the peace problem, and in addressing the prevailing socio-economic challenges.

Effective peacebuilding initiative necessitates addressing both the root causes and drivers of conflict to attain peace and sustainable development. In the formulation of recommended activities or sub-projects that would address the needs and priorities of conflict affected areas, the joint needs assessment (JNA), a project of the World Bank, employed the conflict sensitive approach and peace and development framework. The framework has four (4) pillars of peace and development. Good governance provides the foundation in achieving the desired goals of each pillar, namely: human security, basic services, economic opportunities and social cohesion. It emphasises that assistance will be primarily provided to help reduce tension and conflict, to help build and restore trust and confidence within, between and among people, communities and state in the conflict affected areas. Extensively, peacebuilding refers to the initiatives which foster and support sustainable structures and processes that strengthen the prospects for peaceful coexistence and decrease the likelihood of outbreak, recurrence or continuation of violent conflict. Another framework adopted from Colletta and Cullen (2000) emphasised the interaction of forces and nature and the degree of their dysfunctional state that is manifested through the intertwining dynamics of poverty, inequality and social exclusion that are aggravated by corrupt and inefficient and ineffective governance platform which resulted in accumulated neglect in the provision of basic services especially to the vulnerable and conflict-ridden communities.

The Philippine development plan (PDP) 2011–2016 has included a peace agenda that stresses the achievement of a stable national security environment, as a major sectoral outcome that prioritizes development and security needs of areas affected or have remained vulnerable to armed conflicts. To achieve this, the plan calls for reforms and initiatives that effectively address the causes of all armed conflicts and other issues that affect the peace process as well as the satisfactory conclusion of ongoing and past negotiated political settlements with rebel groups. This strategy underpins the *Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan* (Peaceful and Progressive Communities) which serves as the current peace and development framework of the government (NEDA 2011). Relatedly, the action for conflict transformation (ACT) for Peace Programme in Southern Philippines was the only donor funded initiative that was classified as a peacebuilding initiative that employs theory of change in measuring its outcomes.

Given the commonalities and gaps of the frameworks and paradigms adopted by various actors, it has been observed that peacebuilding strategies are done in packets, sporadic, not comprehensive, not coordinated, and lack of scale. This condition makes the peace and development scenario in Southern Philippines more fragile posing greater challenges for a more comprehensive and integrated approach in peacebuilding and conflict transformation efforts. Thus, it is imperative to outline the strands of peacebuilding framework for Southern Philippines, notwithstanding the recent development on the peace process through the signing

of the comprehensive agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) between the Government and the Bangsamoro, which is a notable impetus towards apt implementation of programs and projects in the coverage area.

The basic intention of this study is to develop a peacebuilding model for Southern Philippines that would attribute to the achievement of peace and security. Specifically, it aims to assess the outcomes of the strands of peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiatives in Southern Philippines by comparing the ACT for Peace Programme outcomes with other local programs and projects. It also aimed to determine the contribution of peacebuilding model of the ACT for Peace Programme in addressing peacebuilding challenges in Southern Philippines. Various studies were conducted on instability in Southern Philippines and Mindanao in particular, yet, there is still a need for another study about peace, conflict, and development in Southern Philippines in the context of peacebuilding and conflict transformation. To date, program donors and government engagements have often been disparate and are still uncoordinated, in part, because many studies were narrowly focused. Hence, this study identified and described the critical strands of peacebuilding that may help improve programmatic responses by national government, local government, donor agencies, NGOs and other key stakeholders on peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Generally, this study may serve as a reference for peacebuilders and development practitioners in pursuit of their agenda. Building on the case studies and rich lessons from the ACT for Peace Programme, it may provide a perspective on the attributes of the programme as a peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiative in conflict affected areas and vulnerable communities.

## **15.2 Literature Review**

### ***15.2.1 Demography and Challenges***

In this study, Southern Philippines is composed of Mindanao and Palawan. Mindanao has a total land area of 133,656 km<sup>2</sup> approximately 39 % of the total land area of the Philippines, the second largest island in the country that consists of six (6) regions, 26 provinces, 33 cities, 422 municipalities, and 10,082 barangays, and Palawan has a land area of 14,650 km<sup>2</sup> (NSCB 2010). Based on national statistical coordination board (NSCB) Philippines census (2010), Mindanao population had reached 21.968 million or an annual growth rate of 1.79 %, meanwhile Palawan (excluding Puerto Princesa) posted a population of 771,677 which posted an annual growth rate of 2.66 % during the period 2000–2010. Muslims, Lumads and Christians comprise the population in Mindanao and Palawan. The Muslims have 13 ethno-linguistic groups with a vast majority in the provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Basilan and in the city of Marawi and a minority in Palawan. These areas (excluding Palawan) comprise the autonomous region of

Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The Lumads have 18 ethnic tribes with ancestral domains covering 17 provinces and 14 cities in Mindanao. This current composition has resulted in a multi-faith and multi-ethnic population with a shared identity. Yet, its distinct history of migration, colonisation and secessionist clashes as well as its unstable power structures and feudal relations have contributed to its complex and fragmented environment of conflict.

Southern Philippines is strategically located in the East association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, almost equidistant to the eastern sections of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei Darussalam, that underscores its potential to be a major transshipment point and center of trade in the region (ADB 2002). Cultural diversity and the island's natural beauty make Mindanao one of Asia's favored tourist destinations with its white sand beaches, scenic volcanoes, vast orchid gardens, and various ethnic festivals are only some of its unique tourist attractions (DOT 2011). Yet, Mindanao in particular has not shown significant impact in reducing poverty incidence because growth has not been sustained. NSCB (2011) showed high levels of poverty, income inequality and wide disparities across regions in Mindanao.

Studies revealed that various types and levels of conflict characterise Mindanao's regions. These include: protracted conflicts led by non-state armed actors such as Moro National liberation front (MNLF), Moro Islamic liberation front (MILF), Communist party of the Philippines-new peoples army-new democratic front (CPP-NPA-NDF), violent clan-related conflicts; armed violence from lawlessness and banditry, and conflicts over control of resources (MEDCo 2006). The armed conflict scenario in the country that has predominantly attributed to Southern Philippines was confirmed in the recent results of failed state index that ranked the Philippines at 59 of the 178 countries with a score of 82.8 under the very high warning category, along with Mozambique (FP 2013). Meanwhile, the country ranked 129 out of 162 countries in the global peace index (GPI) with a score of 2.374 under medium state of peace category in 2013 (IEP 2013). Major factors considered were: militarisation (2/5), society and security (3.1/5) and domestic and internal conflict (3.2/5), in which one is very low and five is very high.

Current peace and development considerations in Southern Philippines require a comprehensive approach that addresses vulnerabilities, builds human security, and enables long-term peace and development across the whole spectrum from fragile to relatively stable settings in the region (MinDA 2011b). It is deemed important to pursue accountable and conflict-sensitive local governance as a critical element in ensuring stability and sustainable development in both conflict-affected and non-conflict areas (MinDA 2011a). The recent development of the peace process between the Philippine government and MILF through the signing of a comprehensive agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) (Philippine Official Gazette 2014) would require a very comprehensive and integrated approach in the implementation of its annexes. The CAB is a milestone that concludes the 17-year peace negotiations between the government and the MILF.

### ***15.2.2 Peacebuilding***

The term peacebuilding can be used to describe a varied set of activities or programmes, the manner that these programmes are implemented as well as their potential outcomes and impacts. It embraces efforts undertaken at different levels of the intervention and implemented by different actors (Lewer 1999). Galtung (1975) defined peacebuilding as encompassing the practical aspects of implementing peaceful social change through socio-economic reconstruction and development. In his latest contribution, peacebuilding is re-defined as part of ‘third generation’ of peace approaches evident after the Cold War, when a reaction against simplistic approaches to building peace finally recognised the deep-rooted nature of conflict and its links to development. Galtung (2002) argues that issues of culture, human needs, and ‘fault-lines of the human condition such as gender’ have now entered the peace debate and are recognised as crucial. The intent of peacebuilding is to create peace as stressed by Galtung (1996), where he suggested two (2) different concepts of peace: negative peace and positive peace. Peacebuilding promotes positive peace that had become a starting point of analyses in addressing the root causes of conflict (Carbonier 1998; OECD 1997; UN 1995). Boutros-Ghali (1995) defined peacebuilding as a wide range of activities associated with capacity building, reconciliation and societal transformation. It is more than just a post-accord reconstruction, but should be understood as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict towards a more sustainable and peaceful relationships and governance modes and structures (Lederach 1997; Morris 2000). It is often context-specific and can vary among actors such as the NGOs, communities at large, policy-makers, politicians and donors (Hamber and Kelly 2005). There seem to have a consensus that peacebuilding requires a long-term commitment to addressing the underlying causes of conflict through structural and relational transformation (Lederach 1997).

### ***15.2.3 Conflict Transformation***

It is now the leading approach to peacebuilding that combines short-term conflict management with long-term relationship building, and transformation of the root causes of conflict (Rupesinghe 1995). It is context-responsive, taking into account the culture, history, and ethos of conflicted groups or societies (Lederach 1997). The goal of conflict transformation is not about resolving any particular conflict but transforming the way people deal with their conflict (Miall 2001). It focuses on relationships and transactions between conflicting parties while addresses wider social, economic, and political sources of conflict and transform negative energy and hostilities into a positive social change (Lederach 1997). Miall lays out five (5) types of “transformers” of conflicts—context, structure, actor, issue and personal/elite

(Article 1, 2001: 12). An example of a contextual transformer is the change to the rules of diamond trade which may have an impact on conflicts in Sierra Leone and Angola. As a structural transformation, he points to the Black Consciousness Movement in the conscientisation of people in township areas in South Africa during the Apartheid regime. In terms of actor transformation he notes the decision of leaders to initiate a peace process (2001:11–14). Conflict transformation is considered as an ‘open-ended’ process (Reimann 2001, p 17; Rupesinghe 1995, p 76).

#### ***15.2.4 Social Cohesion***

It is described as affective bonds between citizens (Chipkin and Ngqulunga 2008), local patterns of cooperation (Fearon et al. 2008) and the bond that stick society together, promoting harmony, a sense of community, and a degree of commitment to promoting common good (Colletta et al. 2001). Discourses on social cohesion arise in analysing the causes and consequences of social upheaval, violence, misallocation of financial assistance, deep-rooted poverty, slow or negative economic growth, and failure to realise welfare gains from market-oriented economic reforms (Colletta and Cullen 2000; Easterly et al. 2000, 2006; Winters 2008). Several theories and frameworks provided support to the ideas that human and social dimensions are important factors in economic growth and development, including sustainable livelihoods (World Bank 2005), capabilities approach (Sen 1999), and theories emphasizing the role of institutions (Chang 2002).

#### ***15.2.5 Basic Social Services***

It includes access to healthcare, clean water and sanitation, and education. Improved service delivery for the constituencies, particularly the poor and disadvantaged can facilitate strengthening civic engagement, rebuilding public trust and confidence in government institutions, contributing to state legitimacy, and reducing the probabilities of recurrence of conflicts (Collier 2007). Governance reforms deemed critical in promoting longer-term social and political transformation have more chances of success if connected to reforms in basic service delivery, which generate concrete results benefiting the constituencies (Berry et al. 2004). However, providing basic services in fragile and conflict affected states is certainly difficult and challenging because this would imply rewarding existing poor performing and dysfunctional local structures (Pavanello and Darcy 2008). Yet, insufficient and/or inequitable access to education for example was a factor in the decision of adolescents and youth to join armed groups in Sierra Leone (Ashby 2002). Apparently, education potentially provides a sense of normality, and shared values and identity to children and youth in conflict areas, thus offering them hope for the future (Baird 2011).

### ***15.2.6 Community Economic Development***

Community Economic Development refers to livelihood and income generating initiatives provided to conflicted communities. This assistance is effective as an incentive if it can provide a credible counterbalance to political ambitions, support pro-peace constituencies, and affect the social and economic environment key to conflict (Griffiths and Barnes 2008 in Wennmann 2010; Uvin 1999). Notably, there is an increasing interest in employing economic propaganda to address other root causes of conflict, such as ethnic tensions, and elite capture of natural resources (Banfield et al. 2006). The capacity of former combatants to reintegrate is dependent on many factors, including what motivated them to fight and what role they played during the conflict and what alternatives are available to them (Specht 2010).

### ***15.2.7 Conflict Management***

It is usually associated with conflict containment (Hamad 2005). Theorists see violent conflict as an unavoidable result of differences of values and interests within and between communities which they regard resolving such conflicts as unrealistic. The best that can be done is to manage and contain them, and sometimes to reach a compromise in which violence may be set aside and normal politics is resumed (Miall 2004). Conflict takes place when two (2) or more parties find their interests incompatible; while peace is more than just the absence of war and is not a static condition but a dynamic process that involves a network of legitimised social relationships which include conflict but are able to manage it in a constructive manner (International Alert 1996).

### ***15.2.8 Conflict Over Natural Resources***

Many studies were devoted to the relationship between environmental degradation and violent conflicts and not to environmental cooperation and peacebuilding. However, since Kofi Annan's speech at the World Day for Water 2002 this notion has changed. He emphasized that:

[...] the water problems of our world need not be only a cause of tension; they can also be a catalyst for cooperation. [...]. If we work together, a secure and sustainable water future can be ours.

The 2004 report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level panel on threats, challenges and change highlighted the fundamental relationship between the environment, security, and social and economic development in the pursuit of global peace in the twenty first century. Meanwhile, a historic debate at the UN

Security Council in June 2007 concluded that poor management of high-value resources constituted a threat to peace (UNSC 2007). Recently, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon confirmed that the basic building blocks of peace and security for all peoples are economic and social security, anchored in sustainable development, because they allow us to address all the great issues—poverty, climate, environment and political stability as parts of a whole (UNEP 2009). The struggle about access to and control over important resources (as water, oil, gold, diamonds, productive land etc.) is one specific cause of conflict. Conceivably, it is intuitive that natural resources could become conflict issues, but less obvious is the role that resources may have in specific instances of a given conflict. Inequities in the distribution, use, needs, desires, and consequences of resources management have been sources of tension and international and intrastate disputes (e.g. Philippine claim over Sabah State, etc.)

Some resource conflict researchers (Ehrlich, Gleick and Conca 2000) stressed four (4) important conditions that influence the likelihood that resources will be the object of military or political action: (1) the degree of scarcity; (2) the extent to which the supply is shared by two (2) or more groups/ states; (3) the relative power of those groups; and (4) the ease of access to alternative sources. Studies revealed the most popular approach in the resource conflict literature which is a “resource scarcity” as a central conflict contributor. This approach that links resources considers resource scarcity (e.g. supply induced, demand induced or absolute scarcity), and environmental degradation as key conflict issues (Homer-Dixon 1999). Homer-Dixon and Percival (1997), highlighting the causal pathways between conflicts and resources in some developing countries, argue that under certain conditions, the scarcity of renewable resources such as cropland, forests and water generate social effects (e.g. poverty, migration, and weak institutions) and produce tensions and conflicts. Accordingly, dealing with conflict proves to be a continuing process, with conflict prevention as its most effective measure. Yet, it is generally accepted that this form of conflict dealing ranks among the most complex and most expensive ventures, for which conflict-vulnerable regions are mostly not in a position and are rarely convinced from the fugal “peace islands” (Weller and Kirschner 2005, p 24).

### ***15.2.9 Land Administration***

It involves the process which has to be based on sound policy and manageable procedures. Land is often a significant factor in a widespread violence and is also a critical element in peacebuilding and economic reconstruction in post-conflict situations (USAID 2004; Batson 2007). Land continues to be a cause of social, ethnic, cultural and religious conflict if not secured because land rights is germane to vulnerable groups such as the poor, women, orphans, displaced persons and ethnic minority groups (Bell 2007). The land and land related issues are increasingly recognised by international community as important element where all



conflict activities take place before, during and after hostilities, during the period of peacebuilding (Todorovski 2011). Unsolved land tenure problems and ineffective land administration can result in economic and political failure (Pienaar 2009; Ocheje 2007). Moreover, even where land is not necessarily the root of conflict, tenure disputes often emerge in the course of conflict and serve to effect insecurity and instability (Van der Zwan 2010). As pointed out, a highly skewed distribution of land ownership and patterns of land access can provoke social conflict and violence (Deininger 2006). The likelihood of violent conflict increases when gross inequities characterised by land-holding patterns, particularly when a large landless or land-poor population has limited livelihood opportunities (USAID 2004). Attention to land policy and land governance needs to be a part of any development or peacebuilding efforts in conflict environment (FAO 2009).

### ***15.2.10 Good Governance***

It refers to quality and effectiveness of institutions, the interactions between different levels of government within a country and the interactions between members of public, including business and NGOs and government. Good governance is an essential component of sustained economic performance, particularly in transition economies (UNECE 2003); an economic policy-making and implementation, service delivery and accountable use of public resources and of regulatory power (World Bank 2000); the ability of government to develop an efficient, effective, and accountable public management processes that are open to citizen participation and that strengthen rather than weaken a democratic system of government (USAID 2009); how institutions, rules and systems of state—executive, legislature, judiciary, and military—operate at central and local levels and how the state relates to individual citizens, civil society and the private sector (DFID 2010); and the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels (UNDP 1997). In essence, it concerns norms of behaviour that help ensure that governments deliver to their citizens the services they deserve.

### ***15.2.11 Peacebuilding as a Change Theory***

Peacebuilding is about change—knowing when it happens, understanding how it happens and working on how to sustain and scale up such change. The process of peace building and conflict transformation looks deep into the four (4) dimensions of change as brought about by social conflicts—personal, relational, structural and cultural. The four (4) dimensions of change are described as: (1) Personal—this involves changes in attitude (the way people think and approach a given topic, situation or relationship) and behaviour (the way people actually act, respond,

express themselves and interact with others); (2) Relational—this involves changes in communication patterns, cooperation, decision-making and mechanisms in handling conflict situations; (3) Structural—this involves changes in social conditions (i.e. disparity, inequity, racial/religious/ethnic disadvantage), procedural patterns (lack of transparency, equality, access, participation, fairness) and institutional patterns (i.e., lack of access, historical patterns); and, (4) Cultural—this involves changes in cultural patterns (culture defined as the process of how meaning is constructed and shared by a group) although such change is often very slow and difficult to monitor since culture is embedded in all three of the other dimensions (Lederach et al. 2007).

### ***15.2.12 Theory of Change***

A theory of change is a set of beliefs about how change happens. Behind each peacebuilding and development initiative, there is at least one theory of change. While such theory broadly explains the logic behind the program's approaches, it also looks for specific changes that can easily be monitored and evaluated. The program looks at significant changes in three (3) of the four (4) dimensions of conflict transformation—personal, relational and structural. These are reflected in the indicators which describe specific changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours of partners or clients, as well as changes in communication patterns and working relationships between and among claim holders and duty bearers, among others. The concept of theory of change is gaining greater attention within the conflict studies community (Shapiro 2002, 2005, 2006; Church and Shouldice 2002, 2003; Lederach et al. 2007; OECD-DAC 2008). The concept originated in the theory-based program evaluation literature of the 1970s (Weiss 1972) and has reverberated throughout the social sciences. Schon (1983) focused on the need to name problems in order to bring technical expertise to address them.

### ***15.2.13 Conflict Lines in Mindanao***

Informed of the conflict analyses of the USAID (2003) and the AusAID (2008), Mindanao stakeholders involved in the conflict analysis and peace needs workshops in 2009 (MEDCo 2009) agreed to focus on the following conflict lines in Southern Philippines and Mindanao in particular:

1. Armed conflict between Moro forces seeking greater autonomy or a separate state and the GPH defending state sovereignty and territorial integrity;
2. A long-standing communist insurgency (splintered into different factions) which is national in scope;

3. An assortment of typically localised conflicts caused by elite political and economic rivalries;
4. Local, often community level conflicts, over access, control and use of land and natural resources; and,
5. Conflicts related to criminal activities including drug trafficking, arms trading, narco-politics, extortion, kidnapping for ransom, illegal logging, smuggling, human trafficking and illegal gambling.

A narrow viewpoint on conflict in the study area in terms of religion, culture or ethnicity, that illustrate the approach of many donor agencies and other development institutions, national government and some scholars, ignores the class divisions and dynamics within and between Christian and Muslim communities, and presents only very limited understanding of the roots and character of the current violent conflict (Vellema et al. 2011).

### ***15.2.14 ACT for Peace Programme***

Building on the gains of the three (3) phases of the government of the Philippines United Nations Multi-donor Programme (GOP UN-MDP) initiatives in Mindanao, the fourth phase known as the ACT for Peace Programme was designed as a peacebuilding and development intervention to respond to the changing peace and development context in Southern Philippines and to address the continuing vulnerability of many communities. Evolving from being a humanitarian and socio-economic response to the GOP-MNLF final peace agreement in its earlier phases, the Programme embarked on a purposive and integrated program for the promotion of human security and the culture of peace in conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable communities. These were inclusive of MNLF or MILF-affiliated communities and other vulnerable or marginalised areas due to conflicts related to presence of other insurgent and armed threat groups (UNDP 2005). The ACT for Peace Programme operated in 278 PDCs which were distributed in 151 municipalities and 12 cities in Mindanao and Palawan that comprises Southern Philippines in this study.

The core of the ACT for Peace Programme had been the peace and development communities (PDCs). Initially established during the third phase of the GOP-UN MDP the PDCs evolved from conflict-affected/vulnerable and fragmented communities to stable and resilient communities that can undertake local peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiatives and participate in and benefit from development. Beyond delivering services and projects to communities, the PDCs represented not only a transformative strategy at the grassroots level but also the significance and benefits of transformation. The progress of PDCs was measured and tracked against several stages of transformation and development (MinDA 2010).

## 15.3 Theoretical Framework

### 15.3.1 *Peacebuilding Frameworks*

Lederach (1997) integrates the peacebuilding concepts to the field of development planning, programming, and implementation. This is complemented with the Peacebuilding Levels (Lederach et al. 2007) that describes the critical roles of key actors, from top level, midlevel and lower level, where community partners and civil society have critical roles in achieving peacebuilding and conflict transformation goals. Lederach (1997) proposes an intervention structure as a pyramid with the apex representing the top military, political and/or religious leadership; the middle level representing a mid-range leadership including sector, professional, ethnic or international non-government organisation (INGO) leaders; and the grassroots leadership placed at the pyramid's base. Each of the three 'spaces' contains activities to advance the peacebuilding process. For instance at the top, high-level negotiations, cease-fire agreements and highly visible mediation would be used. The middle level problem-solving workshops, conflict resolution training, and peace commissions would be better suited. Thus, grassroots interventions may include local peace commissions, grassroots training, prejudice reduction activities, and psychosocial work in post-war trauma recovery (ibid, p 39).

The peacebuilding pallet (Smith 2004) indicates that physical security is equally important as establishing good governance and as socio-economic foundation of a long-term peace. The peacebuilding wheel (Hart 2008), reveals the interfacing of tangible and intangible elements of peacebuilding. The interplay of various forces, the nature and degree of their dysfunctional state is clearly described through the interweaving dynamics of poverty, inequality and social exclusion that are aggravated by poor governance (Colletta and Cullen 2000). The conflict sensitive approach (WB 2005) on peace and development efforts display the four (4) pillars in which good governance serves as the critical platform in attaining the goals of each pillar, such as human security, basic services, economic opportunities and social cohesion. In addition, the framework on building resiliency against violence (Barron 2010) showed the risks of violence would increase when external and internal stresses are coupled with weak institutions, which is basically anchored on good governance. In this framework, the need to restore confidence between and among people requires transforming institutions that provide security, justice and jobs to the citizenry. Meanwhile, the people's agenda in Mindanao (MPW 2010) focuses on genuine peace and sustainable development. Further, the integrated peace and development framework (MEDCo 2008) provides guidance for understanding Mindanao context through conflict analysis and other appropriate methods; integrating peacebuilding and conflict-sensitive concepts and principles to programs and projects; and, formulating and developing the Mindanao 2020 Peace and Development Framework Plan. At the community level, the PDC provides a venue to actively engage the marginalised conflict-affected community as the framework under the ACT for Peace Programme.

### ***15.3.2 Analytical Framework***

Based on various concepts, theories, studies, and operating context in Southern Philippines, this study considered four (4) key strands of peacebuilding, namely: social cohesion, basic social services, community economic development, and conflict management. The four (4) strands are intertwined through the nexus of good governance as the anchor of peacebuilding. Each peacebuilding strand is examined through the lens of the four (4) dimensions of change, which are personal, relational, structural and cultural, to determine the levels of change and transformation that are in place after the programme intervention. These strands have specific theory of change that all geared towards achieving the overarching goal of peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Southern Philippines. The theory of change in each strand is interlinked with the theory of change on good governance as an essential precondition of peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The practice of good governance is not confined to the government sector as traditionally viewed by many. Sound management practices in the private sector are equally crucial to a nation's development particularly in achieving effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, transparency, relevance and impact of the private sector operations as the engine of growth. Good governance, therefore, is a shared responsibility of government, market and civil society dealing with societal concerns.

Social cohesion seeks to contribute to sustainability in the transformation of PDCs and other conflict-affected areas and harness community efforts to develop and advance their own initiatives for peace. Sustainability of peacebuilding and conflict transformation efforts require strong peace constituency and support from various actors at the local, regional, national and international levels. Through these networks and partners, LGUs link communities to peace actors and macro policy makers to generate support in sustaining local peace initiatives. For peacebuilding to be effective, it is deemed vital to have a more active engagement and participation of multiple stakeholders. In particular, the initiative acknowledges that LGUs play strategic roles in conflict transformation as front-liners in the countryside. Deliberate efforts to identify and meaningfully involve and engage multiple stakeholders are regarded as important to the development undertaking. This suggests the desirability of engaging as many stakeholders as possible and the purposive inclusion of marginalised groups while building consensus among the engaged groups and actors. Moreover, re-building trust or confidence, social capital and social cohesion at the community level, while important have their limits because they are constrained by the discourses and agreements of leaders of the parties in conflict.

Obviously, human security encapsulates basic social services and community economic development as most development practitioners posit that security has become the watchword since the early part of the decade as the country is becoming more vulnerable to terrorism, armed conflict and insurgency. In strict sense, what matters most is not the abstract security of state but security of people.

The Philippine Human Development Report (1997) identified common threats to human security that may fall to any of the seven (7) categories, namely: economic security; food security; health security; environmental security; personal security; community security; and, political security. In this study, land is classified as an element of economic development, being a primary and germane resource of the people in the conflict and vulnerable areas.

During conflict situation, the poor and disadvantaged groups suffer more where their vulnerability, lack of opportunities and recognised helplessness come to fore. The effects of armed conflict are most apparent in certain areas of Southern Philippines that affects the country's GDP as well as in achieving the MDGs targets in 2015. Conflict management is seen as one of the durable solutions to this difficult problem to widen prevention and settlement efforts. The presence of local conflict resolution mechanisms or local structures that facilitate the resolution of conflicts or prevent their recurrence is one of the critical elements of the peace infrastructure in Southern Philippines. These forms of structures include legislated, traditional or customary, religious, and contemporary. In support of this, the culture of peace was developed to educate and empower people, institutions, organisations and governments to cultivate values, attitudes and to promote relationships, actions and practices to move from a culture of violence to a culture of peace.

Good governance, however, as an anchor and enabler in building a strong foundation of peace infrastructure, establishes stable and reliable social, economic and political institutions that are responsive to the needs of the constituency and foster equity, justice, confidence, inclusiveness and fair allocation of resources, accountability and transparency. There is a clear relationship between poverty and poor governance, while the recurrence of conflict is considered as the ultimate confirmation of the failure of governance. Conflicts flourish in weak states and fragile institutions. Ultimately, building or rebuilding governance systems is the responsibility of citizens and leaders in post-conflict societies. The interventions of international community cannot, by themselves, fix a country's governance structure, though they can support reconstruction and reforms. Nonetheless, the greatest challenge for developing a governance reconstruction roadmap is to develop processes, systems and tools for bringing altogether local and external actors in manners that gainfully contribute to improving legitimacy, security and effectiveness. Peacebuilding and development thru conflict-transformation processes require important factors including confidence building initiatives and political support to sustain programs after completion; thus, impacts of programs continue to benefit conflict-affected communities.

## **15.4 Research Methodology**

This study employed data mining for qualitative methods of research. It used metasynthesis, multiple case narratives and vignettes. This study assessed the condition of the areas covered by the ACT for Peace Programme during its

implementation period, employing context analysis and metasynthesis to examine the four (4) parameters, namely; social, economic, political, and conflict environments. Metasynthesis, multiple case narratives, and vignettes were also used to determine the results of the implementation of the ACT for Peace Programme in terms of social cohesion, social services, economic security, conflict management and good governance. Multiple case narratives were used to capture and analyse the various programs and projects implemented in, on and around conflict areas. Vignettes were used to visually present the good practices and success stories of peacebuilding programs in the study area. Focus group discussions and key informant interviews served as venues to further validate the findings from the earlier cited methods.

In this study, the theory of change applied for peacebuilding and conflict transformation considers that: “If programs and policy reforms that enable the poor to have equitable access to and control of productive resources, inclusive mechanisms for participation of disadvantaged sectors in the bureaucracy, and effective basic services delivery for marginalised communities to address their conditions, then community and government structures are strengthened to be resilient and their capacities are enhanced to manage differences thus prevent the situation from escalating into armed conflict”.

## **15.5 Findings and Discussion**

The ACT for Peace Programme employed a peacebuilding and conflict transformation model in Southern Philippines. In this model, it sought to respond to the complex situation of conflict in this part of the country, which involved a range of on-going, potential and post-conflict situations in the target areas, in addition to responding to physical and social reconstruction of conflict affected areas. It necessitated interventions to support and sustain peace as well as build human security in these conflict scenarios, such as but not limited to: (a) building local capacities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in areas of potential conflict, as well as in post-conflict situations; (b) basic service delivery and capacity-building for conflict prevention in conflict and post-conflict areas, and, (c) relief and rehabilitation of areas affected by on-going armed conflict, and also in post conflict areas.

Context assessment revealed that the areas covered by the ACT for Peace Programme have been the object of a long unending journey for survival on peace and security. Most LGUs in these areas have poor governance capacity and the institutions were notably fragile. It was evident in the lack or even absence of basic social services which have been the primary needs of the conflict affected and vulnerable communities especially the internally displaced peoples (IDPs). Most of these communities have failing marks in terms of human development index and poverty incidence including meeting the MDG targets in 2015. Due to the

unstable peace and security in these areas, it had been difficult for them to entice private sector investments, thus, the economy continue to lag behind the rest of Southern Philippines and the country in general. The needs of these communities are very huge that the local government units (LGUs) can hardly supply. The political condition also aggravated the situation. Evidently, “rido” (clan war) and armed skirmishes erupted because of the weak governance and fragile institutions in the communities including the lowly capacities of the people and groups. Specifically, five (5) challenging conflict lines are present in Southern Philippines, namely: (1) armed conflict between Moro forces; (2) communist insurgency; (3) assortment of typically localized conflicts caused by elite political and economic rivalries; (4) conflicts related to land and natural resources; and, (5) conflicts related to criminal activities.

The strands of peacebuilding and conflict transformation model of the ACT for Peace Programme are composed of: (1) Strand 1—social cohesion; (2) Strand 2—basic social services; (3) Strand 3—community economic development; and, (4) Strand 4—conflict management. The four (4) strands are intertwined through a nexus of Good Governance. These strands were evaluated in terms of four (4) dimensions of change such as personal, relational, structural and cultural. The theory of change on social cohesion, stated that: “If isolation, division, and discrimination between individuals and groups are broken down through established and functional institutional mechanisms and processes while addressing common interests and differences to promote equitable benefits from economic activities, social and economic gaps then constructive, non-violent, mutually reinforcing relationships, mechanisms and practices can be established and strengthened”.

Basic social services that refer to the capacities in accessing services especially primary health care and potable water, and managing and sustaining these services through the collective efforts of the communities were examined to determine the links and effects on the capacities of the individuals, groups and LGUs particularly in governance. The theory of change on basic social services, stipulated that: “Increased access to basic social services such as education, health and social welfare would increase equity in participating in public and private institutions, systems and processes to nurture a more self-governing and ultimately more stable peace and development.”

The community economic development initiatives were venues that provided capacities in utilising local resources and the establishment of market links toward environment-friendly, industry-level production. These were reviewed to find out its contribution to the attainment of good governance outcomes. It basically included the capacities in generating local employment, increase in household income and overall economic growth from the interventions, e.g. community livelihood, enterprise, infrastructure, including the capacities of the communities to utilise their local resources and establish market-connected industry-level production that generate local employment and peace-promotive and equitable economic growth. The theory of change on community economic development, posited that: “If reliable institutional mechanisms, systems and processes are



established to promote equitable benefits from economic opportunities and activities, social and economic disparities will be reduced thus peace and development will be sustained”.

Conflict management refers to the capacities of the communities in transforming and preventing conflicts from getting violent through conflict analysis, mediation and resolution using traditional, religious, legal and other appropriate systems and mechanisms. The theory of change in conflict management states: “If various actors and sectors in the society respect the viable indigenous, customary or community-based dispute resolution mechanisms where duty-bearers and claim-holders sustain the promotion of culture of peace, then greater intra-ethnic, inter-cultural and intergenerational understanding and peaceful coexistence of community people is warranted”.

Good governance as a nexus that intertwined the strands of peacebuilding refers to the capacities of local leaders and stakeholders in promoting and broadening community participation in local governance processes, resource mobilization, implementation and management of community development initiatives that promote peace. In effect, the theory of change on good governance, states that: “Improving conflict management and good governance capacities of LGUs and other local stakeholders would promote effectiveness of conflict transformation and peacebuilding initiatives, responsiveness to concerns of the conflict affected and vulnerable communities, and effectively inform macro policy and institutional response”.

The results of the metasynthesis, multiple case narratives and vignettes showed the vital role and contribution of each peacebuilding strands in achieving good governance outcome. Specifically, it was found that social cohesion is deemed necessary as a bridging, binding and bonding element for peacebuilding particularly in improving governance capacities of the local leaders (especially LGUs) and stakeholders. The programme strengthened and mobilised the people’s organization (POs) and local social formations (LSFs) to support social capital formation as well as capacitated them to support peacebuilding and human security initiatives. To achieve this, community organising was conducted and capacities were improved through intensive training workshops that resulted in increased trust and confidence that led to a significant increase in the level of appreciation and participation of individuals and groups in peace and development activities and processes in the community.

Theorists supported the findings that working together towards a common goal builds trust and affective bonds between community members (Heyneman and Todoric-Bebic 2000; Heyneman 2003; Levy-Paluck 2007). Rebuilding of interpersonal and intergroup networks, trust and reciprocity, is crucial for sustainable peace (Colletta et al. 2001; Woolcock 2000) that bring great benefits to the people (Putnam 2000). Likewise, the creation of community mechanisms such as the peace and development communities (PDCs) or zones of peace was found to be the formula for people’s participation and enabled the communities (UNDP 2004) to formulate their peace plans and barangay development plans as well as a venue for

regular interfaith activities (Kessler 2010). Community-based capacity building activities that supported peacebuilding and human security initiatives had empowered the actors especially former MNLF combatants, thru improved efficiency, confidence and involvement in group work and activities aimed at bridging, bonding and binding them. The transformation of the actors at the personal and community level is critical in pursuit of achieving its common goals. The process of transforming individual and groups' ideologies and mindset would take longer; however, it is essential in search for self-determination and in improving good governance capacities of actors. Building the confidence of former MNLF combatants through capacity building is integral to their transformation process into peace and development advocates.

Providing basic social services to the communities served as an avenue for local leaders to improve their governance capacity including resource mobilisation for sustainability of such services. The Programme provided core shelters, water and sanitation facilities, health care and health facilities, education and children's playground along with organising and capacitating the individuals, groups and mechanisms to manage the facilities as well as in responding to challenges. In pursuit of attaining such targets, through the rigorous support of the communities and LGUs, it was able to achieve its targets as set in the logical framework of the Programme. With the improved capacities, there was a significant improvement in the access to and utilisation of basic services in PDCs. Improved health conditions was translated to additional income and time to improve the quality of life. The formation of community-based mechanism as an offshoot of the improved capacities acquired after the training is deemed imperative in sustaining prompt response to community needs and in promoting ownership and shared responsibilities in maintaining the facilities such as water system and health stations.

Moreover, community economic development (CED) initiatives facilitated a more cohesive community and enhanced capacities of actors on good governance particularly in the provision of support services and enabling policy. Reports revealed that improved access and capacities on CED were noted in successful livelihood and enterprise projects. Thus, capacities of communities to identify, implement and manage these projects that essentially resulted in self-actualisation are critical in ensuring the success of such initiative even after the end of the programme intervention. A novel project of the Programme involves former MNLF combatants which forged a final peace agreement with the Philippine government on September 2, 1996. The coco sugar production venture is managed by the Mindanawan Cocosugar Corp. (MCC), composed of the coalition of Peace and Development Advocates Leagues from South Cotabato, Sarangani, Davao del Sur, Sultan Kudarat mainland, General Santos City and Cotabato City. The transformation—from being former combatants to entrepreneurs—of these PDAs is a great testament that the efforts of the Programme in cooperation with other partners have succeeded in its aim of transforming lives. Legitimate economic opportunities that bring warring factions together can offer opportunities to re-establish relationships and

trust (Gerstle and Meissner 2010). Some practitioners expressed interests on economic programming in addressing other root causes of conflict, such as ethnic tensions and elite capture of natural resources (Banfield et al. 2006).

Meanwhile, conflict management capacities of actors mainly the LGUs and traditional leaders were found critical in ensuring a sustainable peace and security conditions through the promotion of culture of peace including the Islamic leadership in Governance (ILG), and conflict sensitive processes in addressing conflicts and/or preventing from protracting to violence. Results showed the improved relationship among peace actors resulted in the forging of multi-sectoral partnership for peace constituency building. The breakthroughs are anchored on culture of peace through sustained interfaith activities. Moro-settlers atrocities in a certain PDC rooted from a land conflict was resolved through series of traditional conflict management sessions of community elders as triggered by the multi-stakeholders peace dialogue involving the Philippine National Police, Armed Forces of the Philippines, LGUs (i.e. provincial, municipal, barangay and sitio), religious leaders, citizen armed force geographical units (CAFGUs), and MNLF. Other atrocity of Moro-settlers in another PDC triggered by the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain caused the revival of the ILAGA, a Christian militia. However, these were resolved through multi-stakeholders peace dialogues with the media's monitoring that produced traditional council of elders' support. It was disclosed that strengthened capacities on individuals, groups and institutions on conflict management and community transformation processes enabled them to be resilient during recurrence of armed conflicts and natural calamities. The enhanced abilities for and adherence to the culture of peace among former MNLF combatants were shown through active involvement in their communities as peace champions or peace advocates. Relatedly, the POs and LSFs such as the PDALs are now representing local structures and are implementing projects as well.

Results showed that through the interventions of the ACT for Peace Programme, peace platforms and mechanisms to manage local conflicts were created. Schools of peace were strengthened as among the venues to help promote the culture of peace and peace-based concepts through peace-based exemplars and lesson plans. Strengthened local mechanisms, systems and procedures are therefore necessary in managing local conflicts to prevent from protracting to structural violence, and a means in nurturing peace gains through the schools of peace. In conflict-affected situations, education is more than service delivery but a means of socialisation and identity development through the transmission of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes across generations (UN Report 2009). Ultimately, the PDC became a model that can systematise the transformation of conflict actors in the context of peace agreement. Peace education was also institutionalised through issuance of an executive order that mandated the Department of Education to integrate peace education in the curriculum of basic education. The LGU support in mainstreaming peace and development gains was shown through the issuances of local ordinances and resolution, adopting peace initiatives such as membership of youth in local peace and order councils.

Culture of peace is an effective tool in establishing trust and confidence among peoples in the community to broaden peace constituency across cultures. Traditional way of conflict management by the council of elders (CoE), however, still remains an effective way of resolving local conflicts. The ILG mainstreaming, and the pursuit of more intra and interfaith dialogues and consultations proved to be a predisposing and enabling factor in harnessing the spirituality of community residents and Muslim barangay leaders for peacebuilding. It also worked the same way in the mobilisation of community elders for conflict mediation and transformation.

Good governance in conflict context as an element of peacebuilding was revealed as the encompassing nexus of social cohesion, basic social services, community economic development and conflict management, that intertwined all the elements in achieving the overarching goal of the peacebuilding change theory. The purposive enhancement of the capacities of actors and partners particularly the former MNLF combatants and LGUs from barangay, municipal to provincial levels enabled them to effectively participate in the local structures and conferences. For example, the barangay officials were empowered to represent in conferences where they shared experiences, lessons and practices on enhancing their knowledge, skills and attitudes towards governing their respective areas. Also, the capacity of the LGUs to practice transparency and accountability in its planning, programming and resource mobilization indicated an improved governance capacity. Good governance practices in the private (corporate) and public (state) sectors, especially concerning policy, planning, decision-making, management and administration is critical in any endeavours (Pienaar 2009; Ferreira-Snyman and Ferreira 2006; Botha 2008). LGUs established the Provincial Peace Resource Centres as venues for knowledge and skills enhancement on peacebuilding. Strengthened and functional mechanisms and institutions established at the local and national levels are vital as a display of political support in sustaining the gains on peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiatives. Peacebuilding requires creating stronger state institutions, encouraging broader political participation, undertaking land reform, deepening civil society and respecting ethnic identities (Doyle and Sambanis 2000). Significant breakthrough of the ACT for Peace Programme included the good practices and mechanisms on peacebuilding initiatives that were mainstreamed and replicated outside the coverage area.

Findings in each peacebuilding strand were extracted from the results of assessment employing the four (4) dimensions of change. Anent to the findings from metasynthesis, were the key findings extracted from multiple case narratives and vignettes in each dimension of change. These findings exemplified the following: Strand 1. Social cohesion is deemed critical as bridging, binding and bonding agent for peacebuilding particularly in sustaining a cohesive environment and improved governance capacities of the local leaders and LGUs in conflict affected and vulnerable communities; Strand 2. Basic social services are critical instruments that provide a massive link for peacebuilding and good governance capacity of the LGUs and the local population; Strand 3. Community economic

development serves as a vehicle that propels peacebuilding efforts towards a more sustainable environment of peace and security, and good governance; and, Strand 4. Conflict management capacities of state and non-state actors are critical in sustaining peace and security mechanisms that contribute to the improved governance capacities of local leaders and LGUs. Meanwhile, good governance in conflict context, as the fifth encompassing element of peacebuilding, serves as the nexus of the four strands that provides the basic foundation and avenues for the achievement of peacebuilding change theory. Noteworthy, findings from other programmes and projects implemented in, on and around conflict complemented the findings of the ACT for Peace Program as a peacebuilding model.

## 15.6 Conclusion and Recommendations

The ACT for Peace Programme was implemented, during the period 2005–2010, within complex environment characterised by unstable peace and security situation, imbalanced development and largely low human security conditions. The coverage area has varied levels of development requiring the adoption of context-specific interventions to ensure its relevance and responsiveness. The four (4) strands of peacebuilding, namely: social cohesion, basic social services, community economic development and conflict management which are interlinked altogether through the nexus of good governance are deemed critical in pursuit of stable peace and security conditions, and improved governance capacity of the LGUs. Seemingly, Strand 1—social cohesion is deemed critical as an agent in bridging, binding and bonding individuals, groups and institutions for peacebuilding and improved governance capacity. Strand 2—basic social services as a critical formula draws and strengthens people and institutions alike in pursuit of peacebuilding thru transformative process that contributes to the enhancement of governance capacity. Meanwhile, Strand 3—community economic development initiatives serve as a vehicle for peacebuilding and conflict transformation that contributes to the improvement of the local governance capacity of the local structures. Moreover, Strand 4—conflict management capacities of actors particularly the LGUs are very vital in contributing to the re-shaping of and sustaining the governance landscape in the conflict affected and vulnerable communities. Results showed that the culture of peace is an important factor that strengthened the foundation of conflict management capacities of actors.

Finally, findings revealed that the Peacebuilding Model for Southern Philippines consists of Strand 1 social cohesion, Strand 2 basic social services, Strand 3 community economic development, and Strand 4 conflict management is anchored on Good Governance as its ultimate strategy for success. Thus, any combinations of the peacebuilding strands in conflict context could work in fragile and conflict areas when intertwined to Good Governance. These results may help concerned authorities and peace and development players in discharging their duties and

responsibilities with respect to peacebuilding and MDG efforts. Each strand consists of several sets of projects and activities as results of community consultations and dialogues. Creative strategies and innovative practices have to be constantly explored and shared to effect changes and strengthen weak and fragile institutions. Essentially, a policy framework from the national government that guides in responding to the needs and concerns of the communities in conflict affected and vulnerable communities must be anchored on strong institutions and policy support with dependable management capacities in particular good governance to effectively and efficiently deliver the needed services to the people.

Based on the foregoing results, the following imperatives which are categorised according to policy direction, program agenda and community level agenda may help the concerned authorities in discharging their duties and responsibilities with respect to peacebuilding and conflict transformation efforts in Southern Philippines:

### ***15.6.1 Policy Direction***

1. Revisit the country level (national) thrusts on peacebuilding and conflict transformation efforts for Southern Philippines. This will include the review of the Philippine Development Plan roadmap including the approaches and strategies of concerned agencies such as the office of the presidential adviser on the peace process (OPAPP), National Security Council, Cabinet Cluster on Peace and Security, among others.
2. Harmonize all donors, government agencies, LGUs, I/NGOs and private sectors initiatives on peacebuilding in Southern Philippines through appropriate agencies to ensure complementation of efforts.
3. Review the Philippine laws and other relevant issuances on donor assistance to address the issues on inclusivity and external influence on peacebuilding initiatives.
4. Capitalise public-private partnership (PPP) particularly the corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a source of funds from corporations and companies operating in Southern Philippines especially for basic social services and community economic development projects.
5. Maximise the role of local NGOs in promoting the conflict management systems, processes and practices as trainers or resource persons. In this view, there is a need to strengthen conglomeration of local resource partners in Southern Philippines that can ably handle training on conflict management, culture of peace, among others.
6. Help resolve the roots of conflict, specifically those pertaining to economic issues. Among the steps to be taken is for the national government, in partnership with the international community, to assist the Bangsamoro build a capable bureaucracy with streamlined and transparent procedures.

7. LGUs to institutionalise Council of Elders and scale up through capacitation as a formal mechanism in conflict management that will work in tandem with the Lupong Tagapamayapa (Barangay Justice System).
8. Allocate sufficient funds for Southern Philippines considering its very unique characterisation that needs sufficient fund to meet the MDGs in 2015 thus pushing up the areas which are still way below targets.

### ***15.6.2 Program Agenda***

1. Institutionalise the convergence of project management offices (PMOs) operating in Southern Philippines as a venue for complementation and harmonisation at the program level.
2. In terms of economic development projects, enhance economic development in communities where economic recovery has been successful and assist economic recovery in those communities where economic recovery has not yet been successful. Enhancing economic development in promising communities is a rapid way to increase Mindanao's regional gross domestic product, helping both government and business. Meanwhile, assisting economic recovery in poorer areas, especially the conflict affected and vulnerable communities, will reduce the uneven development that may threaten the stability of Southern Philippines in the medium to long term.
3. Set-up mechanism at the LGU level (e.g. province, municipal, barangay) for the continued capacitation of the peace and development advocates leagues (PDALs), peace and development advocates (PDAs) and barangay officials on conflict management, culture of peace and conflict sensitive and peace-promotive processes.
4. Implement and Institutionalise the Program Monitoring and Evaluation System to ensure complementation and partnership of initiatives between state and non-state actors in Southern Philippines.
5. Implement strategic communication and outreach plan to communicate the results of all programs, projects and activities implemented in, on, and around conflicts in Southern Philippines. This will facilitate addressing the image problem, thus attracting more investments and tourists.

### ***15.6.3 Community-Level Agenda***

1. Institute reforms and provide capacities to LGUs particularly from barangay to municipal levels as frontlines of the communities.
2. Capacitate the local actors on the culture of peace and conflict sensitive and peace-promotive (CSPP) processes to reach and involve all sectors of society, not only individuals but also groups, particularly families, teachers, civil

servants, young people, political leaders, policemen and soldiers, non-governmental and community organization.

3. Roll-out the CSPP monitoring and evaluation system at the community level to enhance transparency and improve governance.
4. Promote gender mainstreaming and environmental management and governance in all policies, programs, projects and activities in the communities as cross-cutting themes.
5. Support the establishment of peace centres or link with existing structures (e.g. but not limited to social action centres, and academic institutions).

### ***15.6.4 Other Researchable Areas***

1. Conduct a comprehensive study on the five (5) conflict lines in Southern Philippines in order to come up with explicit and appropriate strategies and approaches in addressing the more than 40-year persistent armed conflicts.
2. Conduct an impact evaluation on the contribution of community economic development initiatives to peacebuilding in Southern Philippines particularly those implemented in, on and, around conflict.
3. Conduct an in-depth study on the issue on inclusivity and elite capture of donor programs and projects in Southern Philippines.
4. Conduct a social research on natural resource conflicts in Mindanao particularly in Caraga and Central Mindanao to come up with a more scientific and data-based information on the complexity of the conflict in these areas.

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