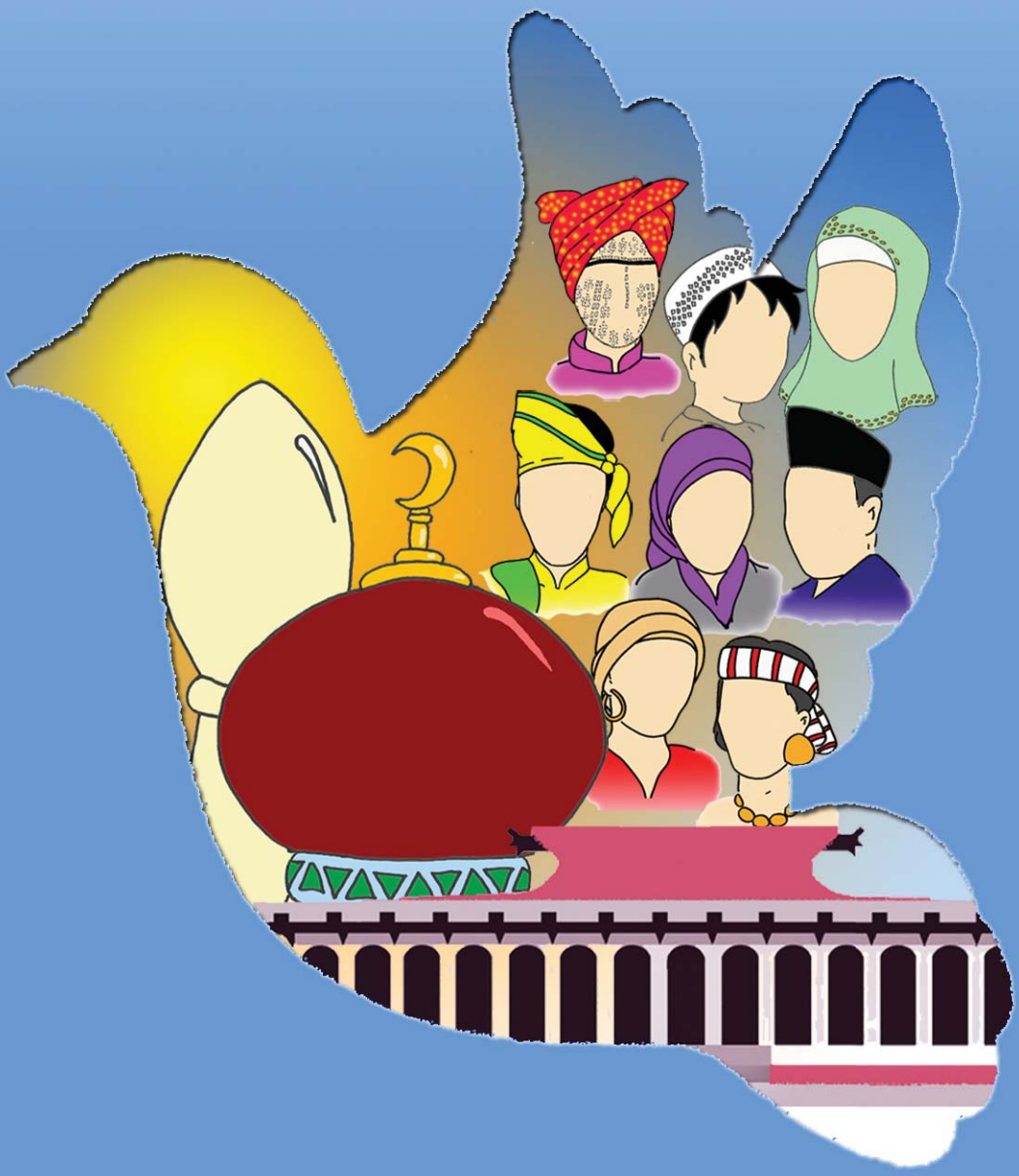
State of Local Democracy in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (SoLD ARMM)



State of Local Democracy in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (SoLD ARMM)

Edna E.A. Co
Ramon L. Fernan III
Maria Faina L. Diola
Amina Rasul
Mehol K. Sadain
Acram A. Latiph
Rufa C. Guiam
Benedicto R. Bacani
Raphael N. Montes Jr.

Supported by:

Australian AID

ISBN: 978-971-8567-85-2

This report is a product of an assessment of the quality of democracy conducted on the basis of International IDEA's State of Local Democracy Assessment framework. The report was developed by the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP-NCPAG) and the Philippine Centre for Islam and Democracy (PCID) with the support and partnership of International IDEA. International IDEA has not participated in the content development nor the research leading to the report. Views expressed in this report do not necessarily represent the views of International IDEA, its Board or its Council members.

This publication was supported by funding from Australian Aid. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of Australian Aid nor of the Australian Government.

Printed in the Philippines by Ec-tec Commercial
First printing: 500 copies, July 2013.

Preface

The State of Local Democracy in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (SoLD ARMM) is the fifth in a series of Philippine citizen-led democracy assessments, and the first ever on the state of local democracy (SoLD). The first four assessments focused on different aspects of democracy at the national level utilizing components of the State of Democracy (SoD) framework that the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) sponsors.

The SoLD ARMM focuses on the practice of democracy at the local level, specifically in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, an interesting site of potential change and reform at this point. As soon as the Aquino Administration took its reign in 2010, President Benigno S. Aquino III declared that he would pursue peace and reform in the ARMM. The SoLD ARMM comes at an opportune time for societal change and reform in one of the most volatile regions of the country.

The citizen-led SoLD ARMM assesses the extent to which democracy functions in the ARMM by examining local institutions and processes and the role of citizens and citizen groups in a democracy. The SoLD ARMM adopts the framework of International IDEA on citizen-led democracy assessment and focuses on the pillars of democracy, such as representation and participation. Each pillar is assessed using criteria questions that help form an analysis on the quality of democracy. Just like previous citizen-led assessments done by the Philippine team, the SoLD recognizes that citizens of this country and experts on the ARMM are key resources in playing out a citizen-led assessment. The citizens are the experts on the SoLD. The assessment uses data that are generated from a combination of approaches, such as citizens engaged through focus group discussions, round table meetings, surveys, documentary review and

analysis, and a validation by key people involved in and knowledgeable on the state of democracy in the ARMM.

The assessment hopes that the SoLD ARMM contributes to an enlightened discussion and societal reform in the midst of an ongoing pursuit for peace talks and development in the region. Moreover, the SoLD ARMM aims to serve as a continuing piece of discourse on national-subnational relations, on local governance in the southern part of the Philippines, and on the challenges of democracy in a Muslim-dominated society.

The Philippine assessment team and the citizens led by the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP-NCPAG) and the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy (PCID) thank International IDEA and the Australian Aid for their support and assistance in this undertaking.

Edna Estifania A. Co
University of the Philippines
National College of Public Administration and Governance
Philippine Democracy Assessment Team

Foreword

Citizen participation is the bedrock of democracy. International IDEA's approach towards democracy is founded on the principles of popular control over public decision making and equality between citizens in the exercise of that control.

In order for processes of democratic decision making to have sufficient quality, decision makers need knowledge of the interests of the people. Apart from expressing those interests through casting a ballot, there are many ways in which citizens can make their preferences known: volunteering, demonstrating, mobilising cause-oriented groups, engaging in public dialogues, and making use of social media to express their views.

There are also systematic ways of capturing citizens' views of democracy. International IDEA's State of Democracy assessment methodology is one – and it is fundamentally democratic in its approach; it leaves it to citizens of a country or a community themselves to judge the quality of their own democracy. Unlike external, "tick-the-box" assessments of democracy, the assessment framework is designed to be inclusive and, importantly, to contribute to the process of democratic change through enabling citizens to draw up and put forward practical reform agendas.

This citizen-led assessment of the quality of democracy in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in the Philippines is a testament to how democracy can indeed be locally owned and how citizens, given the opportunity, can be highly engaged and participative in democratic dialogues. The Philippines has always been recognised as the first democratic country in Asia and for its transition to democracy after dictatorship, which has provided inspiration to other parts of Asia.

Like other democracies, the Philippines still has its challenges, not least in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. This democracy

assessment conducted by the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP-NCPAG) and the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy (PCID) brings into the debate the citizens' take on a wide range of issues, including transparency and accountability, local governance, social and economic development, and electoral reforms. This comes at an opportune time following the 2012 Bangsamoro Framework Agreement reached between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which is the new reference for furthering peace and development in the Moro region. Peace, much like democracy, needs to be built and consolidated over time and with popular ownership. The challenges identified by Moro citizens in this democracy assessment can be a helpful basis for necessary, ongoing dialogue on the policies that the new Bangsamoro entity should pursue in order to build sustainable peace, democracy, and development in Mindanao.

Vidar Helgesen
Secretary General
International IDEA

Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AMORE	Alliance for Mindanao Off-Grid Renewable Energy
ARG	ARMM (or Autonomous) Regional Government
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BEI	Board of Election Inspectors
BIR	Bureau of Internal Revenue
CBCS	Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CDP	Comprehensive Development Plan
CLUP	Comprehensive Land Use Plan
COMELEC	Commission on Elections
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DOH	Department of Health
DOTC	Department of Transportation and Communications
DPWH	Department of Public Works and Highways
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ELA	Executive and Legislative Agenda
FDP	Full Disclosure Policy
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GRP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
HRET	House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal
IACAT	Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IP	Indigenous People

IPRA	Indigenous People's Rights Act
IRA	Internal Revenue Allotment
JI	Jemaah Islamiyah
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KBP	Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (Broadcasters' Association of the Philippines)
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
LCE	Local Chief Executive
LENTE	Legal Network for Free Elections
LGC	Local Government Code
LGU	Local Government Unit
LGSPA	Local Governance Support Program for ARMM
LSB	Local Special Body
MBC	Municipal Board of Canvassers
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MinDA	Mindanao Development Authority
MinHRac	Mindanao Human Rights Action Center
MMA	Muslim Mindanao Act
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MWG	Mindanao Working Group
NAMFREL	National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections
NCIP	National Commission for Indigenous Peoples
NCMF	National Commission on Muslim Filipinos
NSCB	National Statistical Coordination Board
NSO	National Statistics Office
OCD	Office of Civil Defense
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation (formerly, Organization of the Islamic Conference)
OPAPP	Office of the Presidential Adviser to the Peace Process
PAG	Private Armed Group
PBC	Provincial Board of Canvassers
PCID	Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy
PCIJ	Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
PDAP	Philippine Development Coalition Programme
PDF	Philippines Development Forum

PMC	Project Monitoring Committee
PPCRV	Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PSB	Personnel Selection Board
RLA	Regional Legislative Assembly
SET	Senate Electoral Tribunal
SK	Sangguniang Kabataan (Youth Council)
SWS	Social Weather Stations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Introduction

Chapter 1

The State of Local Democracy in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (SoLD ARMM) is a citizen-led democracy assessment conducted in the southern part of the Philippines commonly referred to as Mindanao. It is an assessment of the quality of democracy in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), a region of five provinces where the majority of the country's Muslim population resides. The ARMM consists of the five provinces of Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao, and Lanao del Sur, and encompasses two cities, 113 municipalities, and 2,470 *barangay* (villages). The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao was created on 1 August 1989 through Republic Act No. 6734, otherwise known as the Organic Act, which was amended in 2001 by Republic Act No. 9054. The ARMM is part of the political solution to the war of independence initiated by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) against the Philippine government in the late 1960s. Today the region is still the most conflict-affected in the country, with complicated issues of governance, security, and severe underdevelopment. It has been called the cheating capital of the country due to widely reported anomalies during elections. It is no wonder then that the performance of the ARMM, a regional body that was supposed to bring the Moro people's participation in governance and development up to par with the rest of the country, has been questioned both by citizens and by the region's own leaders.

To introduce socio-political reforms in the ARMM, the Aquino Administration solicited and received the support of Congress for the postponement of the 2011 election for regional officials. A set of interim officials was instead appointed by the president to initiate consultation and reform. Among the reform measures taken up were the attempt to cleanse

the voters list in the ARMM, and the conduct of consultations amongst stakeholders and citizen groups on governance issues, representation, and peace and development in the region. The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) was created to address the socio-politico-cultural concerns that are distinct to the region.

Figure 1.01 Location of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

Reproduced from: Wikipedia

A few months after this postponement of elections, the government announced a breakthrough in the peace negotiations between the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the group that took over the separatist rebellion from the MNLF. This was considered a significant event as initial peace talks in 2008 had failed. The two parties signed a Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro on 15 October 2012 at the Malacañan Palace as a reference agreement to pursue peace and development in the Moro region. With this development in the ARMM and in Mindanao, the State of Local Democracy assessment should be able to contribute more meaningfully as it examines and articulates the citizens' views on the state of democracy and on what things need to be

filled in to substantiate democracy and development in this part of the Philippines. What is more, as this assessment report was being written, a crisis loomed over the historical claim of the sultanate of Sulu on Sabah in Malaysia. The achievement of peace is key to stability in the region and, needless to say, in the Philippines.

Some Muslims think and suggest an incompatibility between the Islamic faith and the ideals of democracy. In a survey conducted among 123 Muslim religious scholars (*ulama)*, 53 percent thought that Islam and democracy were compatible, with democratic ideals rooted in the Islamic principles of *shura* (consultation) and *ijma* (consensus). However, the rest believed that Islam and democracy were incompatible because of the latter's promotion of the separation of church and state.

This poses a challenge to the State of Local Democracy (SoLD). It has to examine the extent to which democracy principles manifest in an Islamic culture and society.

Objectives of the Assessment

The main objective of the SoLD ARMM is to encourage an informed discussion of democratic reform inspired by a citizen-led assessment of local democracy in the five provinces of the autonomous region. The foci of this local democracy assessment are the two areas of representative democracy (elections, political parties, elected officials, and the performance of the key institutions and processes that should serve as mechanisms for popular representation) and participatory democracy (citizen engagement and participation, non-governmental and grassroots organizations, and consensus-oriented policy making as forms of popular control).

In addition to the above-mentioned objective, the SoLD also hopes to:

1. identify the strengths and weaknesses of local democracy and to identify ways by which to consolidate democracy's strengths and address the weaknesses through the modern institutions of policy making and through traditional ways and systems;
2. provide the ARMM regional government and other policy makers at the national level, such as the Congress or executive offices, some valuable inputs to strengthen democratic institutions in Muslim Mindanao;
3. contribute to democracy initiatives and draw lessons in similarly populated societies in the Asia-Pacific, such as in Indonesia and Thailand.

The State of Local Democracy as a Methodology

The SoLD ARMM adopts an assessment methodology initiated by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA). The methodology uses a mapping guide that focuses on representation and participation of citizens toward the working of democracy at the local level. The assessment aims to primarily engage citizens in examining the state of democracy in their own territories and according to their perceptions and analysis of democracy focused on representation and participation. As the citizens engage in the assessment, the diverse views allow for a conversation amongst citizens, citizen groups, local authorities, and other stakeholders. The assessment includes the analysis by experts, including academics and scholars, on the state of local democracy. The assessment also identifies suggestions towards possible reform areas and the strengthening of democracy, whether formal or informal.

As a methodology, the SoLD ARMM differs from other approaches to democracy studies and evaluation that usually adopt a rating and ranking system by experts. More often than not, the approach to democracy evaluation is done by expert-outsiders of a particular society. The state of local democracy adopts a methodology whereby citizens of a country or a society are centrally involved in the assessment where they engage in a conversation amongst each other on democracy. SoLD ARMM adopts the qualitative approach to generate data, information, analysis, and views on local democracy; however, it also employs quantitative data generation as well as documentary review and analysis. Focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted in the five provinces of the ARMM. Key informant interviews (KII) were also arranged amongst known experts and authorities on the ARMM and the region's issues. The PCID, which was the main partner in the region, conducted a supplementary survey on people's perceptions on democracy, particularly on representation and participation. The SoLD methodology suggests that the citizens themselves are the best assessors of their own democracy.

As mentioned above, the SoLD takes an in-depth look at both representative democracy and participatory democracy in assessing the situation at the local level, in this particularly case the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. The assessment of representative democracy examines the extent by which representation takes place through institutions such as parties, elections and selection of leaders, and institutions and processes of these institutions by which governance is carried out. An examination of representative democracy also scrutinizes

national and legal frameworks, electoral system design and performance, party system, and elected officials. It scrutinizes processes, such as election administration, voters' participation, and processes for conflict management.

In the case of Mindanao, the focal unit of local democracy is the subnational level of governance of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Unlike in other SoLD exercises done in other countries where the unit examined is the town or city or the village, the SoLD ARMM looks at the ARMM as a subnational unit that comprises a broader jurisdiction. The assessment is a bit more complex in the sense that the ARMM relates to the national level whilst it also has links with its provinces, towns, and villages. The region is not comparable to a town, city, or village.

Participatory democracy is examined through the quality of the engagement of people, of communities, and of civil society in civic and public affairs and in finding consensual decisions and policy making. It examines institutions, such as local authorities, civil society, private sector, media, and international organizations, including development organizations. It also looks at processes—forms and methods of citizen outreach, referenda, and citizens' initiatives—and tries to examine the extent of popular control over public affairs.

By examining representative and participatory democracy, the SoLD allows a review of the institutions and processes of democracy through the lens of ordinary citizens. Representation assumes that if different groups of citizens are treated on an equal footing, according to their numbers, then the main public institutions will be socially representative of the citizen body as a whole (Beetham et al 2008). Participation assumes that "without citizen participation and the rights, the freedoms and the means to participate, the principle of popular control over government cannot begin to be realized" (Beetham et al 2008, 24). The assessment that focuses on the pillars of representation and participation hopes to lead toward an identification of some measures for reform or for facing up to the challenges of democracy in the local areas. Admittedly, however, these two pillars of democracy subsumed the other values of democratic principles that could have otherwise been scrutinized more thoroughly, namely: 1) authorization, 2) accountability, 3) transparency, 4) responsiveness, and 5) solidarity. These values have certain requirements and institutional means for their realization.

Mapping Guide

The SoLD ARMM focusing on representation and participation adopts a number of search questions that serve as a mapping guide to the assessment. The search questions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. What are the elements of democracy that are presently excellent, satisfactory, or failing?
2. How is the system of representative democracy working?
3. How effective are local authorities in the performance of their functions?
4. How does interactive democracy function?
5. Are there mechanisms that allow people in the five provinces and their cities or municipalities or *barangay* to participate in the decision-making process? What mechanisms are available for an interactive process of decision making? To what extent are these functioning?
6. What are the roles of civil society, international organizations, the private sector, and media in upholding democracy?
7. What are the forms and means of interaction and communication with the public and with the citizens?
8. How effective have previous reform efforts been and what lessons could be learned from the past?
9. What actions can be undertaken by city/local authorities and other stakeholders to develop and sustain democratic governance?

A set of detailed assessment questions guide the state of local democracy mapping. The questions allow the data and information to surface according to the following general headings:

A) geography and spatial features generally discussed
B) demography, social structure, and social relations/heterogeneity of population
C) socio-economic base/municipal finance
D) development and social indicators
E) representative democracy
    - institutions (national and legal frameworks, electoral system design and performance, party system, evaluating elected officials)

- processes (election administration, evaluating voter participation)

F) participatory democracy
- institutions (local authorities and participatory democracy, civil society, the private sector, the international community and the media)
- processes (forms and methods of citizen outreach)

Organization of the Assessment in the ARMM

The SoLD ARMM adopted an organizational mechanism that defined the roles and responsibilities in the conduct of the assessment as follows:

1. Formation of a democracy assessment team. The team was responsible for the framework, direction, guidance, and supervision of the overall flow and outcome of the assessment. The group is composed of members of the Philippine Democracy Team, namely, Dr. Edna Co of the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG) and Mr. Ramon Fernan; and members of the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy (PCID), namely, Ms. Amina Rasul, Mr. Mehol Sadain, Professor Acram Latiph, and Professor Rufa Guiam. Later, Mr. Sadain left the assessment team upon his appointment as commissioner of the newly created National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF).
2. Creation of a reference group. The reference group was composed of the provincial coordinators of the five provinces under the ARMM, national organizations such as the NAMFREL (National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections), LENTE (Legal Network for Free Elections), religious leaders, representatives of *ulama*, and representatives of the local Commission on Elections (COMELEC). The reference group served as a pool of local expertise to which the assessment team referred for methodological, logistical arrangements, and substantive contributions to the conduct of the assessment as far as the local areas were concerned.
3. Program officers were identified with the UP NCPAG to assist in the capability building activity of the provincial coordinators, and to assist the provincial coordinators in the design of the area

assessment, and in consolidating data for reference to the assessment team. Dr. Maria Faina Diola and Mr. Raphael Montes of UP NCPAG served as program officers.

4. Links with various community groups, local development organizations, local authorities, and faith-based groups were established through the provincial coordinators. These local resources were the main sources of information and data for the focus group discussions and key informant interviews.
5. Validation sessions were organized according to subregional area to affirm and correct data and information and to verify and substantiate interpretations of data and information initially generated through the data collection stage. The validation sessions served to triangulate the initial data that arose from the focus group discussions and the survey conducted by the PCID.
6. A national validation was conducted to present the initial draft of the assessment amongst policy makers and national agency representatives, as well as other key stakeholders in the ARMM, including legislators who come from the region and the ARMM regional government itself.
7. Printing and production of the assessment.
8. Dissemination of the assessment, especially amongst policy makers and key stakeholders.

Techniques of Data Generation

The SoLD used different methods and techniques of generating data, including:

a) document and literature review
b) focus group discussion (FGD) among citizen groups, media, local leaders, development actors, young people, women, *ulama* and other religious leaders, private organizations, and other stakeholders
c) key informant interview (KII) among known leaders and authorities, policy makers, as well as experts and prominent personalities who might have significant views on the ARMM institutions and processes
d) survey among targeted groups (in this case, community and grassroots organizations of Muslim people). The survey was conducted in the five provinces of the ARMM and involved 4,000 respondents.

The list of participants in the focus group discussions and list of resource persons for the key informant interviews are annexed to this report.

The data and information that were generated from the various data collection methods were triangulated by the assessors and the rest of the team. The assessment weaved the data and information and interpreted the extent and quality of representative and participatory democracy in the ARMM. The assessment also identified the various sources of data and information, and their perceptions, views, and interpretation of the context and situation of local democracy in the ARMM. At the end of the mapping, the SoLD identified some recommendations on local democracy in the ARMM.

Reference

Beetham, David, Edzia Carvalho, Todd Landman, and Stuart Weir. 2008. *Assessing the quality of democracy: A practical guide.* Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

The Region in Context

Chapter 2

2.1 Geography and Spatial Features

GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES

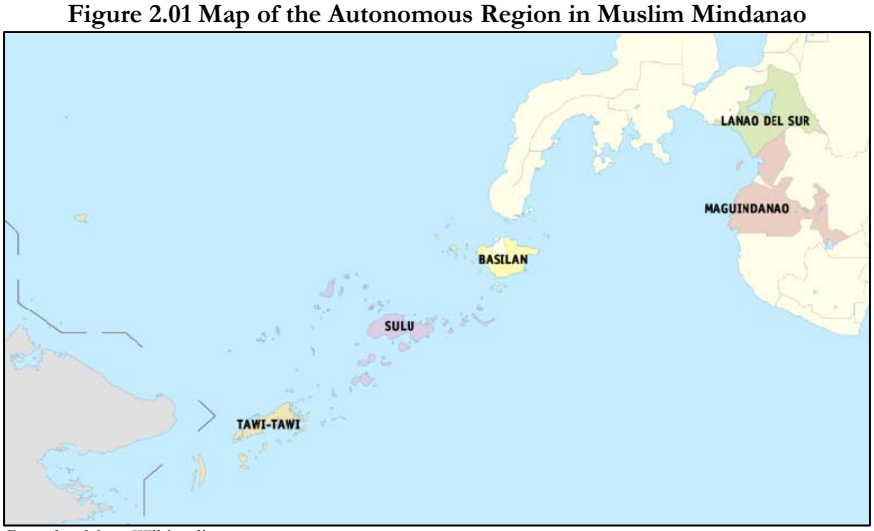
In what ways do the region's physical situation and spatial layout create features that give it a certain identity? In what ways do the geographic context and human settlement patterns affect daily life and social relations? How, if at all, do human settlement patterns relate to the practice of local democracy?

At first glance, it would seem that the geography of the ARMM provinces can be a foundation on which a prosperous democracy can be built. The ARMM island provinces of Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi are in waters that have traditionally yielded much coveted sea products—*tripang* (sea cucumber), fish, and more recently, red seaweed found in the waters of the Sulu archipelago. On the other hand, the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao in mainland Mindanao have access to fertile lands for agriculture, as well as aquatic resources in the Moro Gulf and Celebes Sea. There may also be mineral resources that await exploitation. Historically, the Moros thrived on trade with their neighbors in what is now Indonesia and Malaysia.

In the past, Muslim areas in the Mindanao mainland encompassed much more territory than now is represented by the two ARMM provinces of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur. The Maguindanao Sultanate controlled most of southwestern Mindanao, what was formerly known as Cotabato Province, before it was subdivided into the provinces of South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, and General Santos City, as well as

Maguindanao. The traditional area of Cotabato consists of an expansive river basin, said to be "the broadest expanse of lowland" in Mindanao (McKenna 1998, 25), covering an area of 1,000 square miles through which the Pulangi River (known as Mindanao River in Cotabato) runs as it winds its way from the Bukidnon highlands west to Ilana Bay in the Moro Gulf. The river, depositing mountain silt along the way, has made the basin a fertile agricultural area, and Maguindanaons used to farm these lands until the war displaced many of them. On the river's banks were established two rival (but sometimes cooperating) sultanates, that of Maguindanao at the river's mouth and of Buayan, some fifty-six kilometers upriver. The river was at the center of Maguindanaons' life as it was "their source of food and water, a principal thoroughfare, and the means of trade and communication with the outside world" (McKenna 1998, 30).

Figure 2.01 Map of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao



Reproduced from: Wikipedia.

On the west is Ilana Bay in the Moro Gulf. Along the coast lived the Iranun people, whose language was related to that of the Maguindanaon and the Maranao. They were noted seafarers and raiders, who took slaves and plundered the coastal communities and shipping in the Celebes and Sulu Seas, going as far north as Luzon and as far west as Malacca. In more recent times, their renown came from their ability to smuggle cigarettes into Mindanao by sea.

To the south of Cotabato City are the Teduray highlands, the home of the Lumad group (as the indigenous people of Mindanao are known), the

Teduray. It was in these mountains, which are difficult to physically access, that the MNLF and later, the MILF, established their base camps.

North of Cotabato, the high plateau around Lake Lanao is the home of the people of the lake, the Maranao. The people fish the lake and derive their main livelihood from it. To the west is Panguil Bay and the province of Zamboanga del Sur, on the south Ilana Bay and further north is Iligan Bay, from where the Maranao must have carried out their trading activities.

The Sulu archipelago is made up of the three remaining provinces of the ARMM: Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi. These constitute the main islands of the archipelago, around which are many smaller islands and island groups. The Sulu Sea in the north and Celebes Sea in the south encircle the islands, which from the air form stepping stones between Sabah and the Zamboanga peninsula. The islands have historically constituted a way for goods and people to flow between these two points. Several ethnolinguistic groups inhabit these islands, but the main ones are the Yakan of Basilan, the Tausugs of Jolo, and the Sama of Tawi-Tawi. The Sama are even more internally diverse, and are referenced by different names depending on where they live: the Sama Dea of Sibutu and Sanga-sanga, the Sama Bihing of Simunul and eastern Tawi-Tawi, and the Sama Dilaut (also mistakenly called the Bajau, according to Nimmo) who live a nomadic life on small boats, although a number have also abandoned their boat-dwelling ways or only use them to fish (Nimmo 2001, 18). The Sama Dilaut themselves subdivide their group between north (those who live in Sulu, Basilan, and Zamboanga), and south (those who live in the Tawi-Tawi islands) (Nimmo 2001, 20).

The island province of Basilan is just off the coast of Zamboanga City. Slightly over half of its population is Muslim and represented by the Yakan, Tausug, and Sama ethonolinguistic groups. Chavacano and Cebuano are predominantly spoken by the island's non-Muslim residents. Sixty-one other islands and islets make up the rest of the province. It has been made infamous by the activities of the Abu Sayyaf Group, notorious for its kidnap-for-ransom operations.

South of Basilan is Sulu province with its over 150 islands and islets. Jolo, its capital, was the seat of the Sulu Sultanate and an important entrepot during the heyday of the trade between Europe and China.

Tawi-Tawi consists of about 300 scattered islands, but only the larger islands of Bongao and Tawi-Tawi are cultivated. The coral islands can only support coconuts and cassava. Most of the population live on the coasts, with few people venturing into the interior (Nimmo 2001, 32). The surrounding sea and its abundant fishing grounds dictate that the Sama be

skillful sea travelers and fishers. Recent years have witnessed an influx of increasing numbers of Tausug from Sulu, many fleeing the troubles there.

The islands are mostly of volcanic origin and the larger ones are ideal for the extensive cultivation of various subsistence and commercial crops. The low coral islands depend on the rich fishing grounds that surround them. The location of these islands near the trade routes between China and island Southeast Asia enabled them to participate in this lucrative trade long before Spain's arrival. The port of Jolo was the gateway of this trade. At the height of the Sulu Sultanate's power, the sultanate controlled an area that stretched from southern Palawan to western Mindanao to northern Borneo. This area is, of course, mostly sea and the Tausugs, the dominant ethnic group in the sultanate, profited enormously when trade between Europe and China expanded in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The trade consisted of the shipment of tea from China bound for Europe, of *tripang* and bird's nest gathered from the sea and from the limestone caves of north Borneo, respectively, bound for the dinner tables of Imperial China, of pearls coveted by European royalty, of textiles from India, of gunpowder and modern weaponry from Europe and China, and later, of opium from China (Warren 2000). It was probably this burgeoning trade, plus the incessant slave raiding by Iranun and Sama Balangingi warriors carried out to supply the labor required to collect and process the sea and forest resources sought by international merchants, that moved the Spanish authorities to more forcefully stake its claim on Mindanao.

The geography of the ARMM is not a liability and instead has the potential to greatly accelerate its development. How this will happen and how much of that development will benefit the people of ARMM remain questions to be resolved. The autonomous regional government supposedly has the power to pursue policies that can significantly raise the level of economic activity within the ARMM and reap the benefits of such progress for its people. Doing so will determine to some degree the ability of democracy to establish deep roots in the region.

While its geography per se is not necessarily a physical disadvantage, long-term poverty and lack of development (due to central government neglect, local government incompetence and corruption, and the long-running armed conflict) are factors that contribute to the geographic marginalization of many areas, particularly interior areas, of the region's provinces. Poor transport facilities and inadequate infrastructure make access to centers of commerce and trade as well as government services difficult for people in these areas. This difficulty of access also hinders participation in the local economy, thereby constraining both local growth and that of the larger regional market. Travel within and from the island

provinces, particularly Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, may also be hampered by poor and inadequate transport facilities. Such difficulties constrain people's ability to access voting places during elections, for example. The transport of ballot boxes and other election paraphernalia can also be problematic. This difficulty provides opportunities for the commission of election fraud by tampering with ballots during transport, a common complaint before the introduction of electronic counting.

The mainland provinces of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur present their own difficulties in internal transport. Access to remote towns and villages can often only be made by travelling on rough, unpaved roads and by crossing waterways with small boats.

This geographic marginalization has direct implications on the quality of democracy that the people of ARMM may experience. Difficulty of access means people having a hard time trying to exercise their right to vote during elections or participating in processes of decision making, sometimes even at the barangay level but most certainly at the municipal, city, or provincial level. This also has direct impacts on people's ability to exercise their social and economic rights such as the right to education, the right to health, and others.

The geography of Mindanao means that it is physically very near certain areas of Indonesia to the south, and Malaysia to the southwest. The BIMP - East Asean Growth Area[1] was conceived to exploit the traditional trading links that historically tied these areas together in the hope of spurring economic growth. For the Philippines, the beneficiaries of this subregional cooperation initiative were going to be primarily Mindanao and Palawan. The hoped-for economic fruits of cooperation have not yet sprouted but the idea is still a good one, particularly as the whole Southeast Asian region seems to be experiencing a growth spiral at the moment. Economic growth can only strengthen democracy in the ARMM.

[1] The Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area is a cooperation initiative among these four countries put together in 1994 to accelerate the growth of areas of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines plus the Sultanate of Brunei that are in close proximity with each other geographically and that historically have had close trading and economic ties. Specifically, the subregion covers the entire Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam; nine provinces in Kalimantan and Sulawesi, the island chain of Maluku, and Papua (Indonesia); the Federal States of Sabah and Sarawak and the Federal Territory of Labuan (Malaysia); and the entire island of Mindanao and the island province of Palawan in the Philippines. Coincidentally, these areas (except for Brunei) are also some of the poorest areas in their respective countries and the initiative was designed to exploit possible synergies that would spur growth and development in these areas.

This proximity, however, may have a downside. This is evident in the links supposedly forged between terrorist groups, such as Jemaah Islamiyah and KOMPAK (Komite Aksi Penanggulangan Akibat Krisis), and Philippine groups, supposedly the MILF, some MNLF remnants, and the Abu Sayyaf. One such link gave fruit to the so-called Bojinka plot to assassinate Pope John Paul II (Co, et al. 2010, 119). The United States has alleged that the islands of the Sulu archipelago provide safe haven for various terrorist operatives that are brought through the porous southern border of the country with Indonesia and Malaysia (United States Department of State 2012b, 118).

PUBLIC PLACES

How many public spaces such as parks, public meeting venues, or other facilities exist? Are there guidelines and rules for managing public gatherings, protests and demonstrations, town meetings, or other major public events held in these public spaces?

In the survey conducted by the PCID, the respondents said that they preferred to meet in the barangay hall or municipal hall to discuss public issues that affected the community. Some 40 percent responded this way in the whole region. Every *barangay* (lowest administrative unit equivalent to a village) is supposed to have a public hall for such gatherings, but not every village actually has one. Where none exists, the substitute venue is usually the house of the barangay chairperson. The other preferred venues were either the local school or *madrassah*, or the local church or mosque. However, survey respondents in the mainland provinces of Lanao del Sur (including Marawi City) and Maguindanao seemed to prefer parks at least equally to schools or places of worship as meeting places to discuss public issues, as shown in table 2.01 below.

Table 2.01 Public place meeting, by subregion

Region	*Mosque/ Church*	*Park*	*Restaurant / Eatery*	*School / Madrassah*	*Brgy Hall/ Municipal Hall*	*Others*	*Total*
Basilan-Sulu-Tawi-Tawi	397	170	122	480	711	516	2396
	16.6%	7.1%	5.1%	20.0%	29.7%	21.5%	100%
Lanao del Sur-Marawi-Maguindanao	161	203	34	176	885	132	1591
	10.1%	12.8%	2.1%	11.1%	55.6%	8.3%	100%
TOTAL	558	373	156	656	1596	648	3987
	14%	9.3%	3.9%	16.4%	39.9%	16.2%	100%

This preference rating seems understandable given that when local governments want to discuss public issues, the *munisipyo* (municipal hall) or the barangay hall is where officials invite the people to. However, when such discussions are not initiated by local officials, then the venue choice tends to be more neutral, such as schools. Places of worship become venues when local religious leaders become involved. On the other hand, public open spaces, such as parks (or more precisely, town or community plazas, which are not parks in the usual, that is, Western, sense of the word), are often used for public displays of dissatisfaction, such as rallies and demonstrations.

In the Christianized towns of the country, the town plaza, where traditionally the municipal hall, the local church, shops, and the houses of influential folks are located, is usually the preferred venue for public demonstrations as well as for political rallies related to election campaigns. This type of layout is not often found in towns that are predominantly Muslim, but in those that have a significant Christian population, such plazas may exist. For example, in Cotabato City, a "prayer rally" organized surreptiously by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in 1986 to call to public attention the (Cory) Aquino government's unwillingness to negotiate with the MILF, drew large crowds to the city's plaza through its three-days of protest.

The rules governing public assemblies were issued in 1985 when martial law was supposed to have ended, but the government was still under the rule of Marcos. The law, *Batas Pambansa Bilang* 880, or The Public Assembly Act of 1985, required that a permit be requested from and granted by the local government before any assembly in a public place could take place. An assembly in a "private" place (such as a school, whether private or public, or place of worship) was allowed without a permit, however. Also, a permit was not necessary if the assembly were to be held in a designated public "freedom park" that the local government was supposed to provide. The law again legalized such assemblies, which had been banned during martial law, but it did not save the Marcos regime, which was ousted the very next year. The law still stands and continues to govern the conduct of public assemblies in public spaces. The law was tested before the Supreme Court in 2006 when the Arroyo government tried to enforce its "calibrated preemptive response" policy by denying protesters permits to hold rallies, prompting activists to sue. The court ruled that the right to peaceful assembly could not be curtailed thus and that if no freedom parks had been designated, then all public parks and plazas could be used for such assemblies without requiring a permit. The court also ordered all local authorities to designate freedom parks as

required by the law (Avanzado 2006). This law about freedom parks, however, is one that has been generally ignored by local governments in the ARMM, as well as in many places in the rest of the country. It seems that only in large cities and other highly urbanized areas have freedom parks been designated by local governments.

2.2 Demography, Social Structure and Social Relations and Heterogeneity of Population

POPULATION

What is the current population of the region (total and by gender)? What is the change in population (decrease or increase) in percentage over the last ten years? What is the rate of population growth overall for the next ten years? What proportion of population growth is a consequence of normal population growth and what proportion is due to migration? What proportion of the present population is under 15 years old (providing data by gender)? What proportion of the present population is over 65 years old (providing data by gender)?

The ARMM consists of five provinces, two cities (Lamitan in Basilan and Marawi in Lanao del Sur), 116 municipalities, and 2,490 barangays. These are distributed as shown in table 2.02 below.

Table 2.02 Provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays in the ARMM (2012)

Provinces	*Cities*	*Municipalities*	*Barangay*	*Land Area (km²)*	*Population (2007)*
Basilan	1	11	210	1327.2	371,810
Lanao del Sur	1	39	1159	3872.9	865,832
Maguindanao		36	508	2229.7	726,215
Sulu		19	410	1600.4	587,962
Tawi-Tawi		11	203	1087.4	291,767

Source: National Statistical Coordinating Board.

For the whole region, there is not much difference in the number of females and males, as table 2.03 shows. At the provincial level, however, in the two mainland provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao, the gender breakdown appears more marked, albeit with the two provinces exhibiting opposite trends. There is a higher ratio of females in Lanao del Sur compared to males, a situation that is reversed in Maguindanao.

Table 2.03 Population by province and gender breakdown (2007)

	Total	*Female*	*Percent*	*Male*	*Percent*
ARMM	4,118,327	2,061,804	50.1	2,056,123	49.9
Basilan	408,409	203,251	49.8	204,758	50.1
Lanao del Sur	1,137,987	581,948	51.1	556,039	48.9
Maguindanao	1,273,254	622,681	48.9	650,573	51.1
Sulu	849,386	428,800	50.5	420,586	49.5
Tawi-Tawi	449,291	225,124	50.1	224,167	49.9

Sources: National Statistics Office and National Statistical Coordination Board.

What is striking is the change in this gender ratio over time, from 1995 to 2007, shown in table 2.04. In 1995, males made up 57 percent of the population of the region, but then fell to less than half in 2000 before recovering slightly in 2007. Such attrition in male ranks may have been the direct result of the war in Mindanao as males fought and died in the struggle.

Table 2.04 Gender ratio in ARMM population 1995, 2000, and 2007 (in percent)

	1995	*2000*	*2007*
Female	43.0	50.7	50.1
Male	57.0	49.3	49.9

Source: National Statistics Office 2012.

As table 2.05 below shows, the ARMM has had one of the highest annual average population growth rates in the country in the five census years from 1980 to 2007, except for the period between 1990 and 1995. Between 1980 and 1990, the ARMM region's population grew at a rate in consonance with the rest of Mindanao, but between 1995 and 2007, the number of people in the ARMM continued to grow rapidly even as growth in the rest of Mindanao slowed. This continued rapid growth may be a reaction to the decimation of the population for most of the war years. However, such rapid growth has negative connotations for the short term as the resources of the region are strained to accommodate this growth. In the long run, however, this may augur well as it builds the region's human resources, an essential ingredient for the growth and development that are foreseen as peace is achieved.

Table 2.05 Population average annual growth rate (in percent), census years 1980, 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2007

Area	*1980-1990*	*1990-1995*	*1995-2000*	*2000-2007*
Philippines	2.35	2.32	2.36	2.04
NCR	2.98	3.3	1.06	2.11
CAR	2.28	1.71	1.83	1.5

(Table 2.05 continuation)

Ilocos Region	1.96	1.3	2.15	1.1
Cagayan Valley	2.01	1.51	2.25	1.13
Central Luzon	2.58	2.12	3.17	2.36
Southern Tagalog	3.05	3.53	-	-
IVA- Calabarzon	-	-	4.08	3.21
IVB- Mimaropa	-	-	2.67	1.49
Bicol Region	1.18	1.91	1.73	1.2
Western Visayas	1.77	1.3	1.56	1.35
Central Visayas	1.95	1.65	2.81	1.59
Eastern Visayas	0.88	1.84	1.51	1.12
Western Mindanao	2.23	2.42	2.12	1.83
Northern Mindanao	2.22	2.32	1.99	1.67
Southern Mindanao	3.04	2.72	2.41	1.71
Central Mindanao	3.32	2.66	2.69	2.41
ARMM 1/	3.06	1.8	3.73	5.46
Caraga 2/	2.55	1.82	1.63	1.25

Source: National Statistics Office.

1/ Created into a region under EO No. 429.

2/ Created into a region under RA No. 7901 dated February 23, 1995, taken from Region 10 and Region 11.

This rise in population seems to be due to natural growth as, in fact, net migration in the region through the years of conflict has been negative, as it has been for most of Mindanao except for the northern provinces. This is shown in table 2.06 based on a study by Balisacan and his associates using 2000 census data.

Table 2.06 Population and interregional migration in the Philippines, by region (2000)

Region	*Total Population (2000)*	*Population density (people per square kilometer)*	*Average Annual Growth Rate (%)*		*Migration Rate**
			1980-1990	*1990-2000*	
Philippines	76,504	255	2.3	2.3	0
NCR	9,933	16091	2.9	2.2	-22
CAR	1,365	70	2.3	1.8	-1
Ilocos	4,200	318	2.0	1.7	-1
Cagayan Valley	2,813	90	2.0	1.8	-5
Central Luzon	8,031	437	2.6	2.6	12
South Tagalog	11,794	239	3.0	3.6	26
Bicol	4,687	258	1.2	1.8	-10
Western Visayas	6,211	301	1.8	1.4	-6
Central Visayas	5,707	359	1.9	2.2	-
Eastern Visayas	3,610	155	0.9	1.7	-6
Western Mindanao	3,091	161	2.2	2.3	-9
Northern Mindanao	2,748	170	2.2	2.2	4

(Table 2.06 continuation)

Southern Mindanao	5,189	183	3.0	2.6	-1
Central Mindanao	2,598	144	3.3	2.5	-9
ARMM	2,412	95	3.0	2.7	-9
Caraga	2,095	98	2.5	1.7	-6

Reproduced from: Balisacan, Hill, & Piza. 2009.
Balisacan's calculation based on NSO Census on Population and Housing, 1990 and 2000.
Calculations are based on intra-country migration.
*Net migrants, defined as in-migrants less out-migrants, per 1,000 population in 2000.

Looking forward, the government has optimistically forecast that population growth in the ARMM is going to drop and be more in line with the national average, as shown in table 2.07. In fact, from about 4.1 million in 2007, the forecast is for the region's population to decrease to 3.9 million in 2015 and then increase again by just below two percent on average per year until 2020 when the population is expected to be about 4.3 million. The female-male ratio is not expected to change either at about 49.9 percent males and 50.1 percent females. This is, of course, merely speculation; population dynamics, driven by the necessities and contingencies of the situation, may cause these forecasts to miss their mark.

Table 2.07 Projected population change for ARMM (2015 and 2020)

	2015		*2020*	*% change*
ARMM	3,943,000		4,330,700	9.8
Annual average change				2.0
		% share		*% share*
Male	1,966,300	49.9	2,164,700	50.0
Female	1,976,700	50.1	2,166,000	50.0

Sources: National Statistical Coordinating Board and National Statistics Office.

The ARMM population is rather young with 43 percent under the age of fifteen. Moreover, less than 2 percent of the population is over 65 years old. This seems to bode well for the region in terms of having a significant number of people who may have not grown cynical of the practice of democracy in the region and who will be able to make improvements in its quality in the future, provided appropriate interventions are made.

Tables 2.08 and 2.09 show the age distribution of the ARMM population. In terms of gender distribution by age, there are more women than men in the 15-65 years old age group, but more men than women in the under 15 group and in the over 65 group. Again, this may reflect the effect of the war on the male population. As the war has waned, there

seems to be a tendency to produce more males in order to again attain a demographic balance or a return to the dominance in numbers of males.

Table 2.08 Age distribution in ARMM, by gender (2007)

	Both sexes	*% of population*	*Male*	*Percent*	*Female*	*Percent*
Under 15	1,772,099	43.0	893,543	43.5	878,556	42.1
15 - 65 years	2,280,545	55.4	1,128,243	54.9	1,177,915	56.4
Over 65	65,683	1.6	34,337	1.7	1,346	1.5
Total	4,118,327	100.0	2,056,123	100.0	2,087,817	100.0

Source of basic data: National Statistics Office and National Statistical Coordination Board.

Table 2.09 Age distribution of ARMM population, in percent (1995, 2000 and 2007)

	1995	*2000*	*2007*
0-14 years	42.5	40.8	43.0
15-65 years	56.2	57.5	55.4
65 years and over	1.3	1.7	1.6

Source: National Statistics Office 2012.

LANGUAGES SPOKEN AND ETHNO-LINGUISTIC IDENTITY

What are the principal home languages spoken in the region? What groups speak the languages identified in the previous item? What is the language policy envisioned and/or implemented by local government?

The provinces of the ARMM are home to three major ethno-linguistic groups and ten minor ones (in terms of the number of people speaking them). The three principal languages are Maguindanaon, Maranao, and Tausug. In addition, each province has a different principal language spoken by its residents, as shown in tables 2.10a-c. In Basilan, Yakan is the principal language spoken by more than 40 percent of the households, with Tausug used by 23 percent of households. Tausug is the principal language of Sulu and is spoken by more than 87 percent of the households in that province. Almost 88 percent of the residents of Lanao del Sur commonly speak the Maranao language. No statistical data on commonly spoken languages are available for Maguindanao and Tawi-Tawi. However, in Maguindanao the people principally speak Maguindanaon, while in Tawi-Tawi the dominant Sama population speak Sinama. Within each province, there are other languages as well as dialects of the principal language that are also spoken. In Maguindanao, for instance, there is a significant Iranun community that speaks its own language, which is related to Maguindanaon and Maranao. Even fellow Maguindanaon speakers, speaking different dialects, such as those of the *tau sa laya* (upriver people who historically

belonged to the Buayan sultanate) and of the *tau sa ilud* (downriver people of the traditional Maguindanao sultanate) sometimes find it difficult to identify with each other linguistically (McKenna 1998, 29).

Table 2.10a Basilan: Languages/dialects generally spoken in households (2000)

Languages/Dialect	*Households*	*Percent*
Yakan	137,545	41.36
Tausug	76,366	22.96
Chavacano/Bisaya/ Cebuano/Hiligaynon/ Ilonggo/Ilocano/ Ibanag	71,344	21.45
Others/Sama/Badjao/Tagalog	46,174	14.23
Total	331,429	100.00

Source: NSO Census of Population 2000.
Note: Figures are estimates based on a 10% sample.

Table 2.10b Lanao del Sur: Languages/dialects generally spoken in households (2000)

Languages/Dialect	*Households*	*Percent*
Maranao	85,401	87.95
Hiligaynon, Ilonggo	3,183	3.28
Cebuano	2,384	2.46
Ibanag	1,491	1.54
Iranon	1,161	1.20
Bisaya / Binisaya	542	0.56
Tagalog	258	0.27
Maguindanao	84	0.09
Others	2,600	2.68
Total	97,104	100.00

Source: NSO Census of Population 2000.
Note: Figures are estimates based on a 10% sample.

Table 2.10c Sulu: Languages/dialects generally spoken in households (2000)

Languages/Dialect	*Households*	*Percent*
Tausog	86,041	87.7
Sama (samal)/Abakanon	7,438	7.6
Ibanag	1,983	2.0
Badjao, Sama Dilaut	1,471	1.5
Others	1,218	1.2
Total	98, 151	100.0

Source: NSO Census of Population 2000.
Note: Figures are estimates based on a 10% sample.

Non-Mindanao languages, particularly Visayan languages, have become significant due to in-migration. Increasingly, Tagalog, the basis for

Filipino, the national language, has also become widely spoken in the ARMM. In recent years, the national language has spread broadly all over the country (not just in Mindanao), thanks to the influence of mass media, particularly television and the movies. This is also the result of the promotion of Filipino (and, to a certain extent, English—in effect a bilingual policy) in education in accordance with the 1987 Constitution. The predominant local languages are used as auxiliary languages for instruction in the lowest primary grades.

PRINCIPAL IDENTITY GROUPS

What are the principal identity groups – e.g., ethnic, religious, racial, etc. – within the population? What are the estimated sizes of these groups in terms of proportion of the population? Are any of the groups officially recognized by the government, for example, for special preferences (such as affirmative action) or as indigenous groups? What are the principal ethnic, racial and religious groups? Is any one group especially dominant in social and political life? Are relations among any two or more groups especially troubled, contentious or antagonistic? Are any groups marginalized from the rest of society (under-represented in economic or political decision making)? Are certain ethnic/racial groups considered substantially: i) richer?; ii) poorer?

The Philippines, according to the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (no date), is composed of 77 major ethno-linguistic groups. The major groups consist of the following: Cebuano, Ilocano, Pangasinense, Kapampangan, Tagalog, Bicolano, Waray, and Ilonggo also known as Hiligaynon. All of these groups were Christianized by Spanish colonization. Catholicism is the dominant religion, with 81 percent of the population listed as such; an additional 11.6 percent are classified as other Christians, with Muslims constituting about 5.1 percent (Pangalangan 2010, 559). In addition, there are reportedly over 100 tribal groups, also referred to as indigenous peoples, a number of whom have been Christianized as well.

On the other hand, 90 percent of the population of the ARMM are Muslims, with the rest mostly Christians of different denominations, plus a smattering of non-Muslims and non-Christians, particularly among the Lumad (indigenous groups). The Catholic Church has a strong presence in the region in education (as in the rest of the country) with even Muslims studying in its schools.

The homogeneity in religion in the ARMM is, however, not matched by a similar uniformity in ethnic identity and cultural traditions. As the tables in the previous section shows, each province is dominated by a

particular Muslim ethno-linguistic group (also referred to as tribes by people in the area) speaking its own language and standing on its own cultural practices, history, and traditions. These groups even display different attitudes towards their fellow Muslims, as well as their non-Muslim neighbors. The thirteen ethno-linguistic groups of the Muslims of Mindanao consist of Maguindanaon, Meranao [Maranao], Iranun, Tausug, Sama, Yakan, Kulibugan, Jama Mapun, Ka'agan, Sangil, Badjao [Sama Dilaut], Molbug, and Palawani (The Institute of Bangsamoro Studies and The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue 2011, Box 1 page 14).

Of the 10 percent of the ARMM population that is non-Muslim, eight out of ten persons are Christians, mostly descendants of settlers from Luzon and the Visayas who were first encouraged to relocate to Mindanao during the American colonial period. The remaining 20 percent represent Lumad groups that may or may not be Christian, but whose history and cultural traditions set them apart from the dominant groups. Of the minority non-Muslim groups, the indigenous Lumad are represented by the Teduray and Manobo who live in the mountainous areas of Maguindanao.

The most marginalized groups within the ARMM, as in the rest of Mindanao, are probably the Lumad. These groups subsist by basic farming and fishing, with an occasional surplus that is sold for cash or exchanged for goods. They also live in the remotest highland villages; historically (and similarly with indigenous peoples groups in the Visayas and Luzon), they were the groups that resisted assimilation into the dominant religion of the lowland and the coasts.

Table 2.11 Mindanao population by ethnic group (2000)

Region	*Christians*	*% Share*	*Muslims*	*% Share*	*Lumads*	*% Share*
Region IX	2,264,031	73.4	557,511	18.1	263,780	8.5
Region X	2,524,811	92.0	19,430	0.7	199,653	7.3
Region XI	4,318,369	83.3	141,681	2.7	721,249	13.9
Region XII	1,755,702	7.7	727,039	28.1	108,731	4.2
Region XIII	1,957,662	93.6	8,638	0.4	125,205	6.0
ARMM	204,116	8.5	2,146,957	89.1	59,762	2.5
Mindanao	13,024,691	71.9	3,601,266	19.9	1,478,380	8.2

Source: National Statistics Office Census of Population 2000.

There is a common view that the Sama Dilaut, on the other hand, constitute the most marginalized of the Muslim groups of Mindanao. They live in small boats in various locations in the Sulu Archipelago and lead a largely nomadic life fishing in the Sulu and Celebes Seas. They are apparently impoverished in terms of material possessions, are viewed as largely uneducated and illiterate, and regarded with derision by some of

their fellow Muslims. Nimmo (2001, 18) reports that the Tausug sometimes call the Sama Dilaut *Luwa'an,* literally "something spit out," but which he translates as "outcast." He says this "reflects the pariah position of most Sama Dilaut groups in the Sulu islands" (Nimmo 2001, 18). This pariah status seems to stem from the fact that the Sama Dilaut refuse to conform to the convention of settling in permanent communities (although some of them have done so) and for espousing and practicing religious rituals that predate Islam, although they are nominally Muslims.

Some of the FGD participants, who called the Sama Dilaut "Badjau," seemed to blame their itinerant, sea-faring way as the reason for the Sama Dilaut's impoverishment and backwardness. A few said they knew of government attempts to get the Sama Dilaut to settle in permanent communities on land so that their children could attend school, so that they could avail of government services, and so that they could participate in political affairs, such as in the local councils. Their resistance to such attempts is understandable considering that it would effectively disrupt, if not break, a way of life that has served them well for centuries.

The 1987 Constitution specifically recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples as laid down in various international documents and treaties. The national government passed the Indigenous People's Rights Act in 1997 that strives to protect the traditional rights and ways of life of indigenous peoples and enable them to sustain themselves by productively managing their traditional resources, most importantly their land. The law established the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the government agency responsible for indigenous peoples' affairs. In 2009, the NCIP issued an administrative order requiring the participation of IPs in local decision-making bodies and in the local legislative councils. Implementation of this order has been spotty and slow. In only one FGD group was this participation even mentioned and involved only minority Muslim groups.

In the sectarian violence that flared just before the declaration of martial law in 1972, there were a number of incidents where armed Christian groups had attacked Muslim communities and armed Muslim groups then retaliated against Christian farmers. While these clashes cost many lives lost, extensive damage to property, and displaced many from their homes and communities, McKenna (1998, 149) believes that they were not initiated as a systematic campaign by one group versus another but were the result of particular grievances and were of a limited nature. At the height of the Mindanao conflict, however, informal armed opposition to the Muslim separatist struggle arose in the form of paramilitary groups (also referred to as militia, vigilante groups, or private armies) among Christian

settlers. These militia had their origins in the civilian defense forces organized and used by the national government and the military to combat the communist insurgency. When the MNLF began its war, the government organized similar militia in the Muslim areas, composed mostly of non-Muslim civilians recruited to assist the military against the separatist movement. This militia underwent various incarnations, from the Barrio Self-Defense Units (BSDU) to the Integrated Civilian Home Defense Force (ICHDF) to the Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF), until its final form as the Civilian Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU), in an attempt by the authorities to discipline the members and to stop them from pillaging villages and terrorizing hapless civilians, all to no avail (The Institute of Bangsamoro Studies and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue 2011, 15-22). This use of civilians to assist the military was described by then Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos as a low-cost alternative to the regular military in combating insurgency and rebellion (The Institute of Bangsamoro Studies and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue 2011, 18). These low-cost but undisciplined armed militia gave birth to vigilante groups in Mindanao, whose members claimed that both the communist insurgency and the separatism sought by the Muslim rebels threatened their way of life. These were composed of self-armed volunteers that went under various names: *Alsa Masa, Alamara, Alsa Lumad, Ilaga, Ituman Group, Kuratong Baleleng, Nakasaka*, and *Tadtad*, some of the names describing the particularly vicious methods that they employed in dealing with whoever they considered their enemies. Although not officially sanctioned by government, these groups were said to be welcomed, tolerated, and even armed by the military (The Institute of Bangsamoro Studies and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue 2011, 23). Such paramilitary activities and vigilantism no doubt contributed to feelings of animosity and alienation between Muslims and non-Muslims. The fact that these vigilante groups continue to crop up during periods of conflict may be an enduring source of tension in the region. Vigilantism is generally associated with a weak justice system and those who turn to it are desperate to right some perceived wrong committed against them (The Institute of Bangsamoro Studies and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue 2011, 32). The persistence of such armed groups, many of which have been accused of various violations of human rights, constitutes a serious threat to democracy in the region.

SOCIAL RELATIONS AND SOCIAL HIERARCHY

The Muslim territories in Mindanao at the time of Spanish colonization were constituted into sultanates. The major sultanates then were those in Sulu, Maguindanao, Buayan, and "the *Pat a Pangampong ko Ranao* (confederation of the four emirates of Lanao)" (The Institute of Bangsamoro Studies and The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue 2011, Box 1 page 14). There were also various minor sultanates in the Muslim areas. These sultanates were typical of a feudal and hierarchical society that ranked various groups according to their assigned status, which in turn regulated how they related with each other, with the nobility at the top below which were the lesser social groups subject to their (the nobility's) rule. This traditional hierarchy was not a part of Islam but rather was a common feature among all the communities in island Southeast Asia at that time. Islam as a religion permeated these layers of social stratification, but did not radically transform them although it did change the form of the rule of chieftains. What happened was that the local chieftains transformed themselves into a nobility whose right to rule was now descended from the Sarip (Sharif), a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammed, who had established the sultanate and was the first sultan. Sarip Kabungsuan, for example, was the Prophet's direct descendant who founded the sultanates of Maguindanao by himself marrying into the existing dominant chiefdoms and, later, by allowing other chiefs to marry his children. Invariably, only the descendants of the Sarip had the right to rule or be part of the ruling class. Islam was thus used to justify what McKenna (1998, 48) calls "the myth of sanctified inequality." The datu was, by descent, the leader of the community (the *inged*) and his subjects rendered him tribute and labor service in exchange for his protection (primarily against predation by other datu). While the sultanates no longer exist, this traditional hierarchical system and its implied cultural and social appurtenances continue to thrive. It was commonly heard during the focus groups discussions that ordinary citizens owed their allegiance to the clan (or community) and its leader. This traditional datu system with its social hierarchy and enforced allegiance to the head was commonly denounced by the FGD participants and KII interviewees as one source of continuing grief in the lives of the people of the ARMM.

The idea that traditional leaders have a positive role to play feeds the clamor from certain groups for giving sultans an official capacity in political decision making in the ARMM. Sultans are held in some esteem, particularly in Maranao society, where people still value their counsel and assistance, particularly in matters that require arbitration or adjudication.

The Sultan of Sulu continues to assert its historical claims on leadership and territory in that part of Mindanao.

The traditional social hierarchy of Muslim society in Mindanao has a dark legacy, however, through the dominance of powerful and wealthy clans. The economic and political power of these clans was recently (and unfortunately) highlighted in connection with the murder of 57 people, allegedly with the participation and at the direction of the Ampatuan clan of Maguindanao, in November 2009, in relation to what then were upcoming elections. The patriarch of the Ampatuans, Datu Andal Sr., is a former governor of Maguindanao province and is one of the principal co-accused. He lists his occupation as farming, but it is farming on a large scale. The clan is said to own 500 hectares of land, some of it as substantial residential lots in ritzy neighborhoods, but most of it as farmland in Maguindanao and Cotabato (Lingao 2012). Many of his children and close relatives are local government officials at both provincial and municipal levels. His son, Andal Jr., was the regional governor of the ARMM at the time of the killings, for which he has also been accused as a co-conspirator.

This power structure has been traditionally the domain of men, with women taking on domestic roles and chores. While women in general are under-represented in economic and political decision making in Philippine society, they are probably more so in the ARMM given traditional cultural practices in the region as well as the interpretation of women's roles as expounded in Islamic religious texts.

Muslim women are struggling to redefine their role in society and to broaden their participation in affairs outside of the home. Some of the women participants in the FGDs, for example, expressed strongly the hope that women would have an equal share of power in Islamic society and that practices that guarantee fairness and equality for women would be promoted. Always a heated topic of discussion during the FGDs was the issue of multiple wives, for example.

2.3 Socio-Economic Base and Regional Finance

THE REGIONAL ECONOMY AND REGIONAL DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Which sectors of the economy and specific industries are most important to the region? How do economic patterns shape society, peoples' livelihoods, and communities? Is there a single manufacturer or economic sector that dominates?

Based on latest data from the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), the ARMM economy in 2011 produced a total output

(gross domestic product) of a little over 86 million pesos in current prices, or about 45 million pesos in constant 2000 prices, as the tables 2.12a and 2.12b show. The data also show that the ARMM historically has contributed the least to national product among all the country's regions, no doubt due to the long-running separatist conflict but also as a consequence of central government neglect of that region's economic development.

The ARMM economy for 2011 actually declined in real terms by 1.0 percent compared to a 2.3 percent growth rate in 2010 from the previous year. This decline, according to the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), was caused by negative growth in the agriculture and forestry, and fishery subsectors, which contributed 63 percent to the ARMM's economy, coupled by a slowdown in the industry and service subsectors of the regional economy. Services and industry contributed 32.0 percent and 5.0 percent, respectively (National Statistical Coordination Board 2012a).

Table 2.12a Gross regional domestic products, 2009 to 2011 at current prices (in thousand pesos)

Region / Year		*2009*	*2010*	*2011*
Philippines		8,026,143,388	9,003,480,492	9,735,521,045
NCR	Metro Manila	2,871,469,725	3,236,352,849	3,479,904,737
CAR	Cordillera	180,184,790	197,993,795	210,078,695
I	Ilocos	250,038,887	274,102,946	293,917,589
II	Cagayan Valley	147,640,958	150,037,699	167,492,463
III	Central Luzon	701,756,823	788,897,767	882,806,066
IVA	CALABARZON	1,351,986,481	1,557,068,839	1,644,842,774
IVB	MIMAROPA	154,484,533	162,001,979	176,175,937
V	Bicol	170,957,029	191,534,352	206,618,832
VI	Western Visayas	329,382,086	359,703,101	395,416,966
VII	Central Visayas	464,415,328	538,645,826	601,879,776
VIII	Eastern Visayas	218,537,884	228,815,244	242,593,819
IX	Zamboanga Peninsula	170,432,997	187,254,741	200,882,762
X	Northern Mindanao	302,238,429	340,457,173	367,099,833
XI	Davao Region	336,529,792	372,074,383	408,449,530
XII	SOCCSKSARGEN	218,564,310	237,814,347	261,548,295
XIII	Caraga	87,220,101	99,037,158	109,764,960
ARMM	Muslim Mindanao	70,303,235	81,688,292	86,048,009

Reproduced from: National Statistical Coordination Board 2012b.

Table 2.12b Gross regional domestic products, 2009 to 2011 at constant (2000) prices (in thousand pesos)

Region / Year		*2009*	*2010*	*2011*
Philippines		5,297,239,770	5,701,539,153	5,924,409,486
NCR	Metro Manila	1,898,573,862	2,043,007,187	2,114,839,661
CAR	Cordillera	112,792,966	119,846,575	122,410,056
I	Ilocos	168,426,092	180,404,874	185,735,812

(Table 2.12b continuation)

II	Cagayan Valley	100,691,791	99,594,948	104,943,823
III	Central Luzon	464,403,057	514,244,197	552,769,201
IVA	CALABARZON	903,910,748	1,004,314,886	1,030,165,425
IVB	MIMAROPA	102,146,657	103,266,741	105,860,565
V	Bicol	110,301,848	116,091,899	119,159,545
VI	Western Visayas	217,481,681	225,436,024	237,726,212
VII	Central Visayas	301,882,912	339,476,684	366,380,366
VIII	Eastern Visayas	146,419,070	149,281,960	151,908,570
IX	Zamboanga Peninsula	115,411,480	119,556,623	119,702,783
X	Northern Mindanao	198,117,878	211,774,928	217,029,363
XI	Davao Region	205,705,040	215,894,203	224,848,985
XII	SOCCSKSARGEN	148,069,604	151,076,139	157,125,632
XIII	Caraga	58,272,211	62,604,021	68,591,801
ARMM	Muslim Mindanao	44,632,876	45,667,263	45,211,684

Reproduced from: National Statistical Coordination Board 2012b.

This sluggish growth in the ARMM economy contrasts sharply with the positive growth shown by CARAGA, the region just above the ARMM on the lowest rungs of the regional economic hierarchy. CARAGA's economy grew 9.6 percent in 2011, largely driven by its service and industry sectors. In contrast to the ARMM's dependence on farming and fishing, CARAGA's agriculture and fishery subsectors accounted for just over 21 percent of the region's economy (National Statistical Coordination Board 2012a).

On a per capita basis, the ARMM also suffered the lowest level at a mere 13,600 pesos per head (at constant 2000 prices), or about a fifth of the national average. CARAGA, on the other hand, enjoyed double that figure. (See tables 2.13a and 2.13b.)

Table 2.13a Per capita gross regional domestic products 2009 to 2011 at current prices (in pesos)

Region / Year		*2009*	*2010*	*2011*
Philippines		88,180	97,227	103,366
NCR	Metro Manila	245,500	272,227	288,062
CAR	Cordillera	112,897	122,135	127,614
I	Ilocos	53,166	57,613	61,076
II	Cagayan Valley	46,215	46,362	51,100
III	Central Luzon	70,335	77,569	85,186
IVA	CALABARZON	109,592	122,942	126,589
IVB	MIMAROPA	57,053	58,863	62,995
V	Bicol	31,897	35,255	37,526
VI	Western Visayas	46,863	50,538	54,870
VII	Central Visayas	69,218	78,996	86,880
VIII	Eastern Visayas	53,819	55,678	58,335

(Table 2.13a continuation)

IX	Zamboanga Peninsula	50,731	54,800	57,815
X	Northern Mindanao	71,424	78,980	83,628
XI	Davao Region	76,435	83,017	89,552
XII	SOCCSKSARGEN	54,155	57,659	62,080
XIII	Caraga	36,318	40,675	44,472
ARMM	Muslim Mindanao	21,843	25,029	26,004

Reproduced from: National Statistical Coordination Board 2012c.

Table 2.13b Per capital gross regional domestic products (2009 to 2011) at constant (2000) prices (in pesos)

Region / Year		*2009*	*2010*	*2011*
Philippines		58,199	61,570	62,902
NCR	Metro Manila	162,321	171,849	175,064
CAR	Cordillera	70,672	73,929	74,359
I	Ilocos	35,813	37,919	38,596
II	Cagayan Valley	31,519	30,775	32,017
III	Central Luzon	46,546	50,563	53,339
IVA	CALABARZON	73,271	79,298	79,283
IVB	MIMAROPA	37,724	37,522	37,853
V	Bicol	20,580	21,369	21,642
VI	Western Visayas	30,943	31,673	32,988
VII	Central Visayas	44,993	49,787	52,886
VIII	Eastern Visayas	36,058	36,325	36,529
IX	Zamboanga Peninsula	34,353	34,988	34,451
X	Northern Mindanao	46,818	49,128	49,441
XI	Davao Region	46,721	48,170	49,298
XII	SOCCSKSARGEN	36,688	36,629	37,294
XIII	Caraga	24,264	25,712	27,790
ARMM	Muslim Mindanao	13,867	13,992	13,663

Reproduced from: National Statistical Coordination Board 2012c.

This high dependence on agriculture, which is characterized by a large number of small farms (of an average size of 2.1 hectares per farm, according to the National Statistics Office census of 2002 (National Statistics Office 2004), describes a typical peasant economy characterized by low productivity and low incomes. The dominant seasonal crops are corn and palay, while coconut trees and bananas constitute the permanent crops of the region, a situation typical of low-income agricultural communities around the country. Aside from the vagaries of the weather, agriculture in the ARMM has suffered from the ravages of forty years of intermittent armed conflict.

Table 2.14 Number and area of farms by province of the ARMM (1991 and 2002)

Region and Province	*Number of Farms*		*Area of Farms (hectares)*	
	2002	*1991*	*2002*	*1991*
ARMM	248,528	227,571	533,410	565,219
Basilan	25,344	16,137	82,480	75,374
Lanao del Sur	64,813	58,199	140,111	153,224
Maguindanao	95,089	100,428	221,174	238,725
Sulu	49,392	38,769	59,501	68,709
Tawi-tawi	13,890	14,038	30,144	29,187

Reproduced from: National Statistics Office 2004.

As table 2.14 above shows, in the 90s, the total area of farm land decreased by about five-and-a-half percent, while the number of farms increased by more than 9 percent. Almost all of that increase in farmed area was in Basilan. This is probably due to the expansion of rubber plantations, the most commercially successful type of farming in the province with more than half of its barangays engaged in growing rubber trees. More land is planted to coconuts, but copra, the major product of coconut farming, has had to face highly variable world market prices since its highs in the 70s.

The small average size of farms in the ARMM conceals the fact that large tracts of farmland are often claimed by members of a clan, and particularly by the clan leader (Salerno 2011), just as they have historically done so. It is this traditional clan-based production relation that has differentiated the Muslim regions and has probably prevented the social problems associated with large landowners, large mono-crop plantations, and tenancy typical in the Christianized areas of the country (a direct consequence of Spanish colonial rule and the land ownership arrangements it imposed). A clan-based production system invariably presents its own problems as its direct producers must support the small elite that heads the clan and supposedly guards its interests. The clan elite, in effect, controls and regulates productive use of the land, and even of its disposal. Moreover, it is this persistence of a small-peasant economy that such an arrangement favors that has deprived the Muslim provinces of opportunities for the accumulation of capital that is necessary for transitioning to a modernizing economy.

EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION

What new patterns in economic development have emerged in recent years, for example, in response to globalization?

The ARMM, as well as the whole of Mindanao, has sought opportunities to benefit from the effects of globalization while trying to avoid its pitfalls. The BIMP-EAGA cooperation initiative for regional economic growth was already mentioned above, and involves "the entire sultanate of Brunei; the provinces of Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Maluku and West Papua of Indonesia; the states of Sabah and Sarawak and federal territory of Labuan in Malaysia; and Mindanao region and the province of Palawan in the Philippines. The subregion covers a land area of 1.6 million square kilometers with an estimated population of more than 57 million" (Asian Development Bank 2012). Hopes are high that BIMP-EAGA will still lead to sustainable growth despite the eighteen, so far lackluster, years of its existence. The only real movement has been the promotion of ecotourism in the area with the launch last year of the Equator Asia website (still under construction when last checked). However, the BIMP-EAGA summit in April of this year (2012) reiterated the intent of the area's leaders to use BIMP-EAGA as a complement to the realization of the ASEAN Community in 2015 and to developing the subregion as a food basket. The BIMP-EAGA Implementation Blueprint for 2012 contains only one mention of the ARMM and this is related to improving transport services and port infrastructure along the Zamboanga Peninsula-Sabah subcorridor that goes through the island provinces of Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi. This is part of the Greater Sulu-Sulawesi Economic Corridor that has been designated as a priority area for development in the Blueprint. The document defines economic corridors as

> Geographically defined areas where synchronized and systematic development aims to facilitate the efficient cross-border movement of the factors of production; and stimulate trade, tourism, investment, and other economic activities. Infrastructure development is a prerequisite for an economic corridor to evolve, as it can help activate and accelerate crossborder activities; promote access to markets; reduce trade and transport costs; and facilitate growth between two or more production, export, or consumption points. (Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-The Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area 2012, 7)

No impact of globalization is as pervasive and significant for the country, and the ARMM, as the export of its workers. In 2011 alone, the

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration estimated a deployment abroad of 1.3 million workers, according to the Senate Economic Planning Office (2012). In total, about 10 percent of the population lives and works abroad, and the same Senate report said that remittances in 2011 totaled over 20 billion US dollars, contributing substantially to the country's national income.

Data from the 2011 Survey on Overseas Filipinos show that the CALABARZON region contributed the most to this export labor pool with 16.5 percent coming from that region (see table 2.15 below). The ARMM contributed 3.0 percent, or more than 64,700 workers, to overseas deployment in 2011, down a bit in percentage terms from 2010, but larger in absolute number of workers deployed.

Table 2.15 Number of OFWs per region

	2010			*2011*		
Region	*Both Sexes*	*Male*	*Female*	*Both Sexes*	*Male*	*Female*
Philippines (in thousands)	2,043	1,068	975	2,158	1,126	1,032
Percent	100.0	52.3	47.7	100.0	52.2	47.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
National Capital Region	13.8	16.2	11.2	12.5	15.2	9.5
Cordillera AR	1.8	1.0	2.7	1.9	1.1	2.8
Ilocos Region	9.5	7.4	11.8	9.2	8.1	10.4
Cagayan Valley	6.1	3.1	9.5	6.3	3.3	9.7
Central Luzon	14.4	17.1	11.5	14.3	16.3	12.2
CALABARZON	16.0	20.3	11.3	16.5	20.6	12.1
MIMAROPA	1.7	1.6	1.8	1.9	2.0	1.9
Bicol Region	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.3	3.4	3.2
Western Visayas	8.3	7.7	8.9	8.5	7.3	9.8
Central Visayas	6.6	7.9	5.1	6.9	8.3	5.4
Eastern Visayas	2.0	2.2	1.7	2.0	2.3	1.7
Zamboanga Peninsula	2.3	2.0	2.6	1.9	1.5	2.2
Northern Mindanao	3.0	3.2	2.7	3.5	3.6	3.4
Davao Region	2.8	2.1	3.6	2.3	1.5	3.1
Caraga	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6
ARMM	3.1	1.8	4.5	3.0	1.8	4.2

Reproduced from: National Statistics Office, 2010 and 2011 Survey on Overseas Filipinos. http://www.census.gov.ph/sites/default/files/attachments/hsd/specialrelease/Tab2.pdf.
Notes: Details may not add up to totals due to rounding.
The estimates cover overseas Filipinos whose departure occurred within the last five years and who are working or had worked abroad during the past six months (April to September) of the survey period.

What is more, gender distribution of overseas workers from the ARMM has been overwhelmingly female, as against the predominantly male deployment nationwide. As a whole, as noted in the Senate Economic Planning Office report, the overseas labor market may be shifting from the skilled industrial and construction workers of the 70s to those in domestic services, nursing, waiting at tables and bartending, and caregiving today, as shown in the top ten work categories in table 2.16 below.

Table 2.16 Number of deployed OFWs by top ten occupational categories and gender, new hires[1] (2011)

Occupational Categories	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
All Occupational Categories - Total	181,145	217,830	398,975
Household Service Workers	3,204	135,877	139,081
Nurses, Professional	2,054	13,814	15,868
Waiters, Bartenders & Related	5,866	6,082	11,948
Caregivers & Caretakers	565	8,858	9,423
Wiremen Electrical	9,341	37	9,378
Plumbers & Pipe fitters	8,789	29	8,818
Welders & Flame cutters	7,800	28	7,828
Laborers/Helpers General	6,520	491	7,011
Charworkers, Cleaners & Related	2,999	3,701	6,700
Cooks & Related Workers	3,040	2,051	5,091

Reproduced from: Senate Economic Planning Office 2012.

[1]Combined total number of OFWs-new hires with occupational disaggregation (covers at least 95 percent of the total deployed land-based new hires).

While it is a point of debate whether or not overseas employment is on the whole beneficial or detrimental to the country in the face of a large labor surplus, endemic poverty, and the globalization of the labor market, a clearly negative aspect of the phenomenon has been the parallel increase in human trafficking cases. Human trafficking involves the recruitment of men, women, and children who are forced to work under conditions of extreme servitude, including commercial sex, both locally and in other countries. The U.S. Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report defines trafficking in persons or human trafficking as "umbrella terms for activities involved when one person obtains or holds another person in compelled service" (2011b, 7). The three major forms are forced labor, bonded labor or debt bondage in which work is compelled as payment for debt, and sex trafficking in which "an adult is coerced, forced, or deceived into prostitution—or maintained in prostitution through coercion" (U.S. Department of State 2011b, 7). The island provinces of the ARMM are a preferred point of exit for persons so trafficked because of their proximity

to Sabah, Malaysia. In a Philippine Daily Inquirer report by Jerome Aning posted on 24 November 2012, for example, 64 persons were intercepted by the government's Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) in Bongao, Tawi-tawi for attempting to travel to Malaysia without travel papers. Reliable statistics that show how many actual persons are being trafficked are difficult to come by and even the U.S. State Department report only says that a significant number of Filipinos are being taken abroad for forced labor.

PATTERNS OF EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME EARNING

What are the patterns of employment, unemployment and income earning in the region?

Table 2.17 shows basic labor force and employment statistics for the different regions of the country. One feature that immediately stands out is the comparatively low labor force participation rate for the ARMM, 57.1 percent compared to the national average of 64.1 percent. In fact, the ARMM is the only region where labor participation is below the 60 percent level. (Labor force participation rate in developed economies such as the United States are at about the 68 percent level.) A low participation rate means that a significant portion of the population does not consider itself part of the labor force of employed and currently unemployed people who are looking for work. One possible reason for this low rate in the ARMM is that many have simply given up on finding employment, discouraged by the lack of job opportunities, or prevented from doing so because of certain contingencies, such as the constant state of conflict over the last four decades. However, the high employment rate tends to discount the former because a high rate means that workers who look for work tend to find a job. A more likely reason is that a significant portion of the population, namely women, do not consider work outside the home as an option, either because of traditional cultural constraints on women working, religious considerations that discourage women from seeking work, or socio-economic constraints, such as poor working conditions for women, low pay, the desire to devote full time to family care, and other similar obstacles. Such constraints, however, seem to apply only to women from the poorer segments of ARMM society.

Table 2.17 Labor force and employment statistics 2010 (rate in percent)

Region	*Labor Force Population* (in thousands)*	*Labor Force Participation Rate*	*Employment Rate*	*Unemployment Rate*	*Under-employment Rate*
PHILIPPINES	38,893	64.1	92.7	7.3	18.8
NCR	4,941	62.4	88.5	11.5	11.9
CAR	745	67.4	94.9	5.1	15.7
Ilocos Region	2,098	61.8	91.5	8.5	14.8
Cagayan Valley	1,452	66.2	96.3	3.7	14.7
Central Luzon	4,074	61.0	91.2	8.8	9.1
CALABARZON	4,966	63.6	90.5	9.5	17.4
MIMAROPA	1,260	69.2	95.6	4.4	23.7
Bicol Region	2,201	64.4	94.1	5.9	36.8
Western Visayas	3,201	64.8	92.9	7.1	26.7
Central Visayas	3,040	65.8	92.4	7.6	16.4
Eastern Visayas	1,758	64.1	94.5	5.5	20.9
Zamboanga Peninsula	1,439	65.9	96.3	3.7	21.4
Northern Mindanao	1,956	69.8	95.0	5.0	28.0
Davao Region	1,835	65.0	94.0	6.0	19.8
SoCCSKSarGen	1,691	65.9	95.6	4.4	20.8
Caraga	1,051	65.4	93.5	6.5	22.0
ARMM	1,188	57.1	96.1	3.9	13.5

Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey.
*15 yrs old & over.

EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER

What is the gender distribution of income earning through employment and/or small business ownership? Are young women or young men (from 18 to 25) especially likely to be unemployed? What is the dependency ratio1 for a single average income?

In the ARRM, employment is significantly dominated by men, which supports the assertion made above. It is surely this high unemployment of women that is one reason why many females decline to join the labor force or drop out. Table 2.18 shows that in 2009, about 71 percent of the employed population were men; of the unemployed, 59 percent were women.

Ironically, the women who do work take positions that on average are probably higher paying than those taken by the men. In table 2.19, a higher proportion of women work as corporate executives and as professionals than men. This may be because women who work are those who also finish higher levels of education (college and beyond), and who

probably live in highly urbanized areas and come from families in the higher income groups.

Table 2.18 ARMM employment by gender 2009
(in thousands except percent)

	Employed			*Unemployed*		
Area	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
ARMM	810	325	1,135	11	16	27
Rate	71%	29%	100%	41%	59%	100%

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board.
Notes: 1. Details may not add up to totals due to rounding.
2. Data were averages of four survey rounds (January, April, July and October).
3. Data were generated using population projections based on the 2000 Census of Population.

Table 2.19 ARMM major occupational group employment by gender 2009
(in thousands except percent)

Major Occupation Group	*Male*	*%*	*Female*	*%*	*Total*
Farmers, Forestry Workers and Fishermen	471	91	47	9	518
Laborers and Unskilled Workers	185	53	161	47	346
Officials of Government and Special Interest-organizations, Corporate Executives, Managers, Managing Proprietors and Supervisors	45	45	56	55	101
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	46	100	-	-	46
Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers	22	58	16	42	38
Professionals	7	24	22	76	29
Clerks	10	50	10	50	20
Trades and Related Workers	14	70	6	30	20
Technicians and Associate Professionals	6	55	5	45	11
Special Occupations	2	100	-	-	2
Total	810	71	325	29	1,135

Source: National Statistical Coordinating Board.

While male employment in the ARMM may be comparatively higher, it is also true that many of those men with jobs work in sectors that generally generate low returns or pay low wages. It was mentioned above that agriculture is the dominant production sector in the ARMM economy. Looking at data on employment by industry confirms this. More than half, 54.3 percent of those employed in the ARMM, work in the agricultural, hunting, and forestry subsector, while another 16.8 percent work in the fisheries subsector—and more than 90 percent of the workers are men. The national averages on employment in these subsectors are 29.1 percent and 4.1 percent, respectively, as shown in table 2.20 below. Only the Cordillera Autonomous Region and Cagayan Valley have over half of their workers in agriculture, hunting, and forestry, 52.8 percent and 56.3 percent,

respectively. However, the dependence of seven out of ten workers on the agriculture sector (agriculture and fishery) in the ARMM is substantially higher than in any other region.

What is more, as table 2.20 shows, only 15 percent of the workers in the ARMM work as salaried workers versus 54 percent for the country as a whole. More than half in the ARMM are individually self-employed, while over a quarter are unpaid family workers. These types of work probably provide less than average incomes for majority of the workers of the ARMM.

Table 2.20 Employed by class of worker

	Philippines		*ARMM*	
Class of worker	*in thousands*	*percent*	*in thousands*	*percent*
Total	36,035	100.00	1,142	100.00
Wage and salary workers	19,626	54.46	171	14.97
worked for private household	1,926	5.34	7	0.61
worked for private establishment	14,565	40.42	81	7.09
worked with pay in own family-operated farm or business	111	0.31	4	0.35
worked for government/government corporation	3,025	8.39	79	6.92
Self-employed without any paid employee	10,858	30.13	656	57.44
Employer in own family-operated farm or business	1,394	3.87	8	0.7
Without pay in own family-operated farm or business (unpaid family workers)	4,157	11.54	307	26.88

Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

There are relatively few banks and other formal financial institutions in the ARMM. One reason for this is definitely the armed conflict and the existence of various armed groups that make security of financial institutions a problem. Another may be the special character of Islamic finance, which prohibits the offer of loans that charge interest. One response to this special need was the establishment by the government of a bank, the Amanah Bank, in 1973 to serve the Muslim population of Mindanao and Palawan. In 1990, the bank became known as the Al-Amanah Islamic Investment Bank and was then sold to the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) in 2007. It is currently being rehabilitated by the DBP (Amanah Islamic Bank no date).

POVERTY AND INCOME INEQUALITY IN THE ARMM

What is the rate of socio-economic inequality (usually stated as a ratio between number of people in the highest income segment and the lowest)? What percentages of the population live above and below the poverty line for basic sustenance and food security?

In this sub-section we will discuss not only income inequality in the ARMM but the more general concept of poverty. This is because one of the fundamental problems of the ARMM is not so much unequal wealth distribution (as in the rest of the country) but more so the pervasive poverty that afflicts most of the region, a poverty that has historical roots, but which contemporary factors exacerbate.

Poverty is an elusive concept. It is multifaceted, involving not only material deprivation but also other aspects of human need, such as access to medical care, livelihood, equal job opportunities, and education. In addition, poverty can be measured objectively or subjectively, as well as in absolute or relative terms. In our discussion we will look at various measurements and indicators of poverty in the ARMM. For our purposes we will rely mainly on official data and publications from the government as well as information gathered from focus discussion groups, interviews, and the results of a region-wide survey involving 4,000 respondents conducted by PCID for this assessment.

The Philippines officially defines poverty under Republic Act No. 8425, otherwise known as the Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act of 1997. The law states that the poor

> Refers to individuals and families whose income fall below the poverty threshold as defined by the National Economic and Development Authority and/or cannot afford in a sustained manner to provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing and other essential amenities of life. (Paragraph O, Section 3)

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) bases its estimate of poverty on the Family Income and Expenditures (FIES) survey that is conducted every three years by the National Statistics Office (NSO). The FIES survey has some inherent limitations due to biases in estimates. Some respondents misrepresent the reporting of their income and expenditures; they are afraid that the survey information will be used against them. Others bloat their income to show that they are not as poor as they appear to be. Headcount ratio is the basis of measuring poverty incidence in the Philippines (Orbeta 1996). The poverty threshold is also called the poverty line and depends on an individual's or household's income.

Filipinos who cannot meet the required food sufficiency requirement of 2,000 kilocalories (kcal) for daily dietary needs, and 80 percent of vitamins, mineral, and other nutrient needs, plus other non-food requirements, such as clothing and education, are considered poor. Each province has a different poverty threshold depending on food prices and the preferred local menu. The National Statistics Office collects the prices of food and the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics determines the cost of a one-day menu per province, while the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) recommends what the specific menu items are for each province. There are two yardsticks for poverty measurement: one is the annual per capita poverty threshold, which measures food and non-food requirements and determines the upper bound of poverty; and the other is the annual per capita food threshold, which measures the extreme form of poverty because it directly indicates the ability to sustain life. These measurements are different from province to province, implying that what may be considered poor in a province with a higher poverty threshold may no longer be poor in another province with a lower poverty threshold. For instance, poor families who are just below the poverty line in Metro Manila will no longer be considered poor when they migrate to ARMM simply because the latter region has a lower poverty threshold. Another way to say this is that the cost of living in the ARMM is lower than in Manila.

Table 2.21 shows that the poverty threshold in the ARMM from 2003 to 2004 grew only by 2.9 percent while the national average threshold rose by 5.1 percent. In the rural areas of the ARMM the rate of increase was just 2.2 percent, quite small compared to the overall national growth of 7.3 percent. The decline in the poverty threshold in Sulu contributed to the slower growth of the ARMM's poverty threshold. Usually the poverty threshold should grow parallel with inflation or with the prices of basic goods simply because the threshold is based on prevailing prices in each province. A low growth in poverty threshold coupled with an increase in general prices of basic goods may underestimate the extent of poverty in the ARMM.

Table 2.21 Annual per capita poverty thresholds, by province (2003 and 2004)

Region / Province	*2003 Poverty Threshold (in pesos)*			*2004 Poverty Threshold (in pesos)*			*Growth Rate (percent)*		
	All areas	*Urban*	*Rural*	*All areas*	*Urban*	*Rural*	*All areas*	*Urban*	*Rural*
Philippines	12,475	14,178	11,589	13,113	15,001	12,431	5.1	5.8	7.3
Metro Manila[1]	16,796	16,796	-	17,737	17,737	-	5.6	5.6	-
ARMM	12,739	13,959	12,403	13,111	14,674	12,681	2.9	5.1	2.2
Basilan	11,003	12,574	10,785	11,299	13,213	11,034	2.7	5.1	2.3
Lanao del Sur	13,692	14,353	13,407	14,208	15,103	13,821	3.8	5.2	3.1

(Table 2.21 continuation)

Maguindanao	12,304	12,786	12,194	13,139	13,825	12,982	6.8	8.1	6.5
Sulu	13,445	15,339	12,851	12,698	15,478	11,826	-5.6	0.9	-8.0
Tawi-Tawi	11,714	13,758	11,408	12,583	14,960	12,227	7.4	8.7	7.2

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board.
[1]Metro Manila is completely urban.

The annual per capita food threshold in the ARMM shows a value of about 9,050 pesos, higher than the average for the whole country of 8,737 pesos. One of the reasons for the higher poverty and food thresholds in ARMM is the high price of agricultural products that have to be brought into the region due in part to the region's low agricultural output. Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, and Basilan are all islands with most residents engaged in fishing or in aquaculture, such as seaweed farming. Lanao del Sur is mountainous with a large part of its area occupied by Lake Lanao. Although it has large tracks of arable lands to grow rice, most farmers have abandoned farming and migrated to the cities. Those who remain in the farms usually plant for home consumption and use traditional farming methods. Maguindanao's Liguasan Marsh could be used for agricultural production, but the on-and-off skirmishes between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the national government discourage farmers from cultivating their farms, forcing them to raise livestock or concentrate on other forms of subsistence that are easily moved in times of conflict.

Table 2.22 shows that the average required income each day for an ARMM resident is around 35 pesos for poverty threshold and 25 pesos for food threshold, which are marginally higher than the national averages of 34 pesos and 22 pesos, respectively. Another interesting observation in the two tables is the decrease of the threshold in the province of Sulu. This is unusual since the prices of basic goods have a tendency to increase over time. It may be that some residents in the ARMM produce their own food and report a low income although they are self-sufficient in their dietary needs. Poverty measurement based on income rather than consumption expenditure may not reflect the actual welfare of the poor since agricultural and self-employment income vary from year to year (World Bank 1996).

Table 2.22 Annual per capita food thresholds, by province (2003 and 2004)

Region / Province	*2003 Food Threshold (in pesos)*			*2004 Food Threshold (in pesos)*			*Growth Rate (percent)*		
	All areas	*Urban*	*Rural*	*All areas*	*Urban*	*Rural*	*All areas*	*Urban*	*Rural*
Philippines	8,039	9,009	7,945	8,734	9,569	8,548	8.6	6.2	7.6
Metro Manila[1]	9,974	9,974	-	10,532	10,532	-	5.6	5.6	-
ARMM	8,737	9,481	8,584	9,050	9,965	8,862	3.6	5.1	3.2
Basilan	7,336	8,382	7,205	7,531	8,808	7,371	2.7	5.1	2.3

(Table 2.22 continuation)

Lanao del Sur	9,119	9,544	9,027	9,437	10,043	9,306	3.5	5.2	3.1
Maguindanao	8,496	9,094	8,392	9,068	9,832	8,935	6.7	8.1	6.5
Sulu	9,322	10,071	9,027	8,831	10,162	8,307	-5.3	0.9	-8.0
Tawi-Tawi	7,900	9,064	7,900	8,467	9,856	8,467	7.2	8.7	7.2

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board.
[1]Metro Manila is completely urban.

Over its two decades of existence the ARMM has not made a significant dent in alleviating poverty. Table 2.23 shows the variations in the incidence of poverty among the provinces of the ARMM. From 1997 to 2000 there was a sharp increase in the incidence of poverty in all provinces of the ARMM. Basilan more than doubled its poverty incidence during the period, from 30.2 percent to 65.2 percent. On average, all the provinces gained a 20 percent increase in poverty incidence. Most blame the increase in poverty as the consequence of the all-out war policy of former President Estrada against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). This caused massive displacement and evacuations, destroyed infrastructure, and disrupted people's livelihoods, causing poverty to spike. Many became poor overnight as they lost their properties, homes, and farms when they fled the fighting. There are still some internally displaced evacuees that have not returned to their homes and villages to this day. From 1980 to 1996 the armed conflict aggravated the poverty situation in the ARMM and caused at least 120,000 casualties, destruction to infrastructure, as well as dislocation of people from their communities and sources of livelihood (Lais 2010). The period from 2003 to 2006 showed the same pattern of increase in the incidence of poverty, with the provinces of Tawi-Tawi and Lanao del Sur experiencing a rise of 37.1 percent and 44.7 percent, respectively. One observation from Table 2.23 is that those provinces that are sea-locked (i.e., Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi) exhibit a higher and more variable incidence of poverty.

Table 2.23 Poverty incidence in the ARMM (1997 to 2009)

Region/Province	*1997*	*2000*	*2003*	*2006*	*2009**
Philippines	25.2	26.4	25.6	27.4	26.5
Metro Manila	3.5	5.5	4.9	8.5	4.0
ARMM	46.8	60.8	60.8	69.6	45.9
Basilan	30.2	65.2	61.3	60.0	29.8
Lanao del Sur	36.8	43.2	39.4	57.0	44.8
Maguindanao	27.5	31.9	47.3	45.3	53.7
Sulu	87.5	91.5	89.0	93.8	46.1
Tawi-Tawi	52.1	72.2	67.2	92.1	38.4

Source: Human Development Network 2009.
*Data for 2009 are from the National Statistical Coordination Board's Philippine Poverty Statistics using "refined methodology."

Although the data from 2009 show a lower incidence of poverty compared to previous periods, this is due to a "refined methodology" implemented by the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB). In all periods, the ARMM's poverty incidence is at least twice as large as the country's average. Amendments and changes in official data to reflect the latest findings are occasionally conducted by concerned government agencies in order to provide a more accurate picture for the ARMM. For example, the official population growth rate of ARMM from 2000 to 2007 was around 5.46 percent and its population census showed 4,120,795 residents. The government adjusted the population figure to 3,256,140 for the year 2010, a difference of more than 864,000, or a nine percent decline. Varying values of official data regarding ARMM pose some problems in making conclusive analysis of the region's performance. The reported population figure and level of poverty sometimes do not reflect the true situation on the ground. Local executives tend to induce data gathering agencies to overestimate the size of the population and the extent of poverty. An inflated population means a larger internal revenue allotment (IRA), while a higher count in the size of the poor means more aid and social welfare programs.

The provinces of the ARMM are always included among the top ten poorest provinces of the country, especially Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao, and Lanao del Sur, as shown in table 2.24. At any given time at least three provinces of the ARMM are in the ten poorest provinces—this is appalling considering that there are 81 provinces in the Philippines and the ARMM accounts for only five of them. The province of Sulu during the period 2000 to 2006 left this list of poorest provinces. The improvement in Sulu's status can be attributed to an increase in infrastructure development and the relative peace that prevailed during this period. Moreover, Sulu saw an increase in foreign assistance and various livelihood programs.

Table 2.24 Top ten poorest provinces (2000 and 2006)

2000				*2006*			
Province	*Region*	*Poverty Incidence*	*Rank*	*Province*	*Region*	*Poverty Incidence*	*Rank*
Masbate	V	61.3	1	**Tawi-tawi**	**ARMM**	**78.9**	**1**
Maguindanao	**ARMM**	**59.3**	**2**	Zamboanga del Norte	IX	63.0	2
Sulu	**ARMM**	**58.9**	**3**	**Maguindanao**	**ARMM**	**62.0**	**3**
Ifugao	CAR	55.7	4	Apayao	CAR	57.5	4
Lanao del Sur	**ARMM**	**54.7**	**5**	Surigao Del Norte	Caraga	53.2	5
Camiguin	X	54.2	6	**Lanao del Sur**	**ARMM**	**52.5**	**6**
Camarines Norte	V	52.7	7	Northern Samar	VIII	52.2	7

(Table 2.24 continuation)

Tawi-Tawi	**ARMM**	**52.4**	**8**	Masbate	V	51.0	8
Agusan del Sur	Caraga	52.3	9	Abra	CAR	50.1	9
Romblon	IV-B	52.2	10	Misamis Occidental	X	48.8	10

Source: National Statistics Office, Poverty statistics 2000 and 2006.

Depth of poverty reveals a sad scenario for most provinces of the ARMM. The poverty gap—how far-off from the poverty line the poor are in the ARMM—is twice that of the national average and at least ten times more compared to Metro Manila. Table 2.25 shows clearly that the poverty gap is alarming in the provinces of Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao, and Lanao del Sur. The table indicates not only that the ARMM suffers massive poverty but also that its poor people are the poorest in the country. Table 2.25 is based on the ARMM threshold of poverty. If the country poverty threshold is used, the result would be even more alarming. In examining the ARMM's severity of poverty (that is, taking into account the distance of the poor from the poverty line and the inequality among the poor), the table shows that it is more than double the national average. Throughout the period 2000 to 2009 the severity of poverty in the ARMM was about 15 times worse compared to Metro Manila.

Table 2.25 Poverty gap and severity of poverty in the ARMM (2000 to 2009)

Region/Province	*Poverty Gap*				*Severity of Poverty*			
	2000	*2003*	*2006*	*2009*	*2000*	*2003*	*2006*	*2009*
Philippines	8.0	7.0	7.7	2.7	3.4	2.8	3.1	2.0
Metro Manila	1.2	0.9	1.5	1.2	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.4
ARMM	15.9	12.7	16.2	7.7	6.3	4.9	6.4	2.3
Basilan*	6.7	7.5	5.6	3.2	2.2	2.2	1.4	0.6
Lanao del Sur	16.4	12.5	17.0	7.9	6.2	5.4	6.8	2.4
Maguindanao	20.9	18.3	19.3	10.3	9.6	7.4	8.0	3.5
Sulu	14.9	10.4	11.5	6.3	4.7	3.6	4.1	1.5
Tawi-tawi	13.0	7.7	23.6	7.5	4.4	2.2	9.1	2.2

Source: National Statistical Coordinating Board.
*2000 estimates include the city of Isabela.

What is interesting is the stark difference in the severity of poverty between the island provinces of Tawi-Tawi and Basilan. One of the reasons for the higher severity of poverty in Tawi-Tawi is the dispersion and distance of most islands from its capital, Bongao. It is also farther from the main island of Mindanao resulting in higher transportation cost of goods, unlike Basilan, which has a bigger landmass, tight grouping of islands, and is closer to the mainland, particularly the highly urbanized city of Zamboanga. The remoteness of Tawi-Tawi from the rest of the country forces it to

source some of its economic and basic needs from a closer neighbor, namely Sabah, Malaysia. This mitigates the impoverishment of the province since goods from Sabah are affordable due to low transport cost and evasion of customs duties, the latter technically a form of smuggling, but somehow tolerated by the authorities. Trade between the southernmost islands of the Philippines, such as Tawi-Tawi and Sulu, with Malaysia and Indonesia have long historical roots dating back to pre-Spanish times. Moreover, this trade generates income and opportunities for local people, making it politically prudent for local executives to allow it to continue.

Based on 2003 comprehensive data on poverty, most of the poor in the ARMM are concentrated in rural areas. In Basilan the highest concentration of the poor are in the municipalities of Tipo-tipo and Sumisip. The security concerns in these municipalities are partly to blame. These two municipalities have seen some intense fighting between the Abu Sayyaf Group and government forces, causing large-scale evacuations, loss of livelihood, and destruction of properties. The connection between conflict and heightened poverty is well established in various studies concerning Mindanao.

In Lanao del Sur the poor are found in the municipalities of Sultan Gumander, Tubaran, Calanogas, Marogon, and Kapai where more than 60 percent of the population fall under the poverty line. Aside from Kapai, all of these towns are distant from Lanao del Sur's capital city. The common denominator among these municipalities is the proliferation of *rido* (clan feuds, discussed further below). Although Kapai is adjacent to the city of Marawi, the existence of feuds between displaced indigenous populations and more recently arrived settlers, who control the local government unit, takes a heavy toll on the economic activities of the municipality. Sporadic fighting between the two groups causes most land to lie idle as residents prefer not to develop or invest in their lands for fear of being caught in the fighting or their harvest being requisitioned by armed groups. Further, security threats limit the mobility of the residents in earning a living or engaging in other economic activities, especially among the men who are the prime targets for retaliation. Thus, in most cases, the women generally become the bread winners of the household and take on most errands and other activities for the family.

In Maguindanao the poorest municipality is Matanog with poverty at the 65 percent level. The locality faces many development challenges, such as high malnutrition among children, extremely low elementary completion rate, alarming rate of unemployment, and severe environmental degradation. In Sulu the poorest municipalities are Panglima Estino, Luuk, and Kalingalang Caluang. In the case of Tawi-Tawi the municipality of South Ubian has the highest incidence of poverty at 54 percent in 2003. South Ubian is composed

terrestrially of 16 islands and islets scattered wide apart and located north of the province.

These findings are consistent with those of Malapit et al. (2003) who find that chronic poverty is prevalent in conflict areas. However, there are other factors aside from conflict and remoteness that influence the incidence of poverty in the region. Weather phenomena, such as El Niño and destructive typhoons, also contribute to exacerbating the incidence of poverty.

Table 2.26 Hunger index estimates and degree of severity (2003)

Region/Province	Hunger Index	Severity
Philippines	0.272	Moderate
Metro Manila	0.233	Low
ARMM	0.323	Serious
Basilan	0.261	Moderate
Lanao del Sur	0.252	Low
Maguindanao	0.305	Serious
Sulu	0.395	Alarming
Tawi-Tawi	0.385	Alarming

Adapted from: Table 2 in Virola & Castro 2007 citing Bersales 2007.

In terms of a hunger index as shown in table 2.26, the residents of the ARMM suffer more compared to the rest of the country. One notable exception is Lanao del Sur, where the low index is comparable to Metro Manila's. The reason is the presence of Lake Lanao and vast tracks of arable lands that serve as sources of fish and food crops that contribute to the daily food requirements of residents. On the other hand, the islands of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi are isolated from mainland Mindanao and suffer from a scarcity of freshwater and land for cultivation. The surprisingly high hunger index in Maguindanao may be attributed to the lack of incentives to cultivate and invest in farms as people are afraid that powerful landlords may deprive them of their properties. As one interviewee said, "Land grabbing is prevalent in Maguindanao. Many farmers are frightened to make their land more productive. They are afraid that influential people belonging to ruling families may take interest and demand that they sell their land cheaply or face the consequence of (it) being taken away from them."

The reality of such a threat was revealed by a former community leader named Kedtog in an interview by Human Rights Watch in 1988. He recounted,

> We were called for a meeting with Andal Ampatuan, Sr. Inside, on a table was a .45 caliber pistol and a sum of money put side by side in front of the old man [Ampatuan, Sr.]. We were asked which of the two

> we would choose. . . In Kuloy, almost all the villagers were forced to leave. There were thousands of hectares. . . They built fences around the [land] which [was taken]. (Human Rights Watch 2010, 16)

This kind of land acquisition happens not only in Maguindanao but also in some rural areas of the ARMM where wealthy landowners from ruling families backed by armed militia gain land through the use of unlawful force, intimidation, and threats.

Looking at the poverty incidence for the various sectors of society reveals that women have the highest incidence of poverty, followed by the youth, and then senior citizens (table 2.27); migrant workers have the lowest. The relative improvement in the incidence of poverty among the migrant workers in relation to other sectors is their ability to find work and their mobility in seeking opportunities elsewhere. Poverty among these sectors could be said to be twice as bad as the country average and five times greater than in Metro Manila.

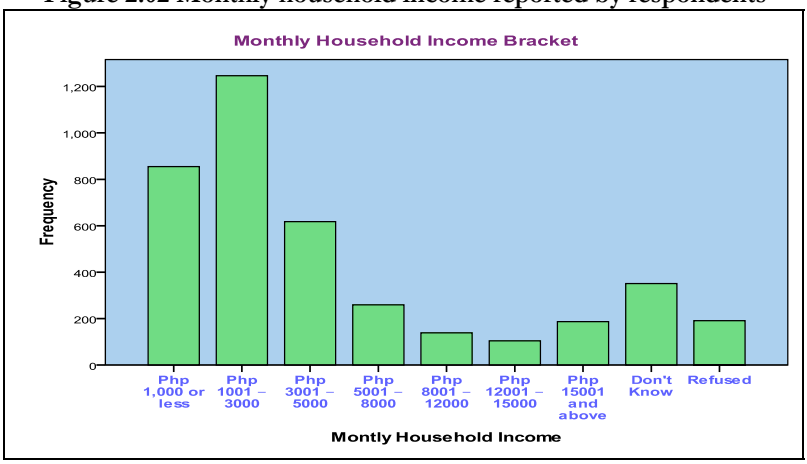
The survey that was done in conjunction with this assessment sought data about the respondents' household income, as shown in figure 2.02 below. Some 31 percent of the respondents related a monthly household income in the range of 1,001–3,000 pesos while 21.4 percent said they earned 1,000 pesos or less. More than half of respondents declared a total family income of around 1,500 pesos on average. Thus, in a family of five, the money available for each member of the household per month is roughly 300 pesos. That is about 10 pesos a day or about 23 US cents per person, far below the universal measure of absolute poverty of one US dollar a day.

Table 2.27 Sectoral poverty incidence in the ARMM (2000 to 2006)

Region	*Estimates of Poverty Incidence*					
	Women			*Youth*		
	2000	*2003*	*2006*	*2000*	*2003*	*2006*
Philippines	32.3	29.0	30.1	24.5	23.5	25.4
Metro Manila	8.4	6.5	9.7	5.4	4.1	7.3
ARMM	58.1	53.7	58.9	47.0	49.5	53.2
	Senior Citizens			*Migrant Workers*		
Philippines	28.0	18.4	20.3	18.7	18.4	19.5
Metro Manila	5.8	3.3	4.4	3.5	3.3	4.8
ARMM	41.3	35.2	46.5	28.2	26.8	29.4

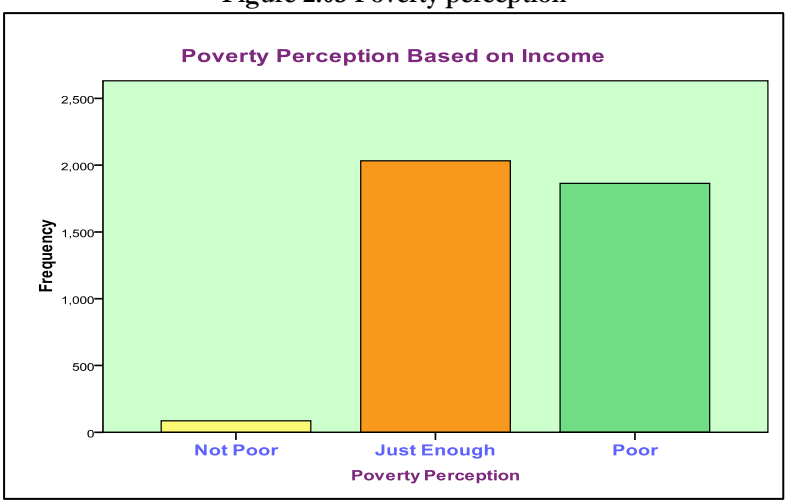
Source of basic data: National Statistical Coordination Board.
http://www.nscb.gov.ph/pressreleases/2009/PR-200907-SSO-02_poverty.asp.

Figure 2.02 Monthly household income reported by respondents



When the respondents were asked to rate themselves in terms of poverty, 1,864 or 46.6 percent perceived themselves as poor while only 86, or 2.2 percent, of the respondents did not see themselves as poor (figure 2.03). This is similar to the average incidence of poverty in ARMM at 45.9 percent in 2009 reported by the NSCB, which is based on standard measurement rather than relative perception as in the survey. Despite the relatively low household incomes, most of the respondents saw themselves as having enough to live on.

Figure 2.03 Poverty perception



In terms of income inequality, table 2.28 reveals that among the regions of the Philippines, the ARMM has the lowest inequality measure with a Gini index of 0.282 in 1997 and 0.264 in 2006. The Gini index is a measure of inequality; the higher the index, the more inequality there is among the population. The ARMM seems to have a more equal distribution than the national average. This may sound like a good indicator; however, the problem in the ARMM is that everyone is equally poor and there is hardly any room for income transfer from the rich to the poor (World Bank 2003).

Table 2.28 Gini index (1997 to 2006)

Region/Province	*1997*	*2000*	*2003*	*2006*
Philippines	0.429	0.429	0.413	0.414
Metro Manila	0.449	0.449	0.384	0.397
ARMM	0.282	0.269	0.285	0.264
Basilan	0.285	0.271	0.271	0.320
Lanao del Sur	0.322	0.236	0.361	0.263
Maguindanao	0.270	0.368	0.335	0.311
Sulu	0.228	0.192	0.212	0.183
Tawi-Tawi	0.305	0.276	0.248	0.242

Source: Human Development Network 2009.

Another measure of inequality is the share of consumption. Table 2.29 shows quite an unequal share in consumption in the ARMM as the poorest 20 percent only accounted for 10.4 percent of the value of goods consumed while the richest 20 percent answered for 37.3 percent in 2003. The same picture continued in 2006 and is an indication of the persistence of inequality in the region. The worse inequality in consumption occurred in Lanao del Sur in 2003 where the poorest 10 percent accounted for only 3.3 percent of the value of consumption while the richest 10 percent consumed 26.2 percent. This regional measure of inequality is similar to what exists nationwide.

Table 2.29 Share of consumption in the ARMM (2003 and 2006)

Region/Province	*2003*				*2006*			
	Poorest 10%	*Poorest 20%*	*Richest 20%*	*Richest 10%*	*Poorest 10%*	*Poorest 20%*	*Richest 20%*	*Richest 10%*
Philippines	2.7	6.4	47.2	31.0	3.0	7.1	46.6	30.9
Metro Manila	3.2	7.4	45.2	29.5	2.8	6.7	47.2	31.6
ARMM	4.6	10.4	37.3	22.8	4.9	11.0	37.4	24.3
Basilan	5.1	11.1	38.6	23.2	4.4	9.8	43.2	30.9
Lanao del Sur	3.3	7.5	41.9	26.2	4.6	10.6	36.6	22.1
Maguindanao	4.8	10.6	38.5	25.2	4.7	10.3	39.9	26.6
Sulu	5.1	11.8	33.0	19.6	5.9	13.0	31.6	18.8
Tawi-Tawi	5.0	10.9	34.3	20.0	5.1	11.5	35.6	23.2

Sources: National Statistical Coordination Board, Family income and expenditures survey 2003 and 2006.

There are other manifestations of the widening poverty in the ARMM that are not captured in official statistics or even in field research. One has to reside in the region for years to observe how the lives of the poor have deteriorated from year to year. For example, decades ago in Lanao del Sur there were hardly any poor going begging house to house, a sight now common in the urban areas of the province. This phenomenon coincides with the increase in petty crimes and in high crimes involving kidnappings or armed robbery. Most observers blame the worsening crime rate to the lack of opportunities and livelihood forcing some people to resort to unlawful means to earn a living. Elderly women beggars have become common features in most mosques in the region, especially during Friday Prayer. This is the case despite the fact that Islam expressly discourages begging since an established mechanism for redistributing wealth to the poor and needy exists in the form of *sadaqa* (voluntary charity) and *zakat* (almsgiving). In Muslim countries *zakat* is institutionalized and supported by the government in order to target the poor more effectively. Sadly, *zakat* in the ARMM is mostly managed by various religious organizations and private associations that are dispersed and rather ineffective in targeting the poor.

ECONOMIC TIES TO SURROUNDING AREAS

To what extent is the region's economy closely tied to the economic activity that occurs in surrounding areas?

The island provinces of the ARMM have close ties to the City of Zamboanga that lies at the southern tip of the Zamboanga peninsula. In fact, Zamboanga City has been referred to as the gateway to the island provinces. The port city of Zamboanga is a center of trade and commerce, government, and education for the western part of Mindanao. It is common for people from Basilan, the ARMM province closest to Zamboanga City, to regularly take the short ferry ride across the Basilan Strait to shop in Zamboanga for their needs. This is cited as a reason why Isabela City, the capital of Basilan, is not able to expand its retail and commercial sector as people would rather spend their money in Zamboanga.

The provinces of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi are much farther away and can be reached most conveniently by plane from Zamboanga. It used to be that there existed a vigorous barter trade between these islands and Sabah so that goods from Malaysia and China found their way to the Zamboanga market. This trade, however, has waned, its value significantly less than what it was at its highpoint.

The initiative to promote the development of this region, including the parts of Indonesia, Malaysia (Sabah), and Brunei close to it through the BIMP-EAGA can be promising if carried out. This used to be an economically vibrant region and can be again, with Mindanao, and subsequently the ARMM, benefitting from the renewal of historical trading ties, the joint exploitation of the area's vast marine resources, and economic cooperation.

Box 1. Barter Trade in Southern Philippines

Trade, through the barter system, flourished in the Sulu Sultanate, which used to include the islands that are now the provinces of Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, and Basilan of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Merchants of Sulu and nearby areas traded with neighboring sultanates. Moreover, it was chronicled that there already existed a "vibrant exchange of goods between lowland and upland communities, as well as between islands and regions" (Tan 1989, 19-20) during those times. However, the barter trade system that the national government regulates has been diminished in terms of its economic benefits to the people living in the Sulu archipelago. The barter trade was principally between Sulu and Sabah. Sabah, a part of the Sulu sultanate, was turned over by the British to the newly established Malaysia in 1963.

According to Tan (1989, 20), "The means of economic exchange varied from place to place and from one historical period to another. In the earliest stage, even prior to the time of the Sultanate, barter was the most popular means of exchange. This assumed either of two forms: the placement of goods on a prominent or usual place of exchange for anyone to match them with products of their own or through direct negotiations between parties in exchange."

Under the Philippine government, the barter trade continued. The practice, which was widely accepted, was "to entrust their capital to a team leader, in groups of ten per team, to undertake the trip to Labuan (Malaysia) or Singapore to trade and purchase goods. They share in the expenses of the trip and the purchased merchandise is distributed in accordance with individual orders and the size of the capital contributed by each" (Tan 1989, 35). However, this type of trading practice was branded by the national government as a form of smuggling because it deprived the National Treasury of custom duties and revenues. Consequently, the government imposed tight controls over the barter trade to prevent the import of contraband as well as earn revenues. Then, President Ferdinand Marcos, in an attempt to keep Muslims from joining the secessionist movement, liberalized the policy" (Tan 1989). However, this liberalization transferred the economic center from Sulu to Zamboanga City, thereby reducing the benefits of the trade for the people of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

The Philippine National Bank (PNB), which was then owned by the government, handled "the documentation of the barter traders and provided for their credit services" (Tan 1989, 35). Traders were required to obtain a Trading Certificate Registration and were allocated "five-thousand peso (P5,000) worth of goods per trading trip, not exceeding two trips a month" (Tan 1980, 35).

(Box 1 continuation)

Cooperatives, such as the pioneering Zamboanga Barter Traders Kilusang Bayan, Inc. (ZBTKBI), were formed to spread the benefits of the trade. However, much of the trading was disrupted by the fighting between the military and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). The Tripoli peace agreement of 1976 restored the trade, which then prospered, thereby attracting new investors. Unfortunately, competition became so heated that Zamboanga soon became an arena of violent clashes among rival business and political clans from Sulu (Tan 1989, 36). This forced Marcos to suspend the trade from 1983 to 1985 (Ariff, 2000).

The barter trade provided an opportunity for both Muslims and non-Muslims with limited capital to pool their resources and participate in the trade. Investors shared profits and losses on a pro-rata basis, which was consistent with Shariah. The trade, however, gave rise to loan-sharking, while some local traders became fronts for large businesses.

During the term of President Corazon Aquino, the Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA) was given regulatory powers over the barter trade. The number of accredited associations able to participate in the trade grew to eight. Another barter trade center was put up in Cotabato City, further reducing the economic benefits of the trade for the island provinces. The barter trade as currently practiced has weaknesses, such as the absence of border agreements that make border patrols problematic, and the "problem of transshipment of goods outside barter trade zones" (Ariff 2000, 41). However, these weaknesses are outweighed by the opportunity given to local traders to engage in a profitable business activity. It also benefits "hundreds of workers, such as support workers, dock handlers, stevedores," (Ariff 2000, 40) and supports trucking firms, restaurants, and domestic tourism.

References:

Ariff, Mohamed. 2000. *The Muslim private sector in Southeast Asia: Islam and the economic development of Southeast Asia.* Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Tan, Samuel K. 1989. *Decolonization and Filipino muslim identity.* Quezon City: University of the Philippines.

LAND CONFLICTS

How many cases of legal disputes over land/property tenure, utilization and access were registered in the last three years (please state number of cases for each year per 1,000 inhabitants)? What efforts does the local government make to resolve / manage the land conflicts? Were there significant land disputes that were not brought to the judicial authorities or other legal processes? What other organizations are involved in resolution/management of the land conflicts?

The Muslim Mindanao conflict has been characterized as partly the consequence of the grabbing of land by settlers from Luzon and the Visayas from their Muslim claimants, something that happened on the largest scale when the government started mass resettlement after independence from American colonialism, as pointed out by McKenna (1998). The resolution of this macro dispute will depend on the terms of the peace agreement between the government and the Muslim rebels[2]. And then there are the ancestral domain claims of Lumad groups who want to regain control of their ancestral lands. These disputes are not just about the physical land but even more so about the valuable resources that are encompassed by that land, such as sources of water and valuable minerals.

At the micro level, and particularly among the Muslims themselves, land disputes have traditionally expressed themselves as clan feuds called *rido*. Rido is a Meranaw (Maranao) term, although it has been popularly adopted by the other Muslim ethno-linguistic groups in the region. Lingga (2007, 53) says other ethno-linguistic groups in Mindanao use different words for clan conflict: *ukag* or *kontla* or *kontra* among the *tao sa laya* of the upper Pulangi valley, *pagbanta* among the Tausug, *pagbaus* among the Sama, and *kontara* among the Yakan. Whatever words are actually used, they all refer to a cycle of violence precipitated by vengeance for a perceived or actual affront to one family's dignity or sense of honor (*maratabat)*. The reasons for rido can range from the most trivial, as disputing the score in a basketball game, to the most serious, such as the abduction of a female family member or a dispute about land. It is a relationship that is hate-based and could last for several generations. In a study conducted by Kamlian (2005), some unresolved rido date back to the 1930s.

It is difficult to get reliable quantitative data regarding the incidence of land conflicts in the ARMM. Important land disputes probably do

[2] At the time of this writing, the government has signed a framework agreement with the main combatants, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and are in negotiations with the latter on the details of that agreement.

generate rido and are not passed for arbitration through the formal justice system and, therefore, not documented. However, not all rido involve conflicts about land although the more important ones certainly do; political rivalries constitute the second major reason for rido (Torres 2007, 16; Kamlian 2007). Other causes are murder, crimes involving gender relations and chastity, cattle rustling, the incurring of debt, drug use and dealing, theft, damage to property, and others (Kamlian 2007, 42; Lingga 2007, 57-61; Matuan 2007, 79-80). According to Matuan (2007, 79), land conflicts among the Meranaw occur because land owners "do not bother to title their land under Philippine laws." Succeeding generations, therefore, tend to contest the extent and boundaries of the land they inherit, especially when some family members seek formal individual titles to the land rather than respect traditional communal ownership.

The study by Torres and others (2007) gives us an idea of how prevalent rido is. The study was not limited to the ARMM provinces, but in this report only the data for the ARMM will be considered.

Table 2.30 Incidence of rido in the ARMM (1970 to 2004)

Province	*Total rido cases*	*Deaths*	*Deaths per case*
Basilan	58	377	6.5
Sulu	144	1519	10.5
Tawi-Tawi	25	88	3.5
Maguindanao	218	811	3.7
Lanao del Sur[1,2]	337	798	2.4

Sources: Kamlian 2007, Lingga 2007, Matuan 2007.
[1] includes Marawi City.
[2] data only for 1994-2004.

The number of cases above includes all rido cases, whether currently resolved, unresolved, or recurrent. On average, in the ARMM provinces, a little more than half of all rido cases remain unresolved, while in Basilan the rate of unresolved cases is 65 percent.

Such feuds claim a considerable number of victims, not all of them necessarily members of the opposing parties. This is because rido can cause large-scale displacements encompassing whole communities. The data also show that rido cases in Sulu appear to be the bloodiest, claiming the most casualties in total, as well as on a per case basis. The scope of the conflicts generated by rido is broad, as Kamlian (2007, 41) notes that "cases have occurred in every municipality and city in Lanao del Norte, Basilan, and Sulu." On the level of daily life, rido is probably more disruptive than the occasional and geographically more restricted clashes between the military and Muslim rebels.

The prevalence of blood feuds is, in general, said to be the result of an ineffectual justice system, which, in turn, is an indictment of the quality of democracy in the affected area. So it is in the ARMM where going to the courts is considered costly and tedious. There are also cultural reasons. For example, Lingga (2007, 61) states that "most people involved in feuds prefer arbitration and mediation because these are less disruptive than the formal legal system." On the other hand, among the Meranaw, "aggrieved families who file cases in court are viewed as 'weak and cowardly'" (Matuan 2007, 81). It may also be the case, as Matuan (2007, 81) adds, that the "penalties prescribed by Philippine criminal laws on cases of murder and homicide" do not satisfy the sense of retribution and compensation sought by those involved in rido. Participants in the FGDs and interviews for this assessment, for example, identified traditional ways of resolving these conflicts, seeking the mediation of local politicians and officials, community elders, and religious leaders, particularly before the conflicts become full-blown rido. Some local governments have had to cope with this demand by creating innovative mechanisms to handle these conflicts, such as creating local councils specifically to handle such cases. Sometimes, though, such efforts may go overboard, such as the information offered by one respondent who said that blood money was being paid from the municipality's public calamity fund.

CRIME

What is the rate of violent crime such as assault, murder, and rape in the region in the last three years? What is the rate of non-violent crime such as theft, fraud, burglary or larceny in the region in the last three years?

Table 2.31 shows national crime statistics from 2001 to 2010. Index crimes are defined by government to be those crimes that are "sufficiently significant and which occur with sufficient regularity to be meaningful," and include violent crimes, i.e., murder, physical injury, robbery and rape, as well as non-violent crimes, such as robbery and theft (National Statistical Coordination Board no date-a). As the notes explain, data after 2008 cannot be compared with those before that year because of a change in estimation methodology. The rates for all types of crimes have consistently been highest in the National Capital Region, except for non-index crimes in 2009 and 2010.

Table 2.31 Crime rate by area and by type of crime per 100,000 population (2001 to 2010)

Year	*Index Crimes*			*Non-index Crimes*			*Total Crimes*		
	Philippines	*NCR*	*Outside NCR*	*Philippines*	*NCR*	*Outside NCR*	*Philippines*	*NCR*	*Outside NCR*
2001	48.5	78.0	44.1	49.5	68.1	46.7	98.0	146.1	90.9
2002	54.6	90.6	49.2	52.4	96.0	46.0	106.9	186.6	95.2
2003	52.1	97.0	45.6	50.1	103.0	42.3	102.2	200.1	87.9
2004	51.1	90.9	45.3	41.4	75.7	36.4	92.5	166.6	81.7
2005	51.6	90.0	46.1	38.4	69.0	34.0	90.0	158.9	80.1
2006	47.8	89.0	41.7	34.1	78.5	27.5	82.0	167.5	69.2
2007	41.8	80.1	36.1	32.6	75.6	26.2	72.9	155.8	62.3
2008	40.4	81.9	34.5	33.5	73.0	27.8	73.9	154.9	62.4
2009	327.1	359.3	322.6	217.9	164.1	225.5	545.0	523.4	548.1
2010	218.0	233.8	215.8	208.0	115.0	221.0	426.0	348.8	436.8

Reproduced from: National Statistical Coordination Board, Statistics: Public Order, Safety and Justice at http://www.nscb.gov.ph/secstat/d_safety.asp

Source: Philippine National Police (PNP) and National Statistics Office (NSO).

Notes: (1) In 2009, PNP has implemented a new crime reporting system wherein the crime data for 2009 was set as the baseline for future research, study and comparison. Hence, crime statistics in 2009 cannot be compared with those crime data obtained during the previous years (2008 and earlier) as the parameters are no longer the same.

(2) Crime Solution Efficiency (CSE) is defined differently from old CSE which is currently known as Crime Clearance Efficiency (CCE). With the implementation of the new crime reporting system in 2009, solved cases now include those which were filed with the prosecutor's office or proper court with at least one of the suspects arrested.

(3) The figures were interpolated from 2000-based population projections.

In terms of the incidence of crimes, the current available statistics only show data up to August of 2011, with the ARMM as a region having the lowest incidence for both index and non-index crimes, as shown in table 2.32.

Table 2.32 Index and non-index crimes (as of August 2011)

Region	*Index Crimes*									*Non-Index Crimes*			*Grand Total*
	Crime Against Person					*Crime Against Property*				*Violation of RA 6425/ 9165*	*Other Crimes*	*Total*	
	Murder	*Homicide*	*Physical Injury*	*Rape*	*Sub-total*	*Robbery*	*Theft*	*Sub-total*	*Total*				
NCR	1,761	562	199	1,041	3,563	2,958	1,898	4,856	8,419	7,362	4,075	11,437	19,856
I	362	110	116	234	822	95	172	267	1,089	670	135	805	1,894
II	324	138	17	181	660	120	99	219	879	251	338	589	1,468
III	521	216	136	347	1,220	405	559	964	2,184	2,307	1,226	3,533	5,717
IVA	425	228	103	317	1,073	1,373	1,346	2,719	3,792	2,974	993	3,967	7,759
IV-B	256	52	13	96	417	38	41	79	496	87	145	232	728
V	463	157	50	493	1,163	196	201	397	1,560	126	571	697	2,257
VI	1,200	450	30	365	2,045	420	418	838	2,883	1,755	986	2,741	5,624
VII	1,091	345	122	471	2,029	484	624	1,108	3,137	2,720	1,490	4,210	7,347
VIII	373	106	12	120	611	96	105	201	812	459	362	821	1,633
IX	478	200	71	305	1,054	138	229	367	1,421	1,101	450	1,551	2,972
X	386	135	30	196	747	293	289	582	1,329	883	490	1,373	2,702
XI	365	176	17	317	875	206	200	406	1,281	969	426	1,395	2,676
XII	452	177	39	325	993	161	224	385	1,378	975	473	1,448	2,826
CAR	106	47	45	107	305	82	89	171	476	148	389	537	1,013
Caraga	271	134	5	137	547	75	48	123	670	280	51	331	1,001
ARMM	20	5	9	6	40	47	107	154	194	9	88	97	291
Total	8,854	3,238	1,014	5,058	18,164	7,187	6,649	13,836	32,000	23,076	12,688	35,764	67,764

Source: Bureau of Jail Management and Penology.

The rate for violent crimes in the ARMM in 2008 alone is comparatively low except for murder, which is equal to the national rate at 0.06 per 1,000 inhabitants (table 2.33). This was mostly because of the high murder rate in Basilan that year of 0.17 per 1,000 inhabitants, although Lanao del Sur and Sulu also equaled the regional and national rates. For the other violent crimes considered here, the ARMM rates are very low, except again for Basilan. The infamous Maguindanao massacre that involved the brutal murder of 58 people has already been mentioned above and will be discussed further in the section on political violence.

Table 2.33 Rate of violent crimes per 1,000 inhabitants (2008)

Region	*Murder*	*Homicide*	*Physical Injury*	*Rape*
Philippines	0.06	0.03	0.12	0.03
ARMM	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00
Basilan	0.17	0.02	0.1	0.03
Lanao del Sur	0.06	0	0.01	0
Maguindanao	0.04	n.a.	0.01	0
Shariff Kabunsuan	0.02	0.01	0.02	0
Sulu	0.06	0	0.02	n.a.
Tawi-Tawi	0.03	0	0.01	0.01

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board 2008.
Note: n.a.= not available.

The rate per 1,000 inhabitants could only be compared between national and regional data for only two types of violent crimes, homicide (including murder) and rape. These are shown in table 2.34. For homicide, the ARMM rate is not very different from the national average; that for rape is significantly lower in the ARMM.

Table 2.34 Homicide and rape per 1,000 population (2008)

	Homicide (including murder)	*Rape*
Philippines	0.065	0.029
ARMM	0.062	0.005

Sources of basic data: United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime and National Statistical Coordination Board.

The rates for non-violent crimes in the ARMM provinces are shown in table 2.35 for the same year. Relatively speaking, the ARMM rates are even lower than those for the country as a whole for non-violent types of crimes.

Table 2.35 Rate of non-violent crimes per 1,000 inhabitants (2008)

Region	*Robbery*	*Theft*
Philippines	0.07	0.09
ARMM	0.01	0.01
Basilan	0.01	0.02
Lanao del Sur	0.01	0.01
Maguindanao	0.01	n.a.
Shariff Kabunsuan	0.01	0.01
Sulu	0.01	n.a.
Tawi-Tawi	0.01	n.a

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board 2008.
Note: n.a.= not available.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

How many cases of domestic abuse or sexual assault per 1,000 inhabitants were reported in the last 12 months?

Again, data for domestic abuse cases are available only for 2008. These cases include abduction, lascivious acts, and rape. Reported incidents of domestic abuse per province in the ARMM are shown in table 2.36, except for Sulu. The incidence for the ARMM appears to be much lower than those for other parts of the country, although no directly comparable data are available. This is a symptom of the generally limited data on domestic violence that is available, and the fact that such data do not reflect the actual situation. For example, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (2010) report on domestic violence in the Philippines cites a 2009 Amnesty International report that says that violence against women in the Philippines is "very pervasive." It then quotes a 2008 Asian Development Bank report that says that "relative to the size of the Philippines' population, official statistics reflect a 'limited number' of reported cases."

Table 2.36 Rate of domestic abuse in ARMM by province (2008)

Province	*Rate per 1,000 inhabitants*
Basilan	0.037
Sulu	n.a.
Tawi-Tawi	0.010
Lanao del Sur	0.005
Maguindanao	0.002
Total	0.004

Source of basic data: National Statistical Coordination Board 2008.
Note: n.a.= not available.

HUMAN RIGHTS

How many cases of human right abuses were reported in the last 12 months? Please state the numbers per 1,000 inhabitants: i) Officially reported by the authorities; ii) Estimated or reported by non-governmental organizations.

The ARMM is the first and only Philippine autonomous region. Being an avowedly democratic national entity, the Philippines can only engender subnational entities that reflect its national goals of democratic governance, as expressed in the vesting of power in the population through the political exercise of selecting representatives in free and fair elections. Moreover, a democratizing state also provides for the protection of human rights of all peoples, whether they are part of the majority or minority populations. Those rights consist not only of the freedom to express multiple and conflicting views and opinions without fear of being imprisoned for such views but also of the ability of all citizens to participate fully in the governance process (Institute for Inclusive Security 2005). Moreover, human rights in their broadest sense (as defined by the United Nations), include "civil and political rights, such as the right to life, equality before the law and freedom of expression; economic, social and cultural rights, such as the rights to work, social security and education, or collective rights, such as the rights to development and self-determination" (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights no date).

Data on human rights violation in the ARMM are shown in the two tables below, each set coming from different sources. For 2011, the Mindanao Human Rights Action Center (MinHRAC) recorded five cases of illegal arrests, two cases of grave coercion, two cases of torture, and three cases of rape for a total of 12 violations (table 2.37). The next table, 2.38, shows cases filed with the Commission on Human Rights for the three years 2009 to 2011. While the two tables are not commensurate, they do show relatively low levels of reported human rights violations in the ARMM. As with other cases of crime and violence, the number of reported cases may be understated, both in terms of actual cases filed with authorities as well as in the identification of cases of denial of rights as human rights violations due to a lack of understanding of what human rights consist of.

Table 2.37 Reported cases of human rights violation in the ARMM (2011)

Province	*Population*	*Illegal Arrest*	*Grave Coercion*	*Torture*	*Rape*	*Total*	*HRV per 1000 Inhabitants*
Basilan	293,322	4	-	-	-	4	0.014
Sulu	718,290	-	-	1	-	1	0.001
Tawi-Tawi	366,550	-	-	-	-	-	no data
Lanao del Sur	933,260	-	-	-	-	-	no data
Maguindanao	944,718	1	2	1	2	6	0.006
Total	3,256,140	5	2	2	3	12	0.004

Source: Mindanao Human Rights Action Center (MinHRAC).

Table 2.38 Human rights violation cases in the ARMM by province and municipality (2009 to 2011)

Province	*Municipality*	*No. of Cases*		
		January - December 2009	*January - December 2010*	*January - December 2011*
Basilan	Isabela City	1	1	1
	Lamitan	2	2	0
	Lantawan	0	1	0
	Maluso	0	1	0
	Sumisip	0	3	0
	Not specified	3	1	0
Lanao del Sur	Marawi City	2	0	0
	Piagapo	0	1	0
Maguindanao	Ampatuan	2	0	0
	Datu Anggal Midtimbang	2	0	0
	Datu Paglas	0	0	1
	Datu Piang	1	2	0
	Guidulungan	1	0	0
	Mamasapano	1	0	1
	South Upi	0	1	1
	Talayan	4	0	0
	Not specified	0	1	0
Sulu	Indanan	1	0	0
	Jolo	0	1	0
	Parang	0	1	0
	Pata	1	0	0
	Not specified	0	1	0
Tawi-Tawi	Turtle Islands	2	0	0
Total		23	17	4

Source: Commission on Human Rights.
Note: Includes only those complaints evaluated for investigation; cases under investigation report, final investigation report, RO draft resolution, RO resolved, en banc resolved and case monitoring.

These cases do not exhaust the actual numbers of human rights violations if the broader definition of human rights, as adopted by the United Nations, is considered. The U.S. Department of State issues annual country reports on human rights practices for many countries. The report appears to be a compilation of reports from various sources. The following discussion presents the highlights of the content of the 2010 and 2011 reports on cases of human rights violation committed in the ARMM (United States Department of State 2011a and 2012b).

Freedom from unlawful and arbitrary deprivation of life. Suwaib Upahm, a witness to the Maguindanao massacre in 2009 for which crime the Ampatuan clan has been accused, was shot and killed in Parang, Maguindanao in 2010 while his inclusion in the government's witness protection program was pending.

Forty-nine bombings by insurgents killed 12 civilians during 2011 in Mindanao. The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)-linked groups were held responsible for bombings in Cotabato, Jolo, and Zamboanga cities, and in Basilan that killed civilians. The ASG also supposedly beheaded two Philippine Marines in Jolo, Sulu on 28 July 2011. On the other hand, the military was accused by NGOs of indiscriminate artillery shellings that resulted in civilian deaths in operations against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention, and torture. On 23 July 2011, members of the army's Special Operations Task Force in Basilan Province arrested 39-year-old baker Abdul Khan Ajid in Sumisip for suspected ASG membership and participation in the 2001 Lamitan siege. Upon the petition of his wife for habeas corpus, the military presented Ajid to a judge who then committed Ajid to the Isabela City Provincial Jail pending a determination of the legality of his arrest. The military, upon allegations of torture, investigated and determined that Ajid had been physically tortured and suffered serious injuries and second-degree burns during three days in military custody, and accused three military personnel of the violation. Authorities dishonorably discharged two staff sergeants from active service and filed a case against Captain Guidagen with the Efficiency and Separation Board, but did not file criminal charges.

Various criminal and terrorist groups were reported to have committed arbitrary detentions and kidnappings for ransom. Nuraldin Yusoph, the son of a commissioner of the Commission on Elections, was abducted in Marawi City on 20 June 2010. The kidnappers demanded the commission nullify election results in four Lanao del Sur towns. Nuraldin was released unharmed on 19 July in Cagayan de Oro.

Denial of fair public trial. Courts in Mindanao had higher vacancy rates than the national average. Many sharia court positions have remained unfilled, with all five district court judgeships and 39 percent of circuit court judgeships still vacant by the end of 2011.

Recruitment of child soldiers. The ASG was accused of continuing the recruitment of children for combat and non-combat roles. The MILF had been accused previously, but in 2009 it had signed an action plan to curb such practice.

Displacement of persons due to armed conflict. Clashes between government forces and various armed groups caused significant numbers of people to be displaced from their homes and villages. Within the ARMM, displaced persons were kept in camps in Cotabato and Maguindanao. Clan feuds also led to the displacement of thousands. The report cited the International Organization for Migration for an estimated 26,600 families being displaced in 2010 due to military operations, while 25,000 persons were said to have been displaced by clan feuds. In 2011, internally displaced persons (IDPs) were estimated by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to number more than 46,000, including approximately 10,000 displaced by feuding clans.

Denial of the right to education. The report cites information presented by the 2008/2009 Philippine Human Development Report that the ARMM suffered the highest rate of illiterate and out-of-school youth at 17 percent (compared to 6 percent for the whole nation). The Human Development Report blamed poverty, insufficient access to information and opportunity, and the peace and order and security problem for this denial of a basic human right among the children and young people of the ARMM.

Recognizing indigenous peoples' rights. Indigenous peoples suffer discrimination all over the country. The report cites data from NGOs that 70 percent of indigenous youth leave or do not attend school because of discrimination. The Indigenous People's Rights Act has sought to correct the lack of participation by indigenous peoples in local decision-making bodies, but compliance by local authorities has been poor, including in the ARMM according to participants of the FGDs. The report also notes the lobbying of the Task Force for Indigenous People's Rights (TFIPR) to secure IP representation in the peace talks between the government and MILF, something that obviously has not happened. The government's National Commission for Indigenous Peoples has also been lobbying for the granting of ancestral sea claims by groups that have traditionally practiced migratory fishing, such as the Sama Dilaut, also without success.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE

How many cases of political violence occurred the last three years?

Political violence in the country is mostly related to election contests, which tend to be competitions among politically powerful families and clans that go to great lengths to win at any cost. Such violent conflicts occur all over the country but in recent decades have appeared to be most intense in the ARMM. Such violence is the direct result of political families possessing private armed groups that inflict physical harm, or at least the threat of it, on those who cross them.

Table 2.39 below shows the number of violent incidents and deaths associated with each election from 1986 to 2010. There does not seem to be any pattern to the number of incidents and deaths historically. However, Rivera (2011) contends that the numbers underestimate the actual incidents of election related violence since they cover only the official election period, that is, the 120 days before and the 30 days after election day.

Table 2.39 Election-related violence (1986 to 2010)

Type of Election	*Year*	*Violent Incidents*	*Deaths*
Snap presidential	1986	364	153
Local	1988	405	188
National & local	1992	157	89
Congress & local	1995	244	108
National & local	1998	322	77
Congress & local	2001	152	98
National & local	2004	249	468
Congress & local	2007	229	297
National & local	2010	180	155

Reproduced from: Rivera 2011.

Only data for the 2010 elections are available for the ARMM, as shown in table 2.40. Incidents of election violence in the ARMM accounted for 21.5 percent of the national total. The number of fatalities was 14.4 percent of total while the number of wounded and injured in the ARMM represented 21.3 percent of total.

Table 2.40 ARMM monitored election-related violent incidents (10 January-13 May 2010)

Area	*Incidents*	*Fatalities*	*Wounded/Injured*
Philippines	130	104	122
ARMM	28	15	26

Sources: Vote Peace, Bantay Eleksyon 2010, and PNP Task Force HOPE.

The main ingredient in fomenting political violence is the existence of private armies controlled by the political families and clans. In the aftermath of the Maguindanao massacre, then President Gloria Arroyo created The Independent Commission Against Private Armies (ICAPA) to identify private armed groups and recommend how to dismantle them. The commission compiled a list identifying 107 armed groups (table 2.41). Twenty of these groups supposedly existed in the ARMM provinces, with members numbering close to 3,000. This meant that three of every four members of a private army was a resident of the ARMM. What is more, if the Economist account of the Ampatuan's private army is accurate (The Economist 2010), eight out of ten of these armed men in the ARMM belonged to the Ampatuan group.

Table 2.41 Private armed groups and loose firearms by region (as of 22 April 2010)

Region	*Number of Private Armed Groups*	*Number of Active Members*	*Estimate of Loose Firearms*
NCR			315,127
I	12	53	26,928
II	6	65	32,168
III	7	70	78,166
IVA	9	45	101,758
IV-B	4	69	8,779
V	15	146	28,587
VI	8	42	52,759
VII	2	17	52,727
VIII	6	73	43,409
IX	4	49	45,969
X	8	200	42,229
XI			49,178
XII	1	10	62,719
Caraga	1	7	43,957
CAR	4	77	11,628
ARMM	20	2856	114,189
Total	107	3779	1,110,277

Reproduced from: Rivera 2011.

Table 2.42 below shows a breakdown by selected provinces of the number of private armed groups and their members (the total for the ARMM is slightly different from the table above). Sulu has the most number of identified private armies, but Maguindanao, accounting for only three such groups, had the most number of men under arms. The total of armed members for the ARMM accounts for 89 percent of all members for these selected provinces.

Table 2.42 Private armed groups (PAGs) in selected provinces and number of members (as of April 2010)

Province	*Number of PAGs*	*Number of Members*	*Total number of PAG members in ARMM*
Abra	4	77	
Nueva Ecija	3	24	
Masbate	11	120	
Samar	3	97	
Eastern Samar	2	29	
Leyte	1	15	
Basilan	4	700*	
Lanao del Sur	1	100*	
Maguindanao	3	1,596	
Sulu	7	380	
Tawi-Tawi	5	140*	2,916 (89%)
Total	44**	3,278	

Reproduced from: Rimban 2011.
*estimated numbers (more or less).
** number does not include 63 PAGs in other regions.

The massacre of November 2009 that saw the killing of 57 unarmed civilians (plus another presumed dead whose body has not been accounted for) was the direct result of the rivalry between two political clans in Maguindanao: Ampatuan versus Mangudadatu. The victims included the wife and two sisters of Esmael Mangudadatu who were on their way to the provincial capital to file Esmael's candidacy for governorship in opposition to the Ampatuans who had held the position since 2001 (Andal senior was the former Maguindanao governor). At the time of the massacre, Zaldy Ampatuan, son of the patriarch, Andal senior, was the ARMM regional governor. He and his younger brother, Andal junior, former mayor of Datu Unsay municipality, have been charged with the murders together with their father and 98 other accused persons. The actual shootings were allegedly carried out by the Ampatuan's private army, some of whom were members and officers of the national police and the military. Ninety-eight other accused are still at-large. Time magazine said "the killings starkly exposed a nationwide malaise: the fierce competition for regional power among the country's small élite of a few hundred families and clans that control an inordinate amount of the national wealth—and the desperate lengths some will go to protect their hold on power" (McIndoe 2009). Three years after the massacre, the trial has proceeded slowly as multiple motions and pleadings have been filed delaying the proceedings (Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility 2013).

The Maguindanao massacre is only the most notorious case of political violence in the ARMM in the last three years. Other known incidents have been compiled by VERA Files (VERA Files 2011).

The lack of an effective political party system that serves to cluster similar interests into distinct political parties that compete for votes in an electoral system is partly to blame for the persistence of political rivalries between powerful families and clans. The existing party system in the country, as Rivera (2011) argues, is merely a way for competing clans to temporarily come together to contest elections against other clans. Such a party system, developed by the Americans to coopt the elite under colonial rule, only represents rival elite interests in different parties that do not fundamentally distinguish themselves from each other. It is a system that, far from eliminating clan politics, merely obscures it under a veil of supposedly opposing political parties. It is no wonder then that it is the rivalries among powerful clans that still shape the political landscape in much of the country and that result in such bloody clashes when they contest elections. An effectively functioning political party system, as Rivera (2011) notes, is an essential ingredient in a fully functioning democracy; without it, democratization cannot be sustained.

REGIONAL FINANCE

What is the overall annual budget of the region in terms of revenues and expenditures? What are the sources of revenue? What share of its total revenue is raised from local taxes ? What share of the revenue is received as subsidies from national or provincial sources of funding?

Funds for the ARMM flow through two channels: the regional government and the local government units. In addition, the regional government and the LGUs can raise revenues by levying local taxes and fees.

The law on local governments (Local Government Code) provides that 40 percent of national revenues from taxes go to the local governments as internal revenue allotments. This 40 percent is subdivided into allotments for provinces and cities (each 23 percent), municipalities (34 percent), and barangays (20 percent). In the case of the ARMM, the regional government receives a separate internal revenue allocation (IRA) and can use these funds to operate programs throughout the region.

In addition, local governments, including the regional ARMM government, are able to raise local revenues, mostly taxes on real property,

local businesses, and by levying various fees. The regional government has also been the recipient of considerable development aid and block grants.

A third source of funds for the region are its representatives in Congress, each of whom is allotted 70 million pesos as his or her share of the Priority Development Assistance Fund (the Congressional pork barrel), plus millions more in Congressional initiative allocations. The ARMM, therefore, can be said to be doubly blessed, something that was not lost on the FGD participants. One of them observed that autonomy should have benefited the ARMM more than any other region of the country and led to its accelerated development precisely because of this mechanism, but unfortunately did not for some reason.

Table 2.43 below shows the funds available at the regional level for regions in Mindanao and in comparison with funds for the National Capital Region. Total receipts mean the total of the IRA and internally generated funds.

In 2007, the total receipts for each region did not vary greatly among the regions of Mindanao; the ARMM collected the second highest amount in terms of both IRA and total receipts. In 2011, there was more variation, but still the ARMM's sum of receipts was third highest in Mindanao while its IRA was second highest. The rate of growth of its total receipts between 2010 and 2011 of 10.3 percent was also third highest, only a little lower than CARAGA's 11.8 percent.

Table 2.43 Regional internal revenue allocations and total receipts (in million pesos)

Regions	*2007*		*2010*		*2011*	
	IRA	*Total Receipts*	*IRA*	*Total Receipts*	*IRA*	*Total Receipts*
NCR	261.93	7,192.93	214.47	720.65	228.71	5,868.91
Region IX	1,693.29	2,451.25	2,400.19	3,373.44	2,586.58	4,065.52
Region X	2,777.83	3,325.11	3,270.27	5,732.67	3,525.34	5,527.92
Region XI	1,989.53	2,203.30	2,850.54	4,808.63	3,075.96	5,137.23
Region XII	753.11	2,354.14	3,152.29	3,198.96	4,401.42	2,734.63
ARMM	2,583.57	2,810.59	4,014.09	4,134.48	4,340.03	4,561.70
Caraga	2,024.74	2,209.74	2,879.03	3,278.93	3,102.02	3,667.79

Source: Department of Budget and Management.

The next table below shows the same data from a different perspective, that is, on a per capita basis. In 2007, total receipts per capita for the ARMM were about average. However, in 2011, they were the second highest in Mindanao. In terms of IRA per capita, the ARMM garnered the highest amount.

Table 2.44 Per capita regional internal revenue allocations and total receipts in selected regions (in pesos)

Regions	*2007*		*2010*		*2011*	
	IRA per capita	*Total receipts per capita*	*IRA per capita*	*Total receipts per capita*	*IRA per capita*	*Total receipts per capita*
NCR	22.67	622.58	18.56	62.38	19.29	495.02
Region IX	524.22	758.88	743.07	1,044.38	759.12	1,193.16
Region X	702.81	841.28	827.41	1,450.41	820.36	1,286.36
Region XI	478.64	530.07	685.78	1,156.85	688.36	1,149.64
Region XII	196.68	614.81	823.25	835.44	1,071.02	665.43
ARMM	626.96	682.05	974.11	1,003.32	1,332.88	1,400.95
Caraga	882.82	963.49	1,255.31	1,429.67	1,276.96	1,509.86

Source: Department of Budget and Management.
Note: Per Capita IRA and Total Receipts based on 2010 Census.

Table 2.45 shows the proportion of internal revenue allotments in relation to each region's total receipts for the years 2007, 2010, and 2011, a measure of each region's dependency on its IRA. The general trend seems to be the lowering of this dependency ratio in most regions of Mindanao except for the ARMM. Much of this can be blamed on the conflict, but part of it may also be because of the inability (or reluctance) of local ARMM governments to broaden their revenue base.

Table 2.45 Ratio of IRA to total receipts in selected regions (in percent)

Regions	*2007*	*2010*	*2011*
NCR	3.6	29.8	3.9
Region IX	69.1	71.1	63.6
Region X	83.5	57.0	63.8
Region XI	90.3	59.3	59.9
Region XII	32.0	98.5	161.0
ARMM	91.9	97.1	95.1
Caraga	91.6	87.8	84.6

Source of basic data: Department of Budget and Management.

The following table 2.46 shows the ratio of IRA to total revenues by province in the ARMM for 2010. Basilan shows the lowest dependency ratio to internal revenue allotments from the national government, while Maguindanao is totally dependent on the IRA, as are Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Table 2.46 Ratio of IRA to total revenues by ARMM province (2010)

Basilan	88.2
Lanao del Sur	95.5
Maguindanao	101.5
Sulu	98.9
Tawi-Tawi	99.6

Source of basic data: Department of Budget and Management.

Table 2.47 shows the total revenues and expenditures for each ARMM province in 2010, while table 2.48 shows the distribution of expenditures by services. Maguindanao stands out as having spent the most for general services, while Lanao del Sur preferred to spend on economic services. Aside from debt service, all the provinces spent the least on social services, with Sulu having spent the most in absolute and relative terms. In contrast, the national government's budget for 2012 allocated the most to social services at 31.3 percent (as figure 2.04 shows); economic services were allocated 24.2 percent, while funds for general services represented only 18.6 percent. This indicates the rather skewed priorities of the local governments of the ARMM and their relative neglect of their people's welfare.

Table 2.47 Revenues and expenditures for ARMM provinces (2010, in million pesos)

	Revenues			*Expenditures*				
	Local Revenues	*Other Revenues**	*Total Revenues*	*General Services*	*Economic Services*	*Social Services*	*Debt Services*	*Total Expenditures*
Basilan	33.78	526.82	586.12	257.01	74.91	37.03	160.19	529.14
Lanao del Sur	30.97	1,250.13	1,288.94	307.87	851.95	33.70	-	1193.52
Maguindanao	5.00	1,111.63	1,062.72	880.00	172.00	12.00	54.00	1,118.00
Sulu	0.91	657.08	657.99	389.89	184.01	81.02	2.08	657.00
Tawi-Tawi	0.63	536.79	538.72	359.9	131.7	38.00	9.10	538.7

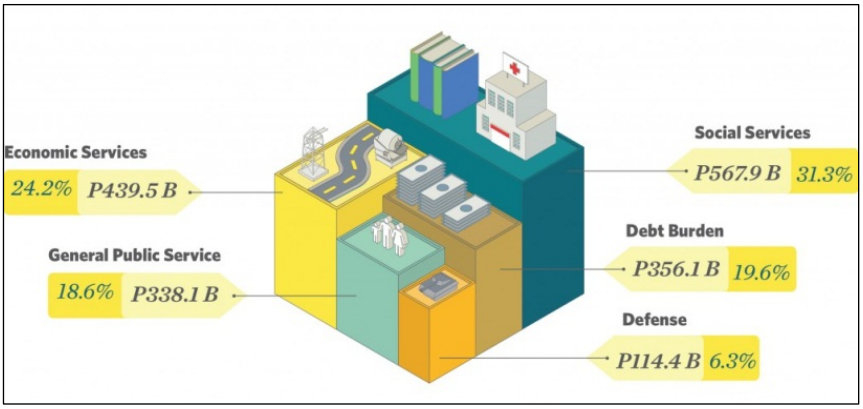
Source of basic data: Department of Budget and Management.
*This includes the internal revenue allotment.

Table 2.48 Distribution of expenditures (2010, in percent)

	General Services	*Economic Services*	*Social Services*	*Debt Service*	*Total*
Basilan	48.6	14.2	7.0	30.3	100.0
Lanao del Sur	25.8	71.4	2.8	0.0	100.0
Maguindanao	78.7	15.4	1.1	4.8	100.0
Sulu	59.3	28.0	12.3	0.3	100.0
Tawi-Tawi	66.8	24.4	7.1	1.7	100.0

Source of basic data: Department of Budget and Management.

Figure 2.04 Components of 2012 Philippine Budget



Reproduced from: Department of Budget and Management. http://budgetngbayan.com/2012-budget-highlights/.

Table 2.49 below shows the national government's appropriation of funds for the ARMM regional government for the years 2009 to 2011. While the funds decreased from 2009 to 2010, they rose by 22 percent in 2011. Capital outlays (meaning funds spent for investments, mostly land and infrastructure) amounted to 12.5 percent, 10 percent, and 13.2 percent, respectively for each year. Foreign aid as a component accounted for 1.9 percent, 0.8 percent, and 8.3 percent, respectively for each year.

Table 2.49 Appropriation of funds for the ARMM regional government (in pesos)

	2009	*2010*	*2011*
Programs	8,264,890,000	8,239,902,000	9,240,815,000
Projects	1,184,067,000	943,362,000	1,938,823,000
Total	9,448,957,000	9,183,264,000	11,179,638,000

Source of basic data: Department of Budget and Management.

At least for these three years the funds that were made available for the ARMM regional government were quite substantial. The question that can be asked is, how were these funds spent and who benefitted from them? This is somewhat difficult to answer, but the case of the Ampatuans may be taken as an example. While this particular case is a somewhat extreme example, the general observation from the FGD participants and the KII respondents is that this is the way that local politicians have regarded government funds—politicians were said to regard public funds as "their own property" and dispensed with them as a form of largesse—and

illustrates the way the resources of the ARMM have been expended for the benefit of a few people rather than for the common good.

Carolyn Arguillas of MindaNews (a journalist cooperative in Mindanao) wrote in 2010, in relation to the Maguindanao massacre, that former President Gloria Arroyo had caused the transfer of billions of pesos to the Ampatuans (who were officials of the regional government and of various local governments in Maguindanao) as government appropriations for the ARMM (Arguillas 2010). She wrote, "In her nine years in power, President Arroyo has poured billions of pesos into the province in internal revenue allotment (IRA), public works budget, and other lump-sum funds. After all, she has nurtured a deep friendship with the Ampatuans, who delivered landslide victory margins for her and her senatorial candidates in the 2004 and 2007 elections". These billions, she alleged, ended up in the pockets of the Ampatuans who then used the funds to deepen their hold on Maguindanao politics, as well as to buy weapons, mansions, farmlands, and other trappings of wealth and power. These allegations were based on the findings of the government when it audited ARMM funds. This is further discussed in the following section on corruption.

CORRUPTION

How many instances of alleged corruption were investigated and filed in the last three years? What was the outcome of such cases? What mechanisms exist to prevent / curb corruption? Please describe with examples.

Corruption has been such an endemic feature of the ARMM that even the ARMM website (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao 2012b) admits as much. Many FGD participants and KII respondents agreed that corruption was widespread in the ARMM, even though only a few said they had personally experienced some form of it. This did not prevent them from saying that corruption permeated all levels of government down to the barangay. Part of the reforms being sought by the interim regional government is to set this right by advocating open governance among all ARMM governments and agencies.

Senator Franklin Drilon of the Senate finance committee was quoted to have said, "In ARMM, there are a lot of ghosts: ghost employees, ghost teachers, ghost students, ghost internally displaced persons, ghost voters, ghost contractors, ghost gasoline stations, and many more" (quoted in Bordadora 2012). These fictitious ghosts were supposedly used to cover up the theft of funds.

A 1996 report by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism written by Eric Gutierrez noted how the ARMM since 1991 (two years after its creation) has enjoyed "huge infusions of money." The author wrote then that despite the millions provided to ARMM, the region had "little to show for this money." Twelve years later, that statement remains as true today as it did then. The article blamed corruption by regional and local officials for siphoning off the money that should have been used to raise the ARMM people's welfare. However, it noted that accusations of corruption were difficult to substantiate and for cases to be filed; apparently, people were intimidated by the power of the accused. Gutierrez noted that the two cases of corruption filed with the Office of the Ombudsman never prospered. What is ironic is that the article then quotes presumably a professor of the Mindanao State University as laying the blame on the Manila government for imposing "an alien structure" of government in an area where "the concept of the state in not well-developed" and where "people find more security in their clan and in their datus . . . (who are only exercising their) normal and logical . . . authority . . . in dealing with an alien authority" (quoted in Gutierrez 1996).

More recent instances of possible corruption in the ARMM may be gleaned from reports of the Commission on Audit. The audit of operations of the Office of the Regional Governor (ORG) for the years 2008 and 2009 concluded that "funds received by the ORG for its own operations were not properly utilized and managed" and that "transactions amounting to P1.003 billion may not be considered valid and legitimate" (Commission on Audit 2010a, 4). No corruption charges were officially raised against then ARMM regional governor Zaldy Ampatuan who nevertheless is in jail for rebellion and for being complicit in the Maguindanao massacre of 2009.

The Commission on Audit's examination of the ARMM Social Fund for 2009 (Commission on Audit 2010b) also showed inefficiencies in the "utilization of funds and in the implementation of programs and projects". The report said that "the implementation of 35 projects costing P64.650 million were found deficient by P15.601 million."

An audit of the ARMM Department of Public Works and Highways' operations in 2008 and 2009 (Commission on Audit 2010c) showed that funds "were not properly recorded, utilized and managed." The report questioned "the validity and legitimacy of payments amounting to P1.123 billion." It also doubted the proper implementation of 27 projects costing P422.797 million.

An audit of the operations of the provincial government of Maguindanao for the same period raised similar doubts about proper utilization and management of funds (Commission on Audit 2010d). The

report considered transactions amounting to P865.887 million to be fictitious and 99 projects costing P873.448 million to be deficiently implemented or not implemented at all. A similar audit of the operations of selected municipalities in the province showed similar deficiencies and mismanagement (Commission on Audit 2010e).

These audits were conducted in 2010 but released only in 2011 after former President Gloria Arroyo, friend and benefactor of the Ampatuans, had long finished her term of office. The Office of the Ombudsman, also in the aftermath of the Maguindanao killings, conducted a lifestyle check of the Ampatuans but did not submit its findings until 29 June 2010, a day before the new president, Benigno Simeon Aquino III, took his oath of office. The lifestyle check was prompted by reports of the Ampatuans' extensive wealth that seemed incongruent with their incomes as government officials. The Ombudman's report stated that the Ampatuan patriarch, Andal senior, "owned at least 27 houses and lots located at Shariff Aguak, Cotabato City, and Davao City worth an estimated P90,463,262.78, most of which were not declared in his Statements of Assets, and Liabilities" (quoted in Lingao 2011). Zaldy Ampatuan, erstwhile ARMM regional governor, on the other hand, "owned at least 38 houses and lots located in Shariff Aguak, Cotabato City, Davao City, and in Metro Manila 'worth an estimated P58,488,545.40, most of which were not declared in his Statements of Assets and Liabilities'" (Lingao 2011).

It is not only the ARMM that is plagued by corruption; corrupt officials can be found in all levels of government throughout the country. Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranks countries based on how corrupt experts (through an assessment) and the public (through surveys) perceive a country to be. In 2012 the Philippines received a rank of 34 on a scale of 0 to 100 (Transparency International 2012). The closer the score is to zero, the more corrupt a country is perceived to be and the Philippines' rank means it is considered to be quite corrupt. In fact, from 2001 to 2010, the country was led by a president who, after stepping down when her term ended, was charged with corruption, plunder, and election fraud, all allegedly committed while she was the country's highest elected official. It was President Arroyo who knew how to exploit the "datu culture" of Muslim Mindanao by supporting the Ampatuan clan's hold on power in Maguindanao and the ARMM, and using the clan to deliver the votes she needed for a clean sweep of the elections.

Means to Curb Corruption

Curbs on corruption have taken on various forms, all of them with little or no effect. Participants in the FGDs and respondents of the KIIs volunteered various measures that they thought would prove effective, such as greater transparency in government dealings, greater accountability by government officials, and moral recovery. Moral recovery has always been somewhat of a favorite. It was certainly emphasized by participants in this study who said that any anti-corruption measure would amount to nothing unless there was a change of character. In fact, former President Fidel Ramos went so far as to issue an executive order (number 319 of 3 April 1996) implementing a moral recovery program for the government. It is difficult to say that it was a success considering that those who subsequently took over as president proved to be of rather low moral character, at least as far as the results of their governance went: Estrada was impeached for corruption and, as mentioned, Arroyo has been charged with various illegal acts. If nothing else, this shows that a moral recovery program alone will not work; institutional change must also be forthcoming. This is something that the current president appears to be intent on. President Aquino is reportedly pursuing steps to curb corruption, improve the delivery of services, and enhance the business and economic environment outlined in a Good Governance and Anti-corruption Plan, which may be accessed at the Open Government Partnership website. The plan expects to institutionalize measures that assure transparency, accountability, and participation at all levels of government. One consequence of this commitment was the president's cancellation of the ARMM elections in 2012 and his appointment of an interim regional government that was to oversee reforms in the ARMM in preparation for the rescheduled elections in 2013. The participants in this assessment generally acknowledged the necessity of reforming the ARMM government as a first step in bringing about meaningful changes for Muslim Mindanao, but they were not all supportive of the cancellation of elections.

The appointed officials of the interim government have expressed their intent on reforming the ARMM. The ARMM regional government has adopted both of the Aquino government's *Daang Matuwid* (the Straight Path) advocacy and its open governance strategy. In pursuit of this goal, the appointed regional governor, Mujiv Hataman, has issued an executive order (number seven) committing the regional government to "institute transparency, strengthen citizen participation, intensify accountability to ethical and performance standards, and maximize technology and innovation" (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao 2012a). These are

supposed to lead to a more open government that is subject to public scrutiny. Specific steps to be taken include:

- ensuring an integrated approach to measuring performance (results-based)
- adopting results-oriented budgeting (ROB) linked to the larger reform framework and while transitioning from the current zero-based budgeting (ZBB) system
- adopting and improving a citizen's charter and response mechanisms to complaints and reports in partnership with CSOs
- institutionalizing the new national guidelines on internal control system (NGICS) based on the Philippine Government Internal Audit Manual (PGIAM).

It remains to be seen, of course, whether these initiatives will lead to substantive changes in the ARMM.

2.4 Development and Social Indicators

Some details for select indicators based on the Human Development Index (HDI) from the 2008-2009 Human Development Report (Human Development Network 2009) reveals how behind the ARMM is compared to Metro Manila and the rest of the country (table 2.50). Within the ARMM itself, individual provinces showed variations in their efforts to improve the quality of life of their residents. Life expectancy in the province of Tawi-Tawi, for example, is 53.4 years compared to the country's average of 70.6 years, a significant difference of 17.2 years. Over the period 2000 to 2006, improvements in HDI were observed for the provinces of Lanao del Sur, Basilan, and Tawi-Tawi; however, Maguindanao and Sulu regressed to lower values. In the same period, the number of high school graduates from the age of 18 years old and above increased in the ARMM by 21 percent. The biggest improvements were in Basilan (36 percent) and Sulu (28 percent). In terms of per capita income increase overall, the ARMM managed to achieve a 17 percent gain, below the national average of 20 percent, due to the contraction in Tawi-Tawi's income by 8 percent and Sulu's meager 9 percent growth. However, Maguindanao (32 percent), Basilan (30 percent), and Lanao del Sur (23 percent) all exceeded the national average.

Table 2.50 Human Development Index for ARMM (2000 and 2006)

Region/ Province	*Human Development Index (HDI)*		*% High School Graduate (18 & above)*		*Per capita income (PPP US$)*		*Life expectancy at birth (years)*	
	2000	*2006*	*2000*	*2006*	*2000*	*2006*	*2000*	*2006*
Philippines	0.695	0.716	49.4	55.3	2,260	2,707	67.7	70.6
Metro Manila	0.774	0.792	74.3	81.1	4,750	5,101	69.9	71.8
ARMM	0.533	0.558	30.5	37.0	1,114	1,308	55.5	57.5
Basilan	0.546	0.592	28.6	38.9	1,074	1,397	60.5	62.1
Lanao del Sur	0.542	0.602	35.7	44.9	1,221	1,503	56.7	58.7
Maguindanao	0.543	0.535	36.1	40.6	1,052	1,384	55.6	57.6
Sulu	0.511	0.500	18.1	23.1	1,201	1,314	53.0	55.5
Tawi-tawi	0.525	0.560	34.2	37.4	1,020	942	51.5	53.4

Source: Human Development Network 2009.

INCOME PER CAPITA

What is the income per capita?

Data on per capita income were shown in a previous section and will be repeated here, as shown in tables 2.51a and 2.51b. On a per capita basis, the ARMM suffered the lowest level for all regions for the years 2009 to 2011. In 2011, per capita income in the ARMM was at a mere 26,004 pesos per head in current prices compared to the national average of over 103,000 pesos; it was 13,600 pesos per head at constant 2000 prices versus the average of 62,902 pesos for the whole country, about a fifth higher than the ARMM level. The Bicol region, with the next lowest per capita income level, had about a third more, while CARAGA, the next lowest in Mindanao, enjoyed almost double the ARMM's figure in 2011.

Table 2.51a Per capita gross regional domestic product 2009 to 2011 at current prices (in pesos)

Region/Year		*2009*	*2010*	*2011*
Philippines		88,180	97,227	103,366
NCR	Metro Manila	245,500	272,227	288,062
CAR	Cordillera	112,897	122,135	127,614
I	Ilocos	53,166	57,613	61,076
II	Cagayan Valley	46,215	46,362	51,100
III	Central Luzon	70,335	77,569	85,186
IVA	CALABARZON	109,592	122,942	126,589
IVB	MIMAROPA	57,053	58,863	62,995
V	Bicol	31,897	35,255	37,526
VI	Western Visayas	46,863	50,538	54,870
VII	Central Visayas	69,218	78,996	86,880
VIII	Eastern Visayas	53,819	55,678	58,335

(Table 2.51a continuation)

IX	Zamboanga Peninsula	50,731	54,800	57,815
X	Northern Mindanao	71,424	78,980	83,628
XI	Davao Region	76,435	83,017	89,552
XII	SOCCSKSARGEN	54,155	57,659	62,080
XIII	Caraga	36,318	40,675	44,472
ARMM	Muslim Mindanao	21,843	25,029	26,004

Reproduced from: National Statistical Coordination Board 2012c.
Data are as of July 2012.

Table 2.51b Per capita gross regional domestic product 2009 to 2011 at constant (2000) prices (in pesos)

Region / Year		*2009*	*2010*	*2011*
Philippines		58,199	61,570	62,902
NCR	Metro Manila	162,321	171,849	175,064
CAR	Cordillera	70,672	73,929	74,359
I	Ilocos	35,813	37,919	38,596
II	Cagayan Valley	31,519	30,775	32,017
III	Central Luzon	46,546	50,563	53,339
IVA	CALABARZON	73,271	79,298	79,283
IVB	MIMAROPA	37,724	37,522	37,853
V	Bicol	20,580	21,369	21,642
VI	Western Visayas	30,943	31,673	32,988
VII	Central Visayas	44,993	49,787	52,886
VIII	Eastern Visayas	36,058	36,325	36,529
IX	Zamboanga Peninsula	34,353	34,988	34,451
X	Northern Mindanao	46,818	49,128	49,441
XI	Davao Region	46,721	48,170	49,298
XII	SOCCSKSARGEN	36,688	36,629	37,294
XIII	Caraga	24,264	25,712	27,790
ARMM	Muslim Mindanao	13,867	13,992	13,663

Reproduced from: National Statistical Coordination Board 2012c.
Data are as of July 2012.

INDICATORS FOR HEALTH

What is the infant mortality rate? What is the number of doctors per 1,000 inhabitants? What is the life expectancy? a) Males b) Females?

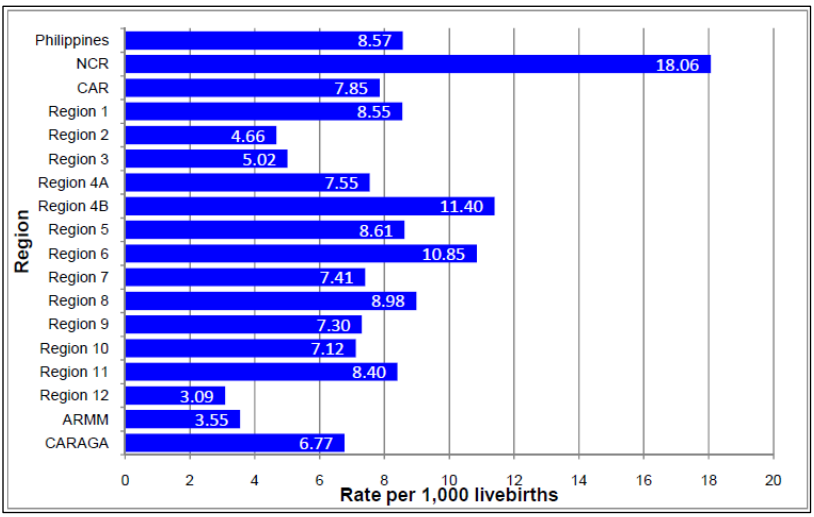
Infant mortality in the ARMM appears to be far lower than that for the country as a whole. In fact, infant mortality in the ARMM has improved more over the years since 1995 than has been the case for the whole country. Table 2.52 shows that the ARMM had the lowest infant mortality rate among all the country's regions for 2009, except for Region 12. This was despite the fact, as shown above, that the ARMM as a region was least likely to spend its funds on social services for its citizens.

Table 2.52 Infant mortality rates per 1000 live births, Philippines and ARMM (1995 to 2009)

	2009	*2008*	*2007*	*2006*	*2005*	*2004*	*2003*	*2002*[a]	*2001*[a]	*2000*[a]	*1995*[a]
Philippines	8.57	9.3	9.2	10	9.72	9.7	10.2	10.9	11.2	12.3	13.7
ARMM	3.55	4.4	4.1	4.4	5.1	4.8	5.7	6.7	6.2	7.9	8.8

Source: Department of Health Field Health Services Information System Annual Reports 1995, 2000-2009.
[a]Basilan and Marawi City not included in ARMM.

Figure 2.05 Infant mortality rates (2009)



Reproduced from: Department of Health Field Health Services Information System Annual Report 2009.

On a per province basis, performance is rather uneven, as table 2.53 below shows. In 2009, Marawi had the worst infant mortality rate, although this had not been always the case in the past (before 2008).

Table 2.53 Infant mortality in the ARMM per 1,000 live births by province (1995, 2000 to 2009)

	2009	*2008*	*2007*	*2006*	*2005*	*2004*	*2003*	*2002*	*2001*	*2000*	*1995*
Basilan	0.8	2.3	3.9	5.6	6.7	9.0	0.5	no data	1.3	2.8	15.9
Lanao del Sur	2.05	2.8	5.2	3.5	5.2	3.3	8.4	8.7	5.8	8.8	5.5
Maguindanao	3.27	3.3	2.4	1.6	3.3	2.9	4.1	4.5	4.2	6.3	1.6
Sulu	3.89	4.8	3	5.5	5.7	6.4	6.3	4.9	3.6	7.6	35.4
Tawi-Tawi	7.76	9.5	10.1	5.1	12.1	8.2	8.1	10.1	14.3	10.7	10.4
Marawi City	12.44	11.1	1.1	1.3	0.2	no data	0.3	0.7	no data	0.7	no data

Source: Department of Health Field Health Services Information System Annual Reports 1995, 2000-2009.

These highly positive results for infant mortality are counterweighted by not so optimistic results on other health indicators for the region. In terms of maternal mortality, for example, the ARMM in 2009 performed only close to the national average, 0.66 as compared to 0.64. However, this was a significant improvement over the data for previous years, as shown in table 2.54 below.

Table 2.54 Maternal mortality rates per 1000 live births in Philippines and ARMM (1995, 2000 to 2009)

	2009	*2008*	*2007*	*2006*	*2005*	*2004*	*2003*	*2002[a]*	*2001[a]*	*2000[a]*	*1995[a]*
Philippines	0.64	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.71	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6
ARMM	0.66	1.32	1.08	1.31	1.36	1.1	2.0	1.9	1.3	1.1	0.9

Source: Department of Health Field Health Services Information System Annual Reports 1995, 2000-2009.
[a]Basilan and Marawi City not included in ARMM

In terms of health facilities (barangay health stations–public provider of basic health services at the barangay level), the ARMM has only about one barangay health station (BHS) providing basic care for every 10,000 people and is the second worst situated region, surpassed only by the National Capital Region. With a population that is about four percent of the country, the ARMM has three percent of the total number of BHS, as shown in table 2.55 below. Within the ARMM, however, the distribution of BHS is skewed, with Lanao del Sur and Sulu suffering from a relative paucity of basic health facilities. Lanao del Sur has 24 percent of the ARMM's population but only 18 percent of its BHS; Sulu accounts for 21 percent of the population but only 15 percent of the number of BHS in the region. Because of this, both Lanao del Sur and Sulu are served only by one station per 10,000 persons, half the national average. The situation in Marawi City is worse with one BHS having to serve 20,000 persons.

Table 2.55 Population, number of barangays, and number of barangay health stations (2009)

	Population	*Number of Barangay*	*Number of BHS*	*Population per BHS*	*% of Total Popn*	*% to Total BHS*
Philippines	91,048,692	41,770	17,407	5,231		
ARMM	3,473,600	2,475	445	7,806	4	3
Basilan	316,200	210	58	5,452	9	13
Lanao del Sur	826,081	1,068	82	10,074	24	18
Maguindanao	1,048,500	488	185	5,668	30	42
Sulu	722,900	410	67	10,790	21	15
Tawi-Tawi	396,600	203	45	8,813	11	10
Marawi City	161,319	96	8	20,165	5	2

Source: Department of Health Field Health Services Information System Annual Report 2009.

This deficit in health stations is replicated in the number of government physicians, nurses, and midwives as well, with the ARMM among those regions with the lowest numbers of these health workers. In 2009, the government doctor to 1,000 inhabitants density in the ARMM was just 0.02, which translates to about one doctor to more than 45,000 people, as table 2.56 below shows. The ideal public health ratio is one doctor to 20,000 people, according to the government. The worst situated province was Tawi-Tawi.

Table 2.56 Number and density of government doctors in the ARMM (2009)

Region/Province	*Population*	*Number of government doctors*	*Density per 1,000 persons*	*Density per 20000 persons*
Philippines	91,048,652	31,385	0.34	6.89
ARMM	3,473,600	75	0.02	0.43
Basilan	316,200	5	0.02	0.32
Lanao del Sur	828,081	35	0.04	0.85
Maguindanao	1,048,500	18	0.02	0.34
Sulu	722,900	11	0.02	0.30
Tawi-Tawi	396,600	3	0.01	0.15
Marawi City	161,319	3	0.02	0.37

Source of basic data: Department of Health Field Health Services Information Systems Annual Report 2009.
Note: According to the government, the ideal ratio is 1 doctor per 20000 persons.

It is clear that the ARMM's citizens are poorly served by their government, both national and regional. The health system in the region is not devolved to the local government units so it is managed by the regional government's own Department of Health. This is despite the fact that the government spent 3.9 billion pesos, 51 percent of which came from foreign funding versus 3.6 percent at the national level (Romualdez et al. 2011, Box 2, p. 52). Increases in the number of health professionals and workers and in facilities could readily improve people's access to higher health standards than are currently available. Such attention can increase the life expectancy of the people of the ARMM from its current level.

In 2005, males in the ARMM had a life expectancy at birth of just 58 years, while women tended to live longer, until 62 years of age (Romualdez et al. 2011, 8). This is the same pattern as in the whole country where women tend to live longer by an average of about four years compared to men, 70.8 years compared to 64.2, respectively, as shown in table 2.57.

Table 2.57 Life expectancy at birth Philippines for 2003 to 2011 (in years)

	2003	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*
Total	67.2	67.3	67.4	67.6	67.8	68.0	68.2	68.5	68.8
Female	70.5	70.7	70.8	71.0	71.2	71.4	71.7	71.9	72.2
Male	64.0	64.1	64.2	64.3	64.5	64.7	64.9	65.2	65.5

Source: World Bank World Development Indicators. http://databank.worldbank.org.

In general, life expectancy in the ARMM is significantly lower than the national average, a result of combined factors related to the availability of health care and health facilities, environmental factors such as clean air and water and sanitation, as well as the violent conflicts that have plagued the region for decades. Table 2.58 below shows the life expectancy per ARMM province in 2009. Basilan residents enjoyed the highest at 62.7 years, while people in Tawi-Tawi were expected to live nine years less.

Table 2.58 Life expectancy at birth in the ARMM (2009)

Province	*Years*
Basilan	62.7
Lanao del Sur	59.7
Maguindanao	58.5
Sulu	56.8
Tawi-Tawi	53.6

Source: Human Development Index, Table 1.
http://www.nscb.gov.ph/hdi/2009/2009%20Human%20Development%20Index.pdf.

EDUCATION INDICATORS

What is the number of kindergartens/nurseries per 1,000 inhabitants? What is the number of teachers per 1,000 inhabitants? What is the literacy rate? a) Males b) Females

No data on the number of kindergartens/nurseries in the ARMM exist. Data on public elementary schools in ARMM are used instead to compute for density, as shown in table 2.59. The region beats the country as a whole in terms of elementary school per 1,000 people at 0.61 versus 0.41 nationally. There is not much of a disparity within the ARMM. Lanao del Sur has the highest density on a province basis with 0.78, while the lowest is in Maguindanao. At 0.49, the density ratio of elementary schools in Maguindanao is just slightly above the national level. In terms of the actual number of schools available for the school-age children of the ARMM, the numbers that exist appear to be relatively adequate. The problem seems to lie in the people's ability to access the schools and the quality of education received by those who go to them, the latter affected by the number and quality of teachers in the ARMM.

Table 2.59 Number of public elementary schools in the ARMM and ratio per 1000 inhabitants (2010)

	Population	*Number of Schools*	*Ratio per 1000 inhabitants*
Philippines	94,013,200	38,351	0.41
ARMM	3,551,800	2,149	0.61
Basilan	322,200	177	0.55
Lanao del Sur	1,011,300	784	0.78
Maguindanao	1,078,100	523	0.49
Sulu	735,000	421	0.57
Tawi-Tawi	405,200	244	0.60

Source: Mindanao Development Authority.

There exists what seems to be a rather low density of teachers per 1,000 inhabitants in the ARMM, as table 2.60 shows. The densities are lowest in the island provinces, particularly in Sulu with just 0.05 teachers per 1,000 inhabitants. Lanao del Sur enjoys the highest density at 0.77.

Table 2.60 Number of elementary school teachers and density per 1000 inhabitants in the ARMM (2010-2011)

	Number	*Density*
Basilan	92	0.29
Lanao del Sur	780	0.77
Maguindanao	346	0.32
Sulu	34	0.05
Tawi-Tawi	74	0.18

Source of basic data: Department of Education, Basic Education Information System 2011.

Table 2.61 shows the literacy rates for the country as a whole and for the ARMM in 2008. The government defines basic literacy as "the percentage of the population 10 years old and over, who can read, write and understand simple messages in any language or dialect" (National Statistical Coordination Board no date-b). Functional literacy, on the other hand, is generally defined as the "ability to read and write at the level necessary to participate effectively in society" (Education.com no date). This usually means that in addition to the basic ability to read and write a person is also able to manipulate numbers and has a certain level of comprehension.

The basic literacy rate for the country as whole is a high 95.6, while the functional literacy rate is somewhat lower at 86.4 percent. The rates for the ARMM are much lower than these in each category: 81.5 in basic literacy and 71.6 in functional literacy. There are no gender disaggregated data available, but since females commonly have a higher survival rate in school, it can be assumed that the respective literacy rates are higher for women than men.

Table 2.61 Literacy rate Philippines and ARMM 2008 (in percent)

	Basic literacy	*Functional literacy*
Philippines	95.6	86.4
ARMM	81.5	71.6

Source: National Statistics Office.

Conclusion

The various indicators considered above show the rather inadequate situation in the ARMM relative to the rest of the country in terms of government services rendered. They also indicate the poor economic and development performance of the region compared to the rest of the country, a performance that can be attributed to both relative neglect from the central government for most of the region's history as well as the poor qualities of the region's indigenous leadership. Part of the blame must also be laid on archaic social relations that have allowed local political leadership to be effectively monopolized by an elite group, collectively referred to as the datu.

It can be argued that the whole of Mindanao long suffered from relative neglect by a central government based in far-away Manila.. Within this region of much promise but little official attention and action, the Muslim parts suffered even more. There is no denying that historical circumstances, different cultures and traditions, and religious differences played a part in this. It took a Muslim uprising for this situation to be recognized, and to be corrected by the establishment of an autonomous region for Muslims with an autonomous government focused on serving the people of that region. For many reasons, some of which have been considered above, this regional autonomy arrangement has not delivered the promised goods. Another attempt to correct this has been initiated, both by the postponement of the regional elections and the appointment of a regional government by the Philippine president that was charged with initiating reforms, and by the recent signing of a framework peace agreement with the MILF. It remains to be seen what these steps will mean for the future of democracy and of the welfare of the people of the ARMM.

References

Amanah Islamic Bank. no date. History. http://www.al-amanahbank.com/History.html.

Amnesty International. 2008. *Shattered peace in Mindanao: The human cost of conflict in the Philippines.* London: Amnesty International Publications.

Anderson, Benedict. 1988. Cacique democracy in the Philippines: Origins and dreams. *New Left Review.* I/169, May-June.

Aning, Jerome. 2012. 64 Pinoys intercepted in 'back door' trafficking. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. November 24. http://globalnation .inquirer.net/57629/64-pinoys-intercepted-in-back-door-trafficking.

Arguillas, Carolyn O. 2010. Maguindanao a development blackhole: The poor get poorer, Ampatuans get richer as IRA billions pour in. In *The Maguindanao chronicles: Reports on politics, murder, and the quest for justice.* Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. http://pcij.org/stories/the-poor-get-poorer-ampatuans-get-richer-as-ira-billions-pour-in/.

Asian Development Bank. 2012. Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-The Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA). http://www.adb.org/countries/subregional-programs/bimp-eaga.

Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. 2012a. Open governance in ARMM. http://www.armm.gov.ph/open-government/open-governance-in-armm/.

_____. 2012b. Open governance in the ARMM: Improved infrastructure, delivery of goods and socio-economic services. *The Open Budget Info.* http://www.armm.gov.ph/the-open-budget-info/.

Avanzado, Madeleine G. 2006. SC declares CPR null And void; upholds regulations on rallies under BP 880 even as it directs LGUs to establish "freedom parks." *Court News Flash.* April 26. http://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/news/courtnews%20flash/2006/04/04260601.php.

Balisacan, Arsenio M., Hal Hill, and Sharon Faye Piza. 2009. Spatial disparities and development policy in the Philippines. In Yukon Huang and Alessandro Magnoli Bocchi, eds. *Reshaping economic geography in East Asia.* Washington, D.C.: The World Bank. http://www.rrojasdatabank.info/regeas09toc.htm.

Barnett, Clive and Murray Low, eds. 2004. *Spaces of democracy: Geographical perspectives on citizenship, participation and representation*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Bara, Hannbal. 2011. The History of the Muslim in the Philippines. National Commission for Culture and the Arts. http://www.ncca.gov.ph/about-culture-and-arts/articles-on-c-n-a/article.php?igm=4&i=232).

Bordadora, Norman. 2012. Senate to trace P1.6B in unremitted GSIS premiums from ARMM employees: Region's rank-and-file suffering from effects of ghost transactions, says Drilon. *Philippine Daily Inquirer.* September 12. http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/268862/senate-to-trace-p1-6b-in-unremitted-gsis-premiums-from-armm-employees.

Briones, Roehlano M. 2009. Asia's underachiever: Deep constraints in Philippine economic growth. In Gideon P. Carnaje and Liborio S. Cabanilla, eds. *Development, natural resouces and the environment.* College, Laguna: College of Economics and Management, University of the Philippines Los Baños, 226-39.

Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-The Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA). 2012. *Implementation blueprint 2012-2016*. March. http://bimp-eaga.org/Documents/ef4b1b8e-7291-40a5-9a0a-2d0250543801.pdf.

Cariño, Jacqueline K. 2010. *Country technical notes on indigenous peoples' issues: Republic of the Philippines*. International Fund for Agricultural Development. January. http://www.ifad.org/english/indigenous/pub/documents/tnotes/philippines.pdf.

Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility. 2013. Ampatuan massacre trial update: justice delayed. *Ampatuan Watch*. January 11. http://www.cmfr-phil.org/ampatuanwatch/.

Chua, Yvonne T. and Luz D. Rimban, eds. 2011. *Democracy at gunpoint: Election-related violence in the Philippines*. Quezon City: VERA Files and The Asia Foundation. http://verafiles.org/docs/publications/democracy_at_gunpoint.pdf.

Co, Edna E.A., Nepomuceno Malaluan, Arthur Neame, Marlon Manuel, and Miguel Rafael V. Musngi. 2010. *Philippine democracy assessment: Rule of law and access to justice*. Quezon City and Stockholm: Action for Economic Reforms and International IDEA.

Commission on Audit. 2010a. *Report on the special audit of the Office of the Regional Governor*. http://www.coa.gov.ph/GWSPA/2010/SAO_Report2010-01_ORG.pdf.

_____. 2010b. *Report on the special audit of the ARMM Social Fund Project*. January 2008 to September 2009. http://www.coa.gov.ph/GWSPA/2010/Special_Audit2010-03.htm.

_____. 2010c. *Report on the special audit of the ARMM Department of Public Works and Highways*. http://www.coa.gov.ph/GWSPA/2010/SAO_Report2010-05_DPWH-ARMM.pdf.

_____. 2010d. Report on the special audit of the provincial government of Maguindanao. http://www.coa.gov.ph/GWSPA/2010/SAO_Report2010-02_MaguindanaoProv.pdf.

_____. 2010e. Report on the special audit of selected municipalities (trust fund) of the province of Maguindanao. http://www.coa.gov.ph/gwspa/2010/sao_report2010-04_maguindanaolgus.pdf.

Department of Budget and Management. 2012. 2012 budget highlights. http://budgetngbayan.com/2012-budget-highlights/.

Department of Education. 2005. Functionally literate Filipinos: An educated Filipino: *National action plan to achieve education for all by year 2015*. http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Philippines/Philippines%20EFA%20NPA.pdf.

_____. 2008. *EFA 2015 implementation and challenges: Mid-decade assessment.* http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Philippines/Philippines_EFA_MDA.pdf.

Department of Health. no date. Universal health care. http://www.doh.gov.ph/Overview.

_____. 2012. *Field Health Service Information System (FHSIS) annual reports 1995-2009*. http://www.doh.gov.ph/serial.

Education.com. no date. Functional literacy. *Glossary of education.* http://www.education.com/definition/functional-literacy/.

Eighth Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–the Philippines East Asean Growth Area Summit (8th BIMP-EAGA Summit). 2012. *Joint Statement.* April 4, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. http://bimp-eaga.org/Documents/709442ed-085f-4209-819a-babe23a953d9.pdf.

Gutierrez, Eric. 1996. A culture of corruption in ARMM. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. http://pcij.org/stories/1996/armm2.html.

Human Development Network. 2009. *Philippine human development report 2008/2009.* Quezon City, Philippines: Human Development Network.

Human Rights Watch. 2010. They own the people: The Ampatuans, state-backed militias, and killings in the Southern Philippines. *Human Rights Watch Publications*. http://www.hrw.org/reports/2010/11/17/they-own-people.

Hutchcroft, Paul. 1991. *Oligarchs and cronies in the Philippine state: The politics of patrimonial plunder. World Politics* 43: 414-50.

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. 2010. *Philippines: Domestic violence, including legislation , availability of state protection and support services for victims.* April 6. http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=country&category=&publisher=IRBC&type=&coi=PHL&rid=4562d8cf2&docid=4e438d2c2&skip=0. Accessed 9 May 2013.

Institute for Inclusive Security. 2005. Justice, governance and civil society. In *Inclusive security: A toolkit for advocacy and action*. London and Washington, D.C.: International Alert and The Institute for Inclusive Security.

Kamlian, Jamail. 2005. Conflict resolution and management among feuding clans and families in Mindanao. A presentation at Elena Tower Inn, Iligan City, August.

_____. 2007. Survey of feuding families and clans in selected provinces in Mindanao. In Wilfredo M. Torres III, ed. *Rido: Clan feuding and conflict management in Mindanao.* Makati City: The Asia Foundation.

Kerkvliet, Benedict. 1995. Toward a more comprehensive analysis of Philippine politics: Beyond the patron-client, factional framework. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 26(2) 401-19.

Lais, J. 2010. The Bangsamoro outlook on the Millennium Development Goals. In *Winning the numbers, losing the war: The other MDG report 2010*. Manila: Social Watch Philippines.

Lingao, Ed. 2011. An anarchy of mansions. Sidebar. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. November 23. http://pcij.org/stories/an-anarchy-of-mansions/.

_____. 2012. Ampatuans own 500 hectares but assets inventory incomplete. In *The Mindanao chronicles: Reports on politics, murder and the quest for justice*. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. November 22. http://pcij.org/stories/ampatuans-own-500-hectares-but-assets-inventory-incomplete/.

Lingga, Abhoud Syed M. 2007. Dynamics and management of rido in the Province of Maguindanao. In Wilfredo M. Torres III, ed. *Rido: Clan feuding and conflict management in Mindanao.* Makati: The Asia Foundation.

Majul, Cesar Adib. 1999. *Muslims in the Philippines.* Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.

Malapit, Hazel Jean L., Tina S. Clemente, and Cristina Yunzal. 2003. Does violent conflict make chronic poverty more likely? The Mindanao experience. *Philippine Review of Economics* 40(2): 31-58.

Matuan, Moctar I. 2007. Inventory of existing rido in Lanao del Sur (1994-2004). In Wilfredo M. Torres III, ed. *Rido: Clan feuding and conflict management in Mindanao*. Makati, Philippines: The Asia Foundation.

McIndoe, Alastair. 2009. Behind the Philippines' Maguindanao massacre. *Time,* November 27. http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1943191,00.html.

McKenna, Thomas M. 1998. *Muslim rulers and rebels: Everyday politics and armed separatism in the Southern Philippines*. Berkeley: University of California Press. http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft0199n64c/.

National Commission on Culture and the Arts. no date. Ethnic differentiation. http://www.ncca.gov.ph/about-culture-and-arts/e-books/e-book.php?id=1&t=1.

National Economic and Development Authority. 2011. *Philippine development plan 2011-2016*. Pasig City: National Economic and Development Authority.

National Statistical Coordination Board. 2008. The countryside in figures. http://www.nscb.gov.ph/countryside/.

_____. 2012a. 2011 Gross regional domestic product, regional performances. http://www.nscb.gov.ph/grdp/2011/reglHighlights.asp.

_____. 2012b. 2011 Levels of grdp. http://www.nscb.gov.ph/grdp/2011/2011conlev.asp.

_____. 2012c. 2011 Per capita grdp. http://www.nscb.gov.ph/grdp/2011/2011concap.asp.

_____. 2012d. Family income and expenditures surveys, 2003 and 2006. http://www.nscb.gov.ph/fies/.

_____. no date-a. http://www.nscb.gov.ph/ru12/DEFINE/DEF-JUST.HTM.

_____. no date-b. Education. *Glossary of terms.* http://www.nscb.gov.ph/glossary/educ.asp.

National Statistics Office 2004. A Review of the Agricultural Sector in Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. http://www.census.gov.ph/content/review-agricultural-sector-autonomous-region-muslim-mindanao.

_____. 2012. Quickstat on Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. October. http://www.census.gov.ph/sites/default/files/attachments/ird/quickstat/armm_3.pdf.

Nimmo, H. Arlo. 2001. *Magosaha: An ethnography of the Tawi-Tawi Sama Dilaut*. Quezon City: Ateneo University Press.

Open Government Partnership. 2012. The Philippine good governance and anti-corruption plan: A roadmap for implementing good governance measures. http://www.opengovpartnership.org/stories/philippine-good-governance-and-anti-corruption-plan-roadmap-implementing-good-governance-mea.

Orbeta, Aniceto. C. Jr. 1996. Structural adjustment and poverty alleviation in the Philippines. *Philippine Institute for Development Studies Discussion Paper*. Series No. 96-04. http://dirp4.pids.gov.ph/ris/dps/pidsdps9604.pdf.

Pangalangan, Raul C. 2010. Religion and the secular state: National report for the Philippines. In *Religion and the secular state / la religion et l'État laïque: Interim reports*, prepared for and issued upon the occasion of The XVIIIth International Congress of Comparative Law, July 25-31, Washington, D.C. http://www.iclrs.org/content/blurb/files/Philippines%20wide.pdf.

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration. 2011. Overseas employment statistics 2010. Slide presentation. http://www.poea.gov.ph/stats/2010_Stats.pdf.

Rimban, Luz R. 2011. Overview: Breaking the cycle of violence. In Yvonne T. Chua and Luz R. Rimban, eds. *Democracy at gunpoint: election-related violence in the Philippines*. Makati City: The Asia Foundation.

Rivera, Temario C. 2011. In search of credible elections and parties: The Philippine paradox. In Felipe B. Miranda, Temario C. Rivera, Malaya C.

Ronas, and Ronald D. Holmes. *Chasing the wind: Assessing Philippine democracy,* 46-89. Quezon City: Commission on Human Rights.

Romualdez, Alberto G. Jr., Jennifer Frances E. de la Rosa, Jonathan David A. Flavier, Stella Luz A. Quimbo, Kenneth Y. Hartigan-Go, Liezel P. Lagrada, and Lilibeth C. David. 2011. The Philippines health system review. *Health Systems in Transition* 1(2). Asia Pacific Observatory on Health Systems and Practices. http://www2.wpro.who.int/asia_pacific_observatory/resources/Philippines_Health_System_Review.pdf.

Salerno, Tania. 2011. Transnational land deals in Mindanao: Situating ambivalent farmer responses in local politics. A paper presented at the International Conference on Global Land Grabbing, April 6-8, 2011, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.

Senate Economic Planning Office. 2012. *Overseas Filipino workers: At a glance.* May. http://www.senate.gov.ph/publications/AG%202012-04%20-%20OFW.pdf.

Silverstein, Adam. 2010. *Islamic history: A very short introduction.* New York: Oxford University Press.

The Institute of Bangsamoro Studies and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. 2011. *Armed violence in Mindanao: Militia and private armies.* Geneva, Switzerland: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

The Economist. 2010. Private armies in the Philippines: The warlords' way. February 18. http://www.economist.com/node/15549053.

Torres, Wilfredo M. III. 2007. Introduction. In Wilfredo M. Torres III, ed. *Rido: Clan feuding and conflict management in Mindanao.* Makati: The Asia Foundation.

Transparency International. 2012. Corruptions perception index 2012. http://www.transparency.org/cpi2012/results.

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. no date. What are human rights? http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Pages/WhatareHumanRights.aspx.

United States Department of State. 2011a. Human rights report: Philippines. In *2010 country reports on human rights practices*. Posted April 8, 2011. http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/eap /154399.htm.

_____. 2011b.*Trafficking in persons report*. June. http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2011/index.htm.

_____. 2012a. *Country reports on terrorism*. July. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of State. http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/195768.pdf.

_____. 2012b. Human rights reports: Philippines. In *2011 country reports on human rights practices*. Posted May 24, 2012. http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2011/eap/186301.htm.

Virola, Romulo A. and Lina V. Castro. 2007. Meeting the challenge for official statistics on hunger in the Philippines. Paper presented at the 10th National Convention on Statistics, EDSA Shangri-la Hotel, Mandaluyong City, October 1-2.

Warren, James Francis. 2000. *The global economy and the Sulu zone: Connections, commodities and culture*. Philippine edition. Quezon City: New Day Publishers.

Wikipedia. Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. http://en.wikipedia. org/wiki/Autonomous_Region_in_Muslim_Mindanao

World Bank. 1996. *Strategy to fight poverty: Philippines*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

_____. 2003. Human development for peace and prosperity in the Autonomous Region on Muslim Mindanao. November. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

_____. 2003. Human development for peace and prosperity in the Autonomous Region on Muslim Mindanao. November. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

Representative Democracy

Chapter 3

3.1 National and Legal Frameworks

How frequently are elections held?

At the national level, elections in the Philippines are mandated every three years for local and national posts, and every six years for the positions of president and vice president. However, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is governed by a separate statute, and the region experiences a third election unique to itself, which is supposed to be held every three years. Be that as it may, only six elections have been held in the region since its creation by law in 1989 to choose the regional governor, the vice-governor, and members of the Regional Legislative Assembly (RLA). The RLA is composed of three members from each electoral district. Elections in the ARMM have been held on 12 February 1990, 25 March 1993, 9 September 1996, 26 November 2001, 8 August 2005, and 11 August 2008.

Although the schedule of elections is fixed by law, the ARMM elections have always been postponed except for the first. This irregularity has made it difficult for political parties and candidates to plan their campaigns and other election-related activities. These changes have consequently led to the terms of office of sitting officials to be extended beyond what are provided by law.

The most recent postponement of the ARMM elections (in 2011) was a direct result of the desire of President Aquino to synchronize the ARMM elections with the midterm elections of 2013. The reason for the postponement was most likely due to the then ongoing peace talks between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine government, with both panels apparently agreeing that election-related violence would likely disrupt the talks. All such postponements were concurred in by Congress and effected through the passing of enabling legislations (Republic Act Nos. 7647, 8176, 8746, 8753, 8953, 9012, 9140, and 9333).

How frequently are the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections held?

At the community level, the synchronized elections for the barangay (village) and SK or youth council are held every three years. The most recent one was held on 25 October 2010. In the ARMM, a total of 768,081 voters cast their ballots in the barangay elections, representing 56.18 percent of the total registered voters, while a total of 32,312 youth (ages 15-17) voted in the SK elections, representing 62.21 percent of the total registered youth voters. The next elections are scheduled on 28 October 2013 barring any postponement.

How does the national statutory and administrative framework affect the conduct of local elections?

Under Republic Act No. 7166, national and local elections are synchronized—held on the appointed day—every three years. However, there are elections where the posts for president, vice president, and 12 of the 24 senatorial seats are not included in the ballot. These are called the midterm elections. The president, vice president, and senators all enjoy six-year terms as opposed to the members of the House of Representatives and local government officials who sit for three-year terms each.

The ARMM regional government is governed by another statute and the elections for regional government officials are set on a date different from the barangay elections.

All elections in the Philippines are administered by an independent constitutional body, namely the Commission on Elections (COMELEC).

Does national legislation provide details on size and structure of local councils?

Because the Philippines' constitutional framework follows the presidential system, its main feature is the separation of powers between the

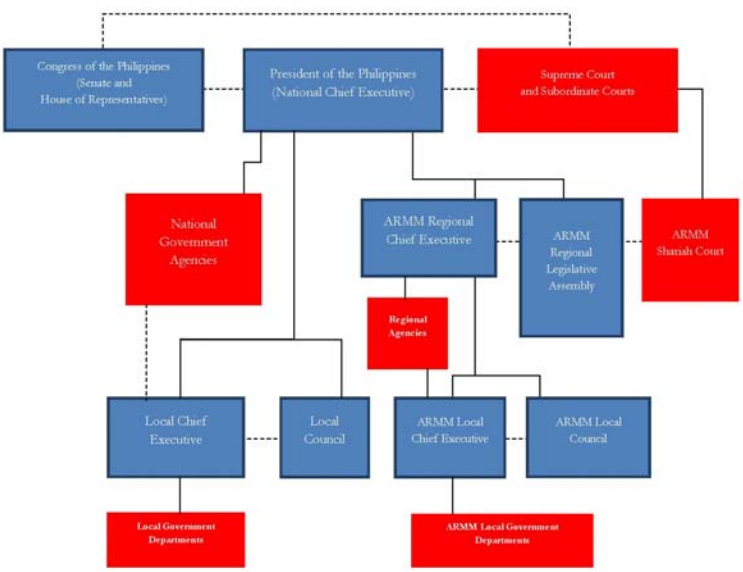
executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. This means that the legislature enacts the laws, the executive branch implements them, and the judiciary interprets them.

The chief executive and deputy or vice chief executive and legislators are elected separately. The chief executive is not a member of the legislature. The highest members of the judiciary are appointed by the president upon the recommendation of a committee that includes members from the legislature, the executive branch, the Bar, and other stakeholders.

Under the Local Government Code, devolution involves the transfer of executive and legislative powers and responsibilities to the local governments. Judicial power was not devolved. However, under the Organic Act of the ARMM, executive, legislative, and judicial functions were devolved to the regional government. The ARMM's judicial powers are limited to shariah family and personal law.

Local governments and the ARMM regional government are supervised by the Office of the President and are classified as executive agencies. In spite of the legislative powers devolved to the LGUs and ARMM, they are still considered part of the executive branch. Figure 3.01 illustrates the elective posts in government (shown in blue) and the non-elective (in red).

Figure 3.01 Chart of elective and non-elective government posts



*Blue boxes illustrate elective posts in government while boxes in red illustrate non elective posts.

The Sangguniang Barangay or village council is headed by a local chief executive. Unlike in provinces, cities, and municipalities, there are no permanent staff at this level because program implementation is to be accomplished through volunteerism and community civic spirit.

All local councils—the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (Provincial Board), Sangguniang Panlungsod (City Council), Sangguniang Pambayan (Municipal Council), and Sangguniang Barangay (Village Council)—are defined under the Local Government Code 1991. The minimum sizes of the membership of the local assemblies are determined by the code as well, which uses the income classification of LGUs as an indicator for increasing the members of the council. The charters of cities determine the number of council members, taking into account the population and classification of the city. Each city charter is enacted by Congress and signed by the President. The sizes of local assemblies are reiterated by resolutions of the Commission on Elections before every election. Adjustments happen when an LGU is upgraded to a higher income classification or when a municipality is converted into a city. Provinces and cities may have their council members elected per district. These districts are multi-member districts with equal numbers of members distributed across districts.

Councils have ex-officio members and sectoral representatives, including representatives from the women sector. The ex-officio members are the presidents of the Liga ng mga Barangay (League of Villages) and the Federation of Sangguniang Kabataan (Youth Councils). However, with the exception of the law for women, there is still no enabling law governing sectoral representation in local councils, effectively shelving sectoral representation. Presiding over council meetings is the vice governor in the case of a province or the vice mayor in the case of a city or municipality.

Unique to the ARMM is the Regional Legislative Assembly (RLA). Under the Philippine Constitution and the Organic Act, the ARMM possesses sufficient political, administrative, and financial powers to enable genuine autonomy of the region.

Republic Act No. 9054 says that the "legislative power of the autonomous region shall be vested in the Regional Assembly." The law specifically states that "the Regional Assembly shall be composed of members elected by popular vote, with three (3) members elected from each legislative district" (ArticleVI, Section 2). The RLA is composed of 24 members. Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, and Sulu elect six assemblymen each while Basilan and Tawi-Tawi elect three each. An Assembly Speaker elected from among its members presides over the ARMM Regional Legislative Assembly.

Table 3.01 indicates the number of elective council members, including those of the ARMM.

Table 3.01 Membership in elective councils

Subnational Level	*Name of Assembly*	*Presiding Officer*	*Number of Members*
Autonomous region	Regional Legislative Assembly	Assembly Speaker	• Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu: 6 each, 3 elected from each assembly district • Basilan (except Isabela City), Tawi-Tawi: 3 each, elected at-large • three sectoral representatives
Province	Sangguniang Panlalawigan	Vice Governor	• 3 Provinces: 12 SP members, 2 elected from each district • All other first class and second class provinces: 10 SP members, with varying number of members per district • Third class and fourth class provinces: 8 SP members, with varying number of members per district • Fifth class and sixth class provinces: 6 SP members, with varying number of members per district • President of the provincial chapter of the Liga ng mga Barangay • President of the provincial federation of the Sangguniang Kabataan • Sectoral representatives
City	Sangguniang Panlungsod	Vice Mayor	• Manila: 36 councilors, 6 elected from each district • Davao City: 24 councilors, 8 elected from each district • Quezon City: 24 councilors, 6 elected from each district • 8 cities: 16 councilors, 8 elected from each district • Rest of Metro Manila and 2 other cities: 12 councilors, 6 elected from each district • 2 cities: 12 councilors, 4 elected from each district • 5 cities: 12 councilors, elected at-large • All other cities: 10 councilors, elected at-large • President of the city chapter of the Liga ng mga Barangay • President of the city federation of the Sangguniang Kabataan • Sectoral representatives

(Table 3.01 continuation)

Municipality	Sangguniang Bayan	Vice Mayor	• Pateros, Metro Manila: 12 councilors, 6 elected from each district • All other municipalities: 8 councilors, elected at-large • President of the municipal chapter of the Liga ng mga Barangay • President of the municipal federation of the Sangguniang Kabataan • Sectoral representatives
Barangay	Sangguniang Barangay	Barangay Chairperson	• 7 members elected at-large • Sangguniang Kabataan chairperson
	Sangguniang Kabataan	Sangguniang Kabataan chairperson	• 7 members elected at-large

Sources: Local Government Code 1991 and Department of the Interior and Local Governments.

The Local Government Code 1991 is quite clear about representation and the selection of representatives to the various policy-making bodies both at the autonomous region and the local levels. What is crucial is the selection of these representatives, and whether the representational mechanisms, such as the councils and the assembly, perform their functions. It is imperative that they reflect the will and needs of the constituents in their respective jurisdictions. The selection of representatives crucially depends on two important factors, namely the choices and critical abilities of the electorate to choose their representatives, and the free and fair exercise of voting. Representation also significantly depends on the effective functioning of the mechanisms of decision and policy making.

The passage of the Local Government Code 1991 is a milestone in decentralization in the Philippines. The ARMM shares the passage of this decentralization law with the rest of the country. The decentralization law devolved to local government units (LGUs) the responsibility to deliver public services to their constituencies. Despite more than 20 years of implementation, the law raises concerns that the objectives of local autonomy and decentralization are only partially achieved. Such concern also holds true in the ARMM.

The ARMM was established by virtue of Republic Act No. 6734, or the Organic Act, passed in 1989 and later amended by Republic Act No. 9054 in 2001. The latter law expanded the territory of the ARMM to include Basilan and Marawi City. Under the Organic Act, 20 regional line agencies were devolved to the ARMM regional government.

On 15 October 2012, the national government signed an agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to forge the Bangsamoro Framework as an initial step toward peace and development in the region. One of the challenges to the current Bangsamoro Framework is to examine the current structure and design for representation, with an eye to how such structure and mechanism might effectively serve democracy and development in the region and Moro society.

Describe any constitutional provisions that directly address the institutional frameworks for local democracy or the processes for local elections.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that "the Philippines is a democratic and republican State. Sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates from them." The Constitution goes further to say that "the legislative power shall be vested in the Congress of the Philippines which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives, except to the extent reserved to the people by the provision on initiative and referendum." The Senate is to be "composed of twenty-four Senators who shall be elected at large by the qualified voters of the Philippines, as may be provided by law," while the House of Representatives "shall be composed of not more than two-hundred-and-fifty members, unless otherwise fixed by law, who shall be elected from legislative districts… and party-list representatives … from the labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, women, youth, and such other sectors as may be provided by law, except the religious sector."

The above provisions of the Constitution reflect the twin concepts of the representative and participatory character of democracy in the Philippines. The system shows that the people are sovereign, but they have elected representatives in legislation and governance, and underscores the importance of elections or suffrage as an instrument of people participation in governance. The Constitution declares,"Suffrage may be exercised by all citizens of the Philippines not otherwise disqualified by law, who are at least eighteen years of age, and who shall have resided in the Philippines for at least one year and in the place wherein they propose to vote for at least six months immediately preceding the election. No literacy, property or other substantive requirement shall be imposed in the exercise of suffrage." The last sentence of the provision stresses the state policy of making suffrage as popular as possible to enable even the unlettered and dispossessed Filipino citizens to participate in the choice of their leaders. This captures the gist of a republican democracy, a government of the people by their elected

representatives. This likewise puts a premium on the importance of honest, free, orderly, and credible elections as pillars of a republican democracy.

Does national legislation specify the electoral system for use in local elections?

Article X of the 1987 Constitution specifically mandates the holding of regional elections for the position of governor, vice governor, and the members of the regional legislative assembly in the ARMM. The processes used are similar to those in the midterm and national elections, with the ARMM governed by the same election code and procedure. Hence the local elections follow a plurality system with single member districts for the regional legislative system, akin to the national electoral system used by the rest of the country.

Are foreigners eligible to vote in local elections?

No, only citizens of the Philippines, not otherwise disqualified by law, are allowed to vote in elections (under Article V, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution). Persons holding dual citizenship are also eligible to vote.

What measures are taken to increase representation for disadvantaged groups, such as women, the disabled, young people or national minorities, and/or to ensure their inclusion or equal status in local government institutions?

Just like in the national electoral system, the ARMM electoral system allows for the participation of women, the disabled, members of indigenous communities, and other disadvantaged groups in the election. Republic Act No. 7160 provides for sectoral representation of women and Republic Act Nos. 7941 and 7912 (the Magna Carta for Women) uphold the right of women to representation.

The Organic Act enabled a devolution of powers that should have granted effective autonomy to the ARMM. In addition to the Local Government Code 1991, the ARMM is also supported by its organic code, which makes the ARMM a unique example of regional government with a governance mechanism of such extensive powers. These unique powers include taxation, education, environmental protection, economic development, natural resource management, human rights, and the delivery of justice. Theoretically, the ARMM has a wide scope to legislate for the needs of its people since it has a Regional Legislative Assembly that is

empowered to pass legislation to govern the five provinces. All of these powers aim to bring the benefits of governance to the ARMM.

Moreover, the Organic Act empowered the ARMM by granting greater autonomy to the Bangsamoro through the following:

- Establishment of the Regional Economic and Development Planning Board, chaired by the ARMM Governor. The agreement stipulated that the board shall "prepare the economic development plans and programs" for the autonomous government.
- Provision of broad powers to the Autonomous Regional Government (ARG) pertaining to economic, financial, business, and commercial matters.
- Devolution of development-related offices/agencies to the ARMM with allowance for further devolution pursuant to ARMM Regional Assembly legislation.
- Creation of an integrated system of education that promotes Filipino and Islamic values. The regional government was charged with managing the entire educational system in the ARMM, including Islamic colleges, in line with existing laws and national policies.
- Establishment of a shariah court system for Muslims.
- Creation of the Joint Monitoring Committee (GRP-MNLF-OIC) to monitor the implementation of phase one of the peace agreement.

Notwithstanding the goal of the ARMM as an autonomous homeland for Muslims, the Organic Act also guarantees the participation of non-Muslim groups, in particular, the Lumad (indigenous peoples) and Christians. The 24-member Regional Legislative Assembly has sectoral representatives that comprise 15 percent of the total elected membership from the legislative districts. The sectoral representatives may be taken "from the agricultural, labor, urban poor, disabled, indigenous cultural communities, youth and women sectors."

Because there are a number of ethnic groups or indigenous cultural communities in the ARMM, the Organic Act imposes a quota of 60 percent of cabinet positions to be reserved for those of indigenous (Muslim or tribal) background with the clarification that they should not be taken from one particular province or city of the autonomous region. Such quota and representation in the executive branch are unique to the ARMM. It is also specific in the Organic Act that the shariah law will only be applicable to Muslim citizens of the ARMM.

What electoral disputes have occurred in the last three local elections and how were these disputes resolved?

Focus group discussion participants in the various provinces claimed that elections in their areas have generally been fraudulent and dishonest. However, they stop short of declaring their leaders as fraudulently elected. It seems that people generally have come to accept the existence of fraud during elections, embracing the leaders who win in such fraudulent political exercises.

The Basilan FGD participants characterized elections as filled with vote buying, manipulation of results by political leaders, proliferation of flying voters, and tampering of the voters' list. The act of voting during elections was regarded as a mere formality. Winners were allegedly "pre-selected." They also supposed that if one did not vote, somebody would vote for him or her. Some FGD participants claimed, "During the time when there was no election, the people were united."

The Sulu FGD participants echoed the observations from the other discussion groups regarding rampant vote buying and flying voters. One participant pointed to a politicized National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL, an elections watch citizens' group), saying, "Money is the game. If you are a politician and you have money, you are a sure winner." Others added, "*Election! Pera na naman; normal na ipagbili ang vote and normal na din sa mga politicians magprepare ng money during election*. (Election! That's the time when people sell their votes and the politicians prepare their money to buy votes.)"

Lanao del Sur FGD participants said, "If there is election violence, people don't speak, they refuse to become a tool for peace. In one municipality, people were unable to vote because of the rido."

On a positive note, however, there is an appreciation for the faster counting of votes by way of the technology of computerized counting. However, there was also the realization that automated elections still faced technical problems.

Maguindanao FGD participants recognized that the phenomenon of the command vote hindered the people's right to freely choose their preferred candidates. The mayor (or some other authority figure) dictated upon the people who to vote for and the people simply followed. They reported rampant electoral fraud, violence, and vote buying. They said that candidates who gave money got the votes. They also alleged that when counting was still by hand, there was no assurance that the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) correctly read the votes; now that counting had become automated, if the BEI saw that a voter did not vote for the

preferred candidate, the inspectors would put an extra mark on the ballot to invalidate it. This was supposedly evidence that it was easier to cheat in automated elections. Other complaints consisted of voters' lists being forged and tampered with, and the lack of security and privacy in the casting of votes. Some said that the best electoral reform was no election because elections were a sham and there was no free choice for voters.

Various other comments from FGD participants showed them struggling with the ethical dilemma of vote buying, as well as with the technical capacity of the personnel tending to the automated voting machines, as shown in the following statements:

> For me it's okay to use the money to buy votes as long as the voters themselves vote in favor of a qualified candidate. Some candidates find other means in buying voters by declaring it (money given) as a form of *zakat* (charity).

> The defect in the conduct of automated election is the lack of training of the computer technician.

The COMELEC, various election watchdogs, political parties, and international election observers have documented cases of fraudulent elections in the region. Automation and fair implementation of elections laws, prosecution of election law offenders, and various other moves by citizen groups are among the attempts to curb election fraud. So far, the positive changes are not quite evident yet.

The accounts of FGD participants from various provinces point to different problems encountered in the election, some of which relate to the administration of elections in spite of automated voting machines, and others to vote buying, command votes, and manipulated voting.

Evidence of election offenses in the ARMM is cited below:

- *2004 Election - Mayor Salip Aloy Jainal (petitioner) vs. Julhatab Talib, and Hussin Ahajan (respondents) (G.R. No. 174551).* Petitioner Mayor Salip Aloy Jainal and private respondent Julhatab J. Talib (Talib) were duly certified candidates for mayor of Indanan, Sulu in the 10 May 2004 elections. During the canvassing, Talib objected to the inclusion of certain returns before the Municipal Board of Canvassers (MBC). On 20 May 2004, the petitioner was proclaimed by the MBC as the winning candidate with an alleged margin of 1,018 votes. On 23 May 2004, Talib filed a pre-proclamation case with the COMELEC, docketed as SPC No. 04-169, praying for the annulment of election

returns pertaining to twenty-one precincts representing 3,788 votes, and for his proclamation as the mayor of Indanan, Sulu.

- *2004 Election – Nur Jaafar vs. Anuar "Hadj" Abubakar (HRET/G.R. No. 173310*). In May 2004, the Commission on Elections declared Abubakar as the duly elected congressman, winning by a wide margin of 2,040 votes. Jaafar filed his election protest before the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal (HRET) on 1 June 2004 alleging that "fraudulent and illegal acts" were employed by Abubakar and his supporters, including members of the police and military. Jaafar's supporters were allegedly prevented "from voting through the use of force, violence (and) intimidation." The COMELEC ruled to dismiss the case.
- *2005 Election – Dr. Mahid M. Mutilan (petitioner) vs. Zaldy Uy Ampatuan (private respondent) (G.R. No. 171248).* On 19 August 2005, petitioner filed an Electoral Protest and/or Petition to Annul the Elections. The case was docketed as EPC No. 2005-3. Petitioner contested the results of the elections in Maguindanao, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, and Sulu on the ground that no actual election was conducted in the precincts in these four provinces. Petitioner alleged that the voters did not actually vote and that the ballots were filled up by non-registered voters in the four provinces. Petitioner also contested the results in the municipalities of Butig, Sultan Gumander, Calanogas, Tagoloan, Kapai, Masiu, and Maguing in Lanao del Sur where massive substitute voting allegedly took place. The petition was dismissed.
- *2007 Election – Aquilino Pimentel III vs. Juan Miguel Zubiri (SET Case No. 001-07).* Pimentel filed the electoral protest to the Senate Electoral Tribunal (SET) on 14 July 2007, which covered 2,658 precincts in the provinces of Maguindanao (1,078), Lanao del Norte (496), Shariff Kabunsuan (291), Basilan (134), Sultan Kudarat (282), Lanao del Sur (161), and Sulu (216). Zubiri then filed a counter-protest covering 73,265 precincts.
- *2007 Election – Mansul D. Aradais vs. Abdusali K. Asmadun - Regional Trial Court-9 Judicial Region Branch 25-Siasi, Sulu.* Aradais filed the election protest against Abdusali K. Asmadun claiming that before, during, and after the election, Asmadun committed "prohibited acts of the Omnibus Election Code such as manufactured votes, substitute voting, voting by one and the same person and the same hand, improperly assisting of votes, threats and intimidation and similar fraudulent acts, thereby depriving him (Aradais) of his valid and legal votes." Aradais won the case.

- *2010 Election – Electoral protest filed by Rep. Salic Dumarpa against sitting Rep. Mohamed Hussein Pangandaman in Lanao del Sur.* The COMELEC declared Pangandaman the winner. He took his oath on 15 November, but that wasn't the end of the contest. Dumarpa's protest, though already dismissed by the COMELEC and the Supreme Court, is still pending in the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal.

Table 3.02 lists other election cases filed with the COMELEC in 2010.

Table 3.02 Cases of pre-proclamation controversies and petitions for annulment of proclamation (2010)

SPC 2010	*Title of the Cases*	*Parties*			*Date filed*
10-001	In the matter of petition against illegal composition and proceedings/Resolution of the Municipal Board of Canvassers of Rajah Buayan, Maguindanao as per Section 3, Resolution No. 8809 dated March 30, 2010 of the Commission on Elections				13-May-10
10-005	Radjan U. Hajibin vs. Municipal Board of Canvassers of Kalingalan, Caluang, Sulu	Radjan U. Hajibin	versus	Municipal Board of Canvassers of Kalingalan, Caluang, Sulu	14-May-10
10-009	Petition for the exclusion of election return that constitutes illegal proceedings of the Board of Canvassers of Binidayan, Lanao del Sur due to terrorism and proclamation of winning local candidates by lowering the threshold limit of the consolidation and canvassing system	Sur Monefah Olama Mulok and Aman Misbac Datumuloc	versus	MBC of Bindayan, Lanao del Sur	17-May-10
10-015	In the matter of petition for correction of discrepancy in the election result in clustered precinct number 27 (0057A, 0058A, 0058B, 0058C), Barangay Tunggosong Banaran, municipality of Sapasapa, Tawi-Tawi as appearing in the COMELEC Central Server and Citizen Arm Server	Ismael A. Masdal			18-May-10
10-017	Petition to annul the proclamation of Ysmael I. Sali as municipal mayor of Languyan, Tawi-Tawi	Romel Y. Matba	versus	Ysmael I. Sali	18-May-10
10-021	Petition to annul the proclamation of Monadato M. Comadug as duly elected member of the Sanguniang Bayan, Taraka, Lanao del Sur	Sambitory B. Paunte	versus	Mondato M. Cumadug& MBC of Taraka, Lanao del Sur	20-May-10

(Table 3.02 continuation)

10-031 Formerly SPA 10-184	Petition to annul the proclamation of Al-Zhudurie L. Asmadun as the winning mayoralty candidate in the municipality of Lugus, Sulu	Abdurahman S. Abdulmajid	versus	The MBC of Lugus, Sulu	21-May-10
10-038	In the matter of the petition to annul the proclamation of all the winning candidates in the municipality of Lugus, Province of Sulu & for the recounting of clustered Precincts Nos. 001A/002A/003A/004A/0015A/ 0016A/ 0017A	Mansul D. Aradais, Hasan Alamia & Salem Adih	versus	The MBC of Lugus, Province of Sulu, Al-Zhudurie L. Asmadun (mayoralty candidate), Limtajar Hassan (vice mayoralty candidate) & Riking Assali Dhoh Wahab, Sid Asamuddin, Julkipli Hassan, Persia Mallang, Oamr Janani, Abdurahman Misah and Mohammad Isa Saning, all municipality councilors candidates	21-May-10
10-063	Petition to annul the proclamation of Haber A. Asarul of Sumisip, Basilan	Gulam S. Salliman-Hataman	versus	Haber A. Asarul & The MBC of Sumisip, Basilan	24-May-10
10-064	Petition to annul the proclamation of Jum J. Akbar as alleged governor-elect of the Province of Basilan	Mujiv S. Hataman	versus	Jum J. Akbar and the PBC of Basilan	24-May-10
10-067	Petition for annulment of election results and proclamation	Salip Aloy A. Jainal	versus	MBC of Indanan, Sulu and Saripuddin D. Jikiri	24-May-10
10-069 Changed to SPA 10-199 (FE)	Petition for annulment of the elections or election results and/or declaration of failure of elections in the barangays of Buton, Langil, Pintasan, Seronggon, Sulutan-Mtanghal, municipality of Mohammad Ajul, Basilan Province of ARMM	The MBC of Mohammad Ajul, namely Sunducia S. Japarul, Majad K. Daggong and Nurie M. Taha and Talib G. Pawaki			25-May-10
10-071	Petition for annulment of proclamation and disqualification of Datu Marshall Sinsuat as the winning candidate for the Office of the Municipal Mayor of Datu Blah Sinsuat, Province of Maguindanao				25-May-10

10-073	Petition for annulment of proclamation with prayer for issuance of a writ of preliminary injunction and ex-parte application for TRO	Gemie P. Sinsuat	versus	MBC of Datu Blah Sinsuat, Maguindanao and Datu Tato U. Mustapha	25-May-10
10-078	Petition to annul proclamation or to suspend the effect thereof on the ground of illegal proclamation committed by the MBC of Binidayan, Lanao del Sur	Monefah Olama Mulok and Aman Misbac Datumulok	versus	MBC of Binidayan, Lanao del Sur, public respondent, Abdullah Colaw Datumalok (mayoralty candidate) and Monib L. Imam (vice-mayoralty candidate), private respondent	26-May-10
10-081	Petition to nullify or declare the nullity of the illegal proclamation due to incomplete canvass of the election results in the municipality of Saguiaran, Lanao del Sur, and to physically and manually count the rejected ballots in the said municipality during the 10 May 2010 Automated General Elections	Arafat M. Salic, candidate for mayor, municipality of Saguiaran, Province of Lanao del Sur	versus	The MBC, the election officer and mayoralty candidate Macmod R. Muti, all of the municipality of Saguiaran, Lanao del Sur	29-May-10

Source: Clerk of the Commission, Commission on Elections.

3.2 Electoral System Design and Performance and Election Administration

How does the electoral system affect the conduct of election campaigns?

The election campaign and propaganda provisions in Article X of Batas Pambansa 881 have been amended by Republic Act No. 9006—an Act to Enhance the Holding of Free, Orderly, Honest, Peaceful and Credible Elections Through Fair Election Practices, or the Fair Elections Act that was enacted on 12 February 2001. This law defined and regulated lawful elections propaganda, established equal access to media, and regulated the rates for political propaganda in order to advance the "equal opportunity for public service" clause in the Constitution.

Are there identity groups in the community—ethnic, racial, or religious groups or those such as women, young people or the homeless—who are not represented in proportion to their estimated population size through formal channels of representation such as political

parties? (If so, how have these groups organized outside the formal channels to represent their interests?)

The constitutional provision on enhancing the participation of marginalized sectors has been enacted into law in the form of Republic Act No. 7941, the Party-List System Act.

Please describe the overall administration of local government elections, from keeping the voters roll, accrediting parties and candidates, designing and counting ballots, voter information, and certification of results.

The provisions on Registration of Voters in Article XII of Batas Pambansa 881 have been amended by Republic Act No. 8189—an Act Providing for a General Registration of Voters, Adopting a System of Continuing Registration, Prescribing Procedures Thereof, and Authorizing the Appropriation of Funds Therefor—approved on 11 June 1996. Known as the Voter's Registration Act of 1996, the law eliminated the periodic general registration of voters every ten years and substituted this with a continuing registration system that allows the old list to exist as long as it is not nullified. It has been observed, however, that a continuing registration will only be advantageous if a corresponding system of cleansing of voters' lists has been adopted. Without such a cleansing system, continuing registration tends to perpetuate the existence of ghost and multiple registrants. Ghost and multiple registrants have marred the list of voters and this was the reason for annulling the list in 2003, prior to the 2004 elections. Due to similar problems, the ARMM voters' list likewise underwent a cleansing in preparation for the 2013 election.

Amendments on the conduct of elections have been enacted, particularly in the areas of voting by qualified voters, counting and canvassing of votes, and proclamation of winning candidates. Republic Act No. 7166—an Act Providing for Synchronized National and Local Elections, and for Electoral Reforms—restated the rules on postponement and failure of elections, filing of certificates of candidacy, registration of voters, annulment of the list of voters, absentee voting, authorized election expenses, canvassing of votes, partial proclamation of winning candidates, pre-proclamation controversies and proceedings, election contests, and other administrative details of elections.

Finally, steps to modernize the electoral system in order to minimize election fraud and ensure the conduct of honest, peaceful, and credible elections have been undertaken through various legislations. One of these measures is Republic Act No. 9369 (23 January 2007) that amended

Republic Act No. 8436 (22 December 1997)—an Act Authorizing the Commission on Elections to Use an Automated Election System in the 11 May 1998 National or Local Elections and in Subsequent National and Local Electoral Exercises. The new law widened the field for the selection of appropriate election technology from the original constrictive specification for "stand alone optical mark reader" machines provided under Republic Act No. 8436. The new law likewise included in its policy statement a provision for electronic transmission of election results, which was not present in the old law. It says, "It is the policy of the State to ensure free, orderly, honest, peaceful, credible and informed elections, plebiscites, referenda, recall and other similar electoral exercises by improving on the election process and by adopting processes and means which shall involve the use of an automated election system that will ensure the secrecy and sanctity of the ballot and all election, consolidation and transmission documents in order that the process shall be transparent and credible and that the results shall be fast, accurate and reflective of the genuine will of the people."

The foregoing concern for transmission is repeated in another provision that says, "Automated election system, hereinafter referred to as AES—a system using appropriate technology which has been demonstrated in the voting, counting, consolidating, canvassing, and transmission of election results, and other electoral processes." These legislated improvements in the election modernization law turned the electoral system into a more effective vehicle for ascertaining the true will of the electorate, therefore improving the processes of representative and participatory democracy.

What electoral administration practices—in areas such as voter or candidate registration, ballot design, voting processes, precinct management, counting and verification processing, and election dispute management—have been identified as successful and which have been identified as in need of improvement?

The participants in the focus group discussion (FGD) in Tawi-Tawi pointed out that although there were problems in achieving clean, honest, and fair elections in the ARMM, there were some improvements in the administration of elections in the locality. According to them, "the computerization of elections resulted in less conflict and fraud." However, the FGD participants from Maguindanao thought that it was easier to cheat in automated elections. According to them, the voters' lists were forged and tampered with; there was also no security and privacy in the casting of votes.

The FGD participants in Lanao del Sur expressed a similar observation as the Maguindanao participants did regarding cheating. The Lanao del Sur participants referred to it as "high tech cheating." They further observed, "*Yung tunay na residente hindi priority, mas priority pa yung mga flying voters, may area pa sa Lanao del Sur mas marami pa yung flying voters… mas marami pa kaysa actual voters.* (The real residents are not the priority, flying voters are. There are areas in Lanao del Sur where there are more flying voters than there are genuine voters.)"

Key informant interviews in Sulu described voting precincts as jam-packed, and identified the difficulty of voting due to the transfer of names to other areas, on the one hand, and missing names from the master list, on the other hand. The voters' list was among the problems encountered during the last two elections. Key informants in Lanao del Sur recognized the occurrence of vote buying, flying voters, ghost electors, double registration, electoral sabotage, and other fraudulent acts during the last two elections.

The focus group discussions and key interviews with informants imply that the problems related to elections are not confined to the election technology but include problems of vote buying, cleansing and managing the voters' list, and ensuring that flying and non-qualified voters are prevented from voting. Although the electoral management body and the laws may correct the perennial problems that bug elections, there are certainly many more challenges to the sense of citizenship of voters and the sense of responsibility of candidates and their minions. Effective management by electoral administration bodies and accredited groups is equally crucial, as are the strict enforcement of laws and policies and the vigilance of citizens to make a difference in the conduct of elections in the ARMM.

Thus far there have been six elections of regional officials in the ARMM that were reset. Some people think that such postponements of elections show that the national government is not quite serious about governance in the ARMM particularly in the regular conduct of the selection of the region's leaders. See table 3.03 for the list of postponed elections and the reason for their postponement.

The national government has a history of interference in the ARMM elections by favoring party candidates, or otherwise directly or indirectly influencing the votes. This interference has diluted the regional autonomy of the ARMM. For example, there are instances of proven and suspected influencing and manipulation of the votes in regional elections. Some people have also identified the reasons for such manipulation. According to former COMELEC Commissioner Rene Sarmiento, the datu system significantly affects ARMM politics. He said, "*Kung ano po sinabi ng datu, ganoon po.*" Command votes exist in this sense. The interference from

Malacañan (the presidential palace) has managed to manipulate the system by having the President of the Philippines, the datu, select the regional leadership.

Table 3.03 ARMM elections and reasons for postponement

Election Schedule	*Reason for Postponement*
12 February 1990	On time by virtue of the Transitory Provision in RA 6734 that the election will be not earlier than 60 days or later than 90 days after the law has been ratified.
25 March 1993	Section 1 of RA 7647 states that the date of ARMM election will be on the second Monday after the Muslim Month of Ramadhan except on the second regular election which is on 25 March 1993.
9 September 1996	The *Eidl Fitr* was on 20 February 1996, and so by virtue of RA 7647, the ARMM election should be on 4 March 1996, the second Monday after Ramadhan. But RA 8176 moved it to 9 September 1996, the third ARMM election. RA 8176 was passed in less than 3 months before the scheduled election.
	The 1999 election was supposed to be on 8 March 1999 (based on RA 8176), but RA 8746 was approved on 4 March 1999, four days before the scheduled election and moved the date to 13 September 1999.
	The supposedly 13 September 1999 election was moved to 11 September 2000 by virtue of RA 8753, which was passed on 8 September 1999.
	Ten days before the scheduled 11 September 2000 election, the date was again moved to 14 May 2001 (this time to coincide with the general election) under RA 8953. The bill to change the date was certified urgent by the president. It was filed on 2 June 2000, was approved by the House on 5 June 2000, sent to the Senate on 6 June 2000, and was received by the Senate on 14 June 2000 before the Congress' sine die adjournment. Despite the insufficient time-frame argument raised by the opposition, both chambers agreed to form a ConCom on 21 August. The ConCom released its report on 22 August. On 31 August, the bill was transmitted to the President who approved it on 1 September, ten days before the date of election.
26 November 2001	RA 9012, which was approved on 14 February 2001, changed again the date of ARMM elections from 14 May 2001 to 10 September 2001. Take note that more than a month since the passage of RA 9012, RA 9054, aka the Organic Act of ARMM, lapsed into a law without the president's signature. This was the time of the so-called EDSA Dos where there was much political instability in the country. Article XVIII of the Transitory Provisions of RA 9054 provides that "The first regular elections of the Regional Governor,

(Table 3.03 continuation)

	Regional Vice Governor and members of the regional legislative assembly under this Organic Act shall be held on the second Monday of September 2001." It was specific only for the first regular election. It did not state that the next elections would be three years thereafter. The supposedly 10 September 2001 date for the elections was moved to 25 November 2001 by virtue of RA 9140. 25 November 2001 was the fourth ARMM election and the first ARMM election under the new Organic Act, RA 9054.
8 August 2005 11 August 2008	RA 9333 changed the date of the ARMM election to the second Monday of August. The 8 August 2005 and 11 August 2008 elections, the fifth and sixth ARMM elections, respectively (or the second and third ARMM elections based on the new Organic Act), were based on RA 9333. Later, RA 9333 was questioned at the Supreme Court for being unconstitutional. Even the 8 August 2011 election was based on RA 9333.
	In June 2011 the Senate passed the bill postponing the 2011 ARMM elections. On 28 July 2011, President Aquino signed Executive Order 51 that created the OIC Screening Committee to vet candidates to be temporarily appointed to the ARMM regional government. On 13 September, the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order against the implementation of the law synchronizing the 8 August 2011 elections in the ARMM with the 13 May 2013 polls and allowing President Aquino to appoint officials to serve in the interim (21 months).

3.3 Results of the PCID Survey in Relation to Representative Democracy

A survey was conducted by the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy (PCID) in the ARMM regarding election-related issues and problems. The respondents were asked whether they witnessed or experienced commonly known election-related problems, such as vote buying, flying voters during election, vote padding, delays in the transfer of vote boxes, ballot box snatching, and others in the last three years. A question on the election-related rido was also asked.

The respondents were also asked whether they reported these problems and to whom they did so if at all. The survey results are shown in the following charts and tables. Subregional results are shown for Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi as totals for BASULTA, and those for Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao as totals for LAMARMA in the tables.

Vote Buying Witnessed

Slightly more than half of the surveyed respondents personally witnessed or knew of vote buying in the region (shown in figure 3.02 below), which makes this problem the most common, at least in the perception of the people surveyed. There were some significant variations by province as shown in table 3.04. Moreover, these are views that were confirmed by the focus group discussions. However, the survey and focus group discussion informants said that people who witnessed fraud did not necessarily report them.

Figure 3.02 Incidence of election vote buying witnessed

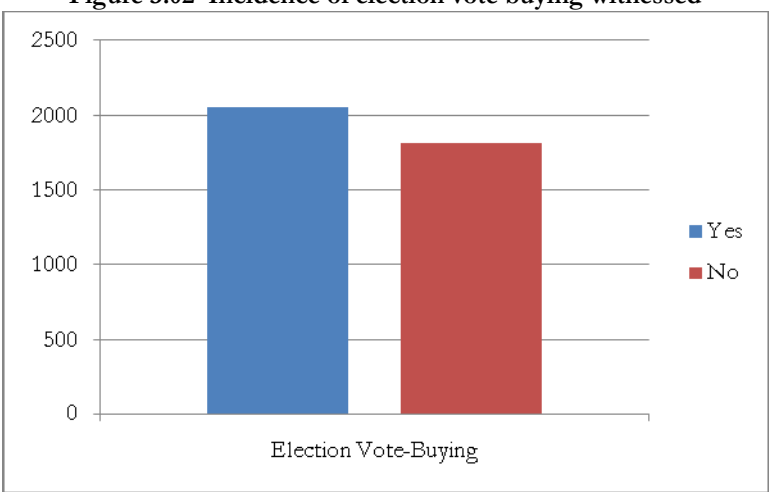


Table 3.04 Incidence of election vote buying witnessed, by province and subregion

Province/Subregion	*Yes*		*No*	
	Frequency	*Percent*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Basilan	460	58.2	331	41.8
Sulu	431	58.6	304	41.4
Tawi-Tawi	365	45.8	432	54.2
Total BASULTA	1256	54.1	1067	45.9
Lanao	522	69.2	232	30.8
Maguindanao	283	35.5	515	64.5
Total LAMARMA	805	51.9	747	48.1

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Flying Voters, Vote Padding, and Other Problems Witnessed

There are survey informants who said that they personally witnessed the occurrences of such local electoral problems such as flying voters, election votes padding, ballot box snatching, coercion and intimidation, and delay in the transport of ballot boxes. However, the majority said they did not personally witness nor had they personal knowledge of these problems. These occurrences were validated in several focus group discussions where participants cited these problems to have happened in various provinces of the region. The extent to which these occurrences happened could not be ascertained by the FGD informants as they were merely relaying anecdotal incidents.

Figure 3.03 Incidence of election flying voters witnessed

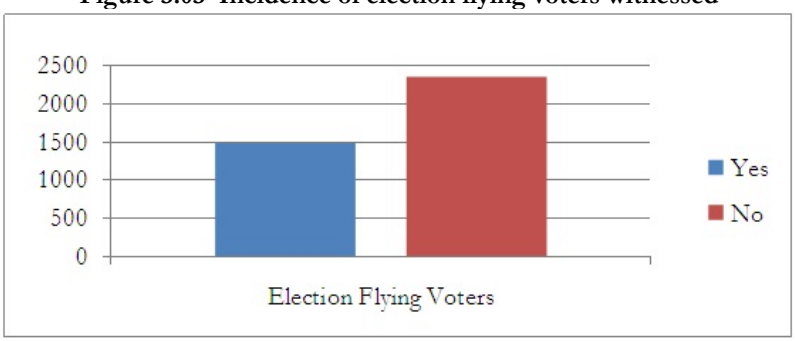


Table 3.05 Incidence of election flying voters witnessed, by province and subregion

Province/Subregion	*Yes*		*No*	
	Frequency	*Percent*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Basilan	238	30.2	553	69.9
Sulu	262	36.8	449	63.2
Tawi-Tawi	235	29.5	561	70.5
Total BASULTA	735	32	1,563	68
Lanao	462	62.2	281	37.8
Maguindanao	288	36.1	510	63.9
Total LAMARMA	750	48.7	791	51.3

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Figure 3.04 Incidence of vote padding witnessed

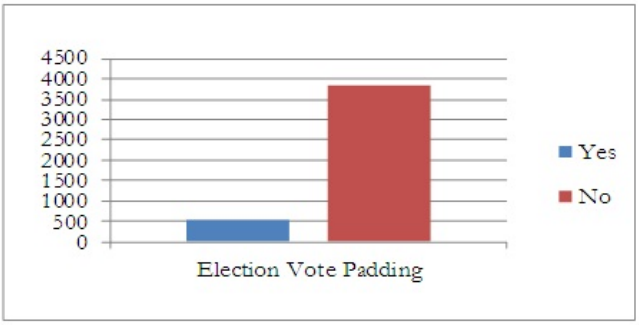


Table 3.06 Incidence of vote padding witnessed, by province and subregion

Province/ Region	*Yes*		*No*	
	Frequency	*Percent*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Basilan	60	7.6	731	92.4
Sulu	140	19.7	569	80.3
Tawi-Tawi	43	5.4	753	94.6
Total BASULTA	243	10.6	2053	89.4
Lanao	186	25.9	532	74.1
Maguindanao	199	12.4	698	87.6
Total LAMARMA	285	18.8	1230	81.2

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Figure 3.05 Incidenceof ballot box delay witnessed

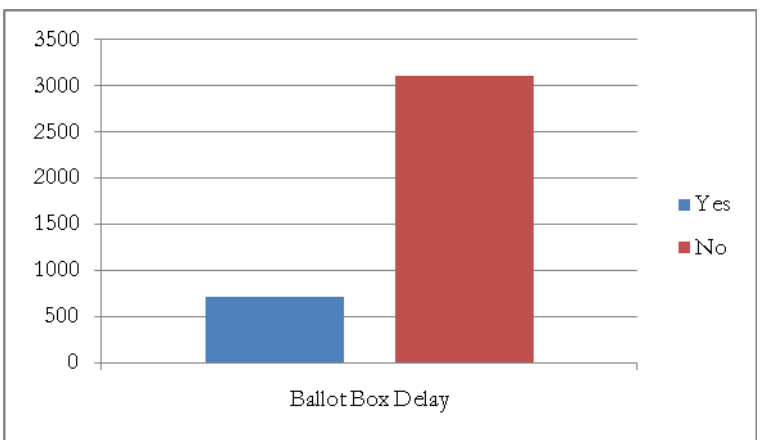


Table 3.07 Incidence of ballot box delay witnessed, by province and subregion

Province/Subregion	*Yes*		*No*	
	Frequency	*Percent*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Basilan	87	11.0	705	89.0
Sulu	156	22.2	546	77.8
Tawi-Tawi	50	6.3	747	93.7
Total BASULTA	293	12.8	1998	87.2
Lanao	345	46.9	390	53.1
Maguindanao	72	9.0	725	91.0
Total LAMARMA	417	27.2	1115	72.8

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Figure 3.06 Incidence of ballot box snatching witnessed

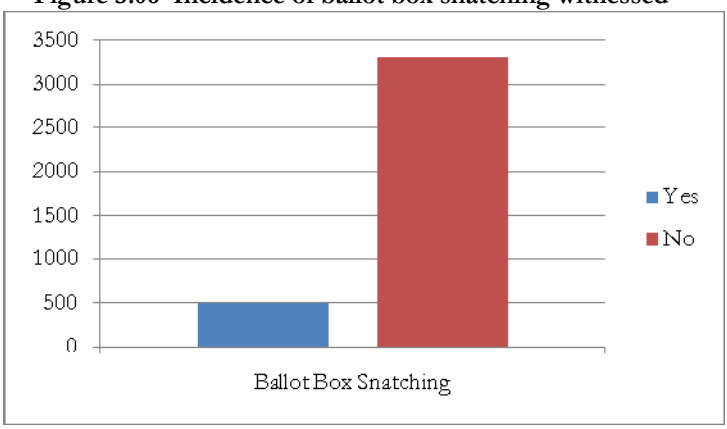


Table 3.08 Incidence of ballot box snatching witnessed, by province and subregion

Province/Subregion	*Yes*		*No*	
	Frequency	*Percent*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Basilan	56	7.1	735	92.9
Sulu	100	14.2	602	85.8
Tawi-Tawi	25	3.1	771	96.9
Total BASULTA	181	7.9	2108	92.1
Lanao	253	34.8	473	65.2
Maguindanao	73	9.2	724	90.8
Total LAMARMA	326	21.4	1197	78.6

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Figure 3.07 Incidence of election-related coercion or intimidation witnessed

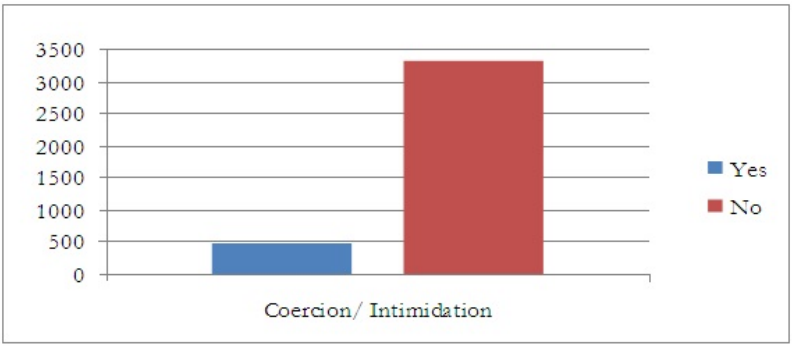


Table 3.09 Incidence of election-related coercion or intimidation witnessed, by province and subregion

Province/Subregion	*Yes*		*No*	
	Frequency	*Percent*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Basilan	55	7.0	734	93.0
Sulu	98	13.9	605	86.1
Tawi-Tawi	20	2.5	776	97.5
Total BASULTA	173	7.6	2115	92.4
Lanao	175	24.5	540	75.5
Maguindanao	127	15.9	671	84.1
Total LAMARMA	302	20	1211	80.0

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Figure 3.08 Incidence of election-related rido witnessed

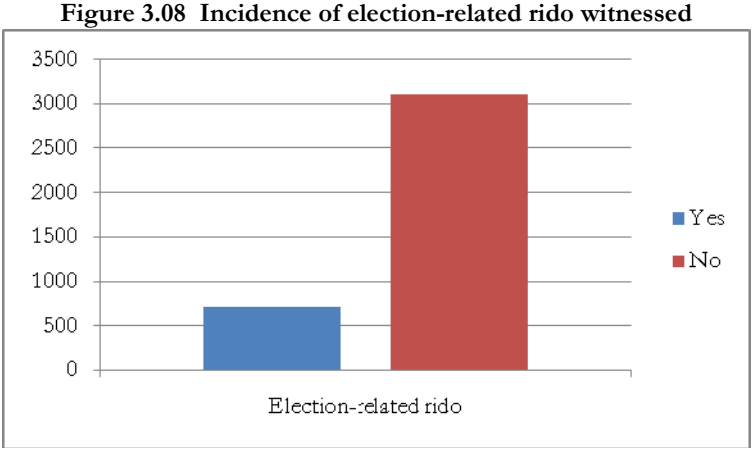


Table 3.10 Incidence of election-related rido witnessed, by subregion

Subregion	*Yes*		*No*		*Don't Know*		*Refused*		*Total*	
	Count	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*
BASULTA	154	9.6	844	52.5	351	21.8	260	16.2	1609	100
LAMARMA	109	10.6	750	73.0	57	5.6	111	10.8	1027	100
Total	263	10	1594	60.5	408	15.5	371	14.1	2636	100

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Rido is clan-based violence. One clan tries to get even with another clan that has committed violence against any member of the first clan. Some of the rido are election-related as well.

Table 3.11 Incidence of reporting of election problems, by subregion

Subregion	*Yes*		*No*		*Don't Know*		*Refused*		*Total*	
	Count	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*
BASULTA	154	9.6	844	52.5	351	21.8	260	16.2	1609	100
LAMARMA	109	10.6	750	73.0	57	5.6	111	10.8	1027	100
Total	263	10.0	1594	60.5	408	15.5	371	14.1	2636	100

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

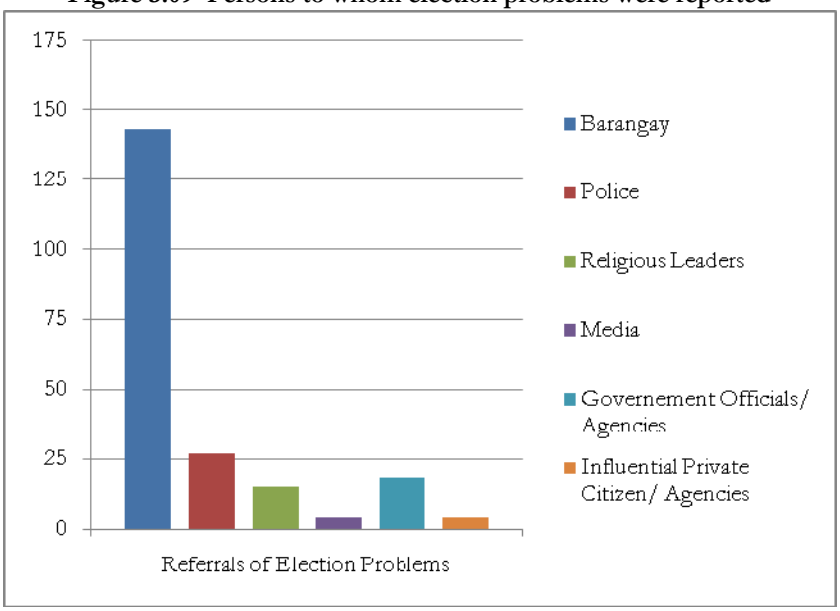
Table 3.12 Incidence of reporting of election problems, by gender

Gender	*Yes*		*No*		*Don't Know*		*Refused*		*Total*	
	Count	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*
Male	124	14.1	509	58.0	144	16.3	100	11.6	877	100
Female	139	7.9	1085	61.7	264	15.1	271	15.3	1759	100
Total	263	10.0	1594	60.5	408	15.5	371	14.1	2636	100

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

A big percentage, 61.7 percent of female respondents and 58 percent of male respondents (shown above in table 3.12), claimed that neither they nor any member of the community that they knew reported election-related problems. In figure 3.09 below, the study shows that some people (12.8 percent) thought that the fear of reporting fraud may lead to reprisal, 10.7 percent said they did not want to be bothered, and 9.2 percent said they did not believe in the justice system and that reporting would not help achieve justice. These views of the respondents speak of the citizens' perceptions about the electoral system as much as the state of mind and attitude of citizens themselves on the political system that prevails in the ARMM.

Figure 3.09 Persons to whom election problems were reported



In an interview with COMELEC Commissioner Rene Sarmiento in November 2012, the commissioner said that the results of elections in the ARMM have been incessantly challenged by parties or candidates that sought public office. He reported of many complaints or election protests and numerous petitions for the conduct of special elections. Among the ARMM provinces, Tawi-Tawi seems to have the most number of election protests filed.

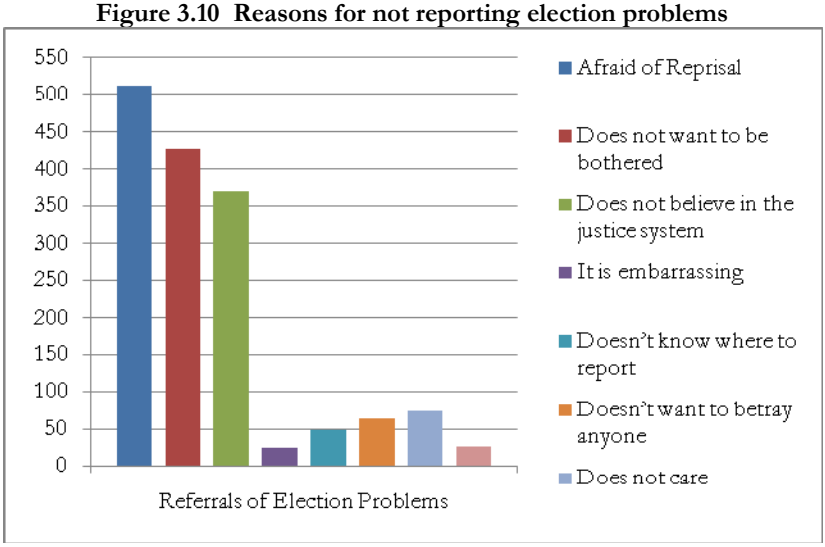
Of those respondents who reported election problems, the biggest percentage (3.6 percent of total respondents) said that they referred the problem to the barangay. This shows that the first line of referral of a problematic situation, such as electoral fraud, is the barangay being the most accessible unit of local authority. Only 0.7 percent said they referred the matter to the police, 0.5 percent said they reported to government officials/agencies, and 0.4 percent reported to religious leaders. Accessibility to or trust possibly explains why citizens preferred to report election problems to certain persons or offices.

Table 3.13 Incidence of reporting of election problems, by province and subregion

Province/ Subregion	*Barangay*	*Police*	*Religious Leaders*	*Media*	*Government Officials/ Agencies*	*Influential Private Citizen/ Agencies*	*Total*
Basilan	86	0	3	3	4	1	97
	88.7%	0	3.1%	3.1%	4.1%	1%	100%
Sulu	20	5	5	0	2	0	32
	62.5%	15.6%	15.6%	0	6.3%	0	100%
Tawi-Tawi	10	7	1	0	0	1	19
	52.6%	36.8%	5.3%	0	0	5.3%	100%
Total BASULTA	116	12	9	3	6	2	148
	78.4%	8.1%	6.1%	2%	4.1%	1.4%	100%
Lanao	17	11	4	1	5	2	40
	42.5%	27.5%	10%	2.5%	12.5%	5%	100%
Maguindanao	10	4	2	0	7	0	23
	43.5%	17.4%	8.7%	0	30.4%	0	100%
Total LAMARMA	27	15	6	1	12	2	63
	42.9%	23.8%	9.5%	1.6%	19.0%	3.2%	100%
Total ARMM	143	27	15	4	18	4	211
	67.8%	12.8%	7.1%	1.9%	8.5%	1.9%	100%

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Figure 3.10 Reasons for not reporting election problems



Democracy and Election Issues

Despite the complaints of people regarding electoral fraud and the challenges of representation in government through their selected leaders, many people in specific provinces or subregions, particularly in Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi, said that those who were proclaimed were actually those who won the votes in their areas. More than half of the respondents (58.3 percent) agreed with this statement, as figure 3.11 shows. This positive response was most emphatic in the subregion of Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi where almost 63 percent of the respondents said that those who were proclaimed winners were those whom people actually voted for. Most of the respondents also said that they either strongly supported or somewhat supported their current officials in the last elections, an indication again that those candidates who won actually had the support of most of the electorate, as tables 3.17 to 3.20 show.

Figure 3.11 Perception of consistency between proclaimed winners and voters' preference

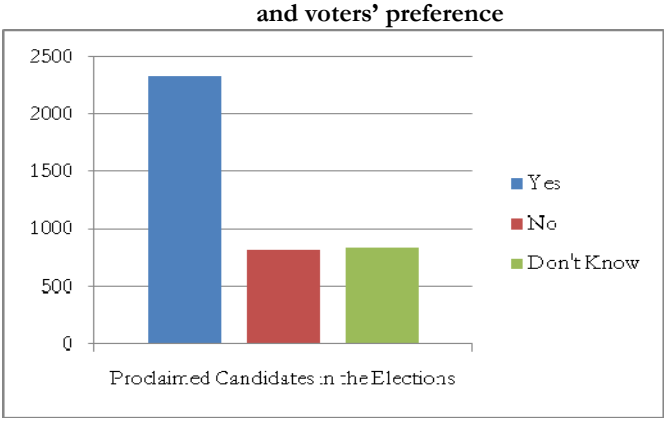


Table 3.14 Perception of consistency between proclaimed winners and voters' preference, by subregion

Region	*Yes*	*No*	*Don't Know*	*Total*
BASULTA	1503	400	487	2390
	62.9%	16.7%	20.4%	100%
LAMARMA	827	418	355	1600
	51.7%	26.1%	22.2%	100%
Total	2330	818	842	3990
%	58.4%	20.5%	21.1%	100%

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Table 3.15 Perception of consistency between proclaimed winners and voters' preference, by gender

Gender	*Yes*	*No*	*Don't Know*	*Total*
Male	723	254	233	1210
	59.8%	21%	19.3%	100%
Female	1607	564	609	2780
	57.8%	20.3%	21.9%	100%
Total	2330	818	842	3990
%	58.4%	20.5%	21.1%	100%

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Table 3.16 Perception of consistency between proclaimed winners and voters' preference, by category of respondents

Category	*Yes*	*No*	*Don't Know*	*Total*
Muslim Religious Leaders (MRLs)	252	102	11	465
	54.2%	21.9%	23.9%	100%
Professionals	282	152	85	519
	54.3%	29.3%	16.4%	100%
Youth	126	100	87	313
	40.3%	31.9%	27.8%	100%
Out of School Youth	110	36	30	176
	62.5%	20.5%	17.0%	100%
Marginalized	1560	428	529	2517
	62%	17%	21%	100%
Total	2330	818	842	3990
%	58.4%	20.5%	21.1%	100%

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Table 3.17 Extent of support in last elections for current officials

Response	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Strongly supported	1475	36.9
Somewhat supported	1498	37.5
Supported a little	510	12.8
Not supported at all	212	5.3
Did not participate in the last election	289	7.2
Missing Values	16	0.4
Total	4000	100

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Table 3.18 Extent of support in last election for current officials, by subregion

Subregion	*Strongly supported*	*Somewhat supported*	*Supported a little*	*Not supported at all*	*Did not participate in the last elections*	*Total*
BASULTA	1018	880	269	101	122	2390
	42.6%	36.8%	11.3%	4.2%	5.1%	100%
LAMARMA	457	618	241	111	167	1594
	28.7%	38.8%	15.1%	7.0%	10.5%	100%
Total	1475	1498	510	212	289	3984
%	37%	37.6%	12.8%	5.3%	7.3%	100%

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Table 3.19 Extent of support in last election for current officials, by gender

Gender	*Strongly supported*	*Somewhat supported*	*Supported a little*	*Not supported at all*	*Did not participate in the last elections*	*Total*
Male	465	453	164	56	69	1207
	38.5%	37.5%	13.6%	4.6%	5.7%	100%
Female	1010	1045	346	156	220	2777
	36.4%	37.6%	12.5%	5.6%	7.9%	100%
Total	1475	1498	510	212	289	3984
%	37%	37.6%	12.8%	5.3%	7.3%	100%

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

Table 3.20 Extent of support in last election for current officials, by category of respondents

Category	*Strongly supported*	*Somewhat supported*	*Supported a little*	*Not supported at all*	*Did not participate in the last elections*	*Total*
Muslim Religious Leaders (MRLs)	153	191	71	19	19	465
	32.9%	41.1%	15.3%	4.1%	6.7%	100%
Professionals	191	210	63	25	29	518
	36.9%	40.5%	12.2%	4.8%	5.6%	100%
Youth	72	110	40	24	67	313
	23%	35.1%	12.8%	7.7%	21.4%	100%
Out of School Youth	60	69	19	5	22	175
	34.3%	39.4%	10.9%	2.9%	12.6%	100%
Marginalized	999	918	317	139	140	2513
	39.8%	36.5%	12.6%	5.5%	5.6%	100%
Total	1475	1498	510	212	289	3984
%	37%	37.6%	12.8%	5.3%	7.3%	100%

Note: Results based only on valid responses excluding missing values.

People in the ARMM or its provinces note the occurrence of election-related problems; some complain about these, many others do not. What is clear is that people are not absolutely pleased with the conduct of elections in the provinces and in the ARMM generally. With no clear resolution or correction of such problems, which are worsened by the involvement of voters and candidates in vote buying, the proliferation of flying voters, and the incidents of coercion and manipulation, the elections are put to doubt on whether they are indeed exercises that are representative of the electorate's will.

Much remains to be desired in terms of making elections in the ARMM free and fair and representative. The conduct of elections challenges both the electorate as citizens, the candidates as responsible potential public officeholders, and the electoral management bodies as guardians of a democratic and credible election.

3.4 Women and Marginalized Sectors in ARMM Politics

Although all key informants said that there were women candidates, no exact number or percentage of women candidates who won was provided. According to key informants, there were some instances when women candidates raised gender issues, but most of them (especially those who won) were members of political clans who ran in place of their husbands who were no longer eligible to run, according to Baealabi Shora Sabdullah-Sarigala, a key informant for this assessment. There is a disproportionately small number of women in the ARMM who run for and who get elected into political office, as shown in table 3.21.

A more detailed breakdown is shown in table 3.22. Of the total number of 47 elected officials, only two are women who hold office at the provincial level. At the municipal level, an indicative ratio in favor of male officials can be seen in the province of Sulu, where there are 16 male mayors out of 18 and the same number of male vice mayors, in contrast to only two female mayors and two vice mayors. It is interesting to note that in Basilan the lone female elective official is a woman, and she is the widow of the former governor.

Invariably, most of the women who run for political office are also members of powerful clans that control Muslim Mindanao politics. The women politicians in the ARMM enjoy popularity and support because of family affiliations, either by consanguinity or by affinity. For example, the current vice governor of Tawi-Tawi is the daughter of the governor; at least two women mayors in Maguindanao province easily took the place of their husband and father-in-law, respectively. The female mayors in Sulu also

Table 3.21 Number of women in ARMM who run for and get elected in political office

Region/Province	*Number of Candidates*						*Number of Elected Candidates*					
	2004		*2007*		*2010*		*2004*		*2007*		*2010*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
ARMM	4,554	591	3,501	360	3,774	551	859	117	794	116	949	162
Basilan	394	28	411		547	64	64	8	111	12	117	16
Lanao del Sur	2,066	283	1,480	187	1,369	185	290	38	295	40	254	41
Maguindanao	627	77	311	35	887	129	250	23	40	3	325	51
Shariff Kabunsuan			312	38					92	11		
Sulu	913	103	603	89	608	104	173	19	171	23	152	34
Tawi-Tawi	554	100	384	11	363	69	82	29	85	27	101	20

Source: Commission on Elections 2011.

Table 3.22 Gender distribution of provincial elected officials in ARMM, as of 2007-2010

Province	*Male*	*%*	*Female*	*%*	*Total*
Basilan	9	90	1	10	10
Maguindanao	13	100	0	0	13
Lanao del Sur	11	92	1	8	12
Sulu	12	100	0	0	12
Tawi-Tawi*					
Total (excluding Tawi-Tawi)	45		2		47

*incomplete data (only for governor – male; vice-governor – female, the daughter of the governor.

belong to prominent political families in the province. Thus, women's agency in the political or public sphere in the ARMM is strongly driven by family affiliations and considerations of keeping it all in the family, a political tradition that has spawned the rise of political dynasties in the region. This is not unique to the ARMM. The Philippine political landscape is dotted with powerful families dominating their respective areas of control or their political turfs. But while it has been possible in other areas in the country for a woman from a sectoral group or a non-political family to be elected as governor, this has not happened in the ARMM.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution provides for the participation of historically underrepresented groups, including women, in local decision-making bodies. The Local Government Code 1991 mandates such sectoral representation.

All sectoral representatives in the sangguniang panlalawigan (provincial council) in the four provinces are male. The sectors represented are the League of Barangay Chairs, the Sangguniang Kabataan (Youth Council), and Councilors' League. In Lanao del Sur, the provincial government has included a representative of the Ulama Council and one from the Council of Elders, both of whom are male. Women and other marginalized sectors are not represented, at least in four out of five provinces in the region. The table below shows the gender distribution in appointive and tenured positions in local administrative posts in the ARMM. All are dominated by men.

Table 3.23 Gender distribution of administrative officials

Province	*Male*	*%*	*Female*	*%*	*Total*
Lanao del Sur	31	77.5	9	22.5	40
Sulu	15	75	5	25	20
Maguindanao*	3		3		-
Basilan	7	78	2	22	9

*incomplete data.

COMELEC Commissioner Rene Sarmiento admitted that there is still a need to implement the sectoral representation provided for under the Local Government Code. In practice, the party list organizations do not necessarily represent the marginalized.

Moreover, there is doubt that the RLA has acted as a real deliberative body that represents diverse views in a democratic society. There are no established regional parties. Members of the RLA came into power not on account of party affiliations and principles but on ties with clans and political warlords. Thus, the determination of majority and minority in the RLA is based not on principles and ideology but on what the members agree by consensus as equitable distribution of political positions.

3.5 Civil Society in the ARMM

To what extent are civil society groups represented in the ARMM?

The strategic role of civil society in the ARMM is clearly established by the ARMM's Organic Law. The regional government is mandated to protect and promote the rights of people's organizations. Regional bodies, such as the Regional Economic Planning and Development Board, are required to have representatives from the private sector. The Local Government Code 1991 promotes the participation of people's organizations and their representation in local bodies.

The presence of civil society organizations is a bright spot in the ARMM. The number of civil society groups is increasing, although many of these are involved in peace and development advocacy because this is where the funds are concentrated. The civil society involvement in development and peace in the ARMM is discussed in another section of this book. However, the civil society groups in the region have their share of challenges, including the unstable peace and order situation in the region, the threats of kidnapping, and uncooperative local government executives.

3.6 The Shariah Court System

Does the shariah court system effectively represent the Moro culture and institution?

Presidential Decree 1083, which was enacted in 1977 under Marcos, recognizes the legal system of Muslims in the Philippines as part of the law of the land. It seeks to make Islamic institutions more effective, codifies

Muslim personal laws, and provides effective administration and enforcement of Muslim personal laws among Muslims.

The code provides for the establishment of five shariah district courts and 51 shariah circuit courts. The ARMM Organic Law created the Shariah Appellate court, which is equivalent to the Court of Appeals. The shariah courts decide on civil disputes among Muslims involving custody, guardianship, legitimacy, paternity and filiation, and petitions for declaration of absence and death under PD 1083. They also decide on appeals from the shariah circuit courts and have concurrent jurisdiction with civil courts on civil cases involving Muslims. The shariah courts have jurisdiction over disputes involving marriage, divorce, marital rights, and support and communal properties.

The review on the performance of the shariah courts has been mixed. There is recognition that PD 1083 laid the foundation for recognizing the distinct identity and culture of the Moro people; however, the implementation of the code is widely regarded as weak due to many factors. One factor is that 39 percent of the courts are not operational because of the lack of judges. Of the 56 shariah courts, 34 courts, or 61 percent, have judges, whilst 22 courts, or 39 percent, are without magistrates. Among the operational courts, there is severe lack of physical infrastructure, deficient court technology, equipment, and budget outlay.

The limited jurisdiction of the shariah courts does not promote an environment conducive to the development of the shariah justice system. They do not have jurisdiction over criminal cases, which hamper their ability to deliver justice in criminal cases. For instance, they do not have jurisdiction over cases of rido when these cases are one of the main causes of violence and armed conflicts.

There are differing views on the application of shariah law. The MILF prefers the so-called pure shariah; many others do not agree to it. Feminists want a reexamination of shariah in the Philippines; others think that the shariah courts should have limited jurisdiction.

In the FGDs, some participants expressed the view that the jurisdiction of shariah courts should include criminal cases, arguing that by expanding their coverage, the courts could serve as a deterrent to violent acts and crime.

The ARMM Regional Legislative Assembly is empowered to expand the jurisdiction of the shariah courts to include criminal cases. However, there is doubt whether the shariah courts, if empowered, could extend to Christian-dominated areas. Congress is not conversant with the shariah law under the PD 1083. Moreover, there are those who question the jurisdiction of the shariah law especially in areas in the region where the dominant

population is non-Muslim. There seems to be an impasse with regard to the development of shariah law.

3.7 The Role of the Regional Legislative Assembly

The Organic Acts allowed 20 regional line agencies to be devolved to the ARMM. These 20 agencies, together with eight offices created by the regional government, form the portfolio of the Cabinet of the Regional Governor. All these agencies are in principle under the general supervision of the Regional Governor. In contrast, all counterparts of these agencies in the other regions are under the ministerial control of the Cabinet of the President of the Republic.

The subordination of these agencies to the national government creates a sticky issue in that the situation makes the region vulnerable to strong influence and even control by the national government, particularly the Office of the President. In the past, the Office of the President played a crucial role in shaping and influencing governance in the ARMM. When this happened, the autonomy of the region was indeed put on the line, and citizens and advocates in the ARMM raised concerns about the quality of democracy in the region. Democracy and autonomy offer challenges to the leadership at both national and regional levels, particularly in the interpretation of autonomy and the extent to which autonomy plays out, that is, between the region and the provinces with the rest of the local government units, and between the national government and the regional authorities. Either way, the regional government tends to bear the challenges of democracy and popular control, on the one hand, and control and subservience, on the other. The relationship among these levels of governance units should be critically examined if the region is to appreciate the locus of democratic governance reforms.

The governance mechanisms are observed in the layout of the ARMM. The Regional Legislative Assembly is a 24-member body elected by popular vote. Three members are elected from each of the legislative districts. There are sectoral representatives in the RLA whose number shall not exceed 15 percent of the total number of elected members of the Regional Assembly. The sectoral representatives come from the agriculture, labor, urban poor, disabled, indigenous cultural communities, youth, and women. The Assembly may enact legislation to allow for representation of other sectors. However, this provision on sectoral representatives has not been implemented in the absence of legislation passed by the RLA.

Some people doubt the representativeness of the citizens in the region through the RLA because the regional electoral system is allegedly

compromised and controlled by political warlords and clans. In addition to the complexity of the relationship between national and regional governments cited above, democracy—particularly representative democracy in the ARMM—is challenged by the presence of political warlords and clans. These political warlords and clans are not necessarily associated with the age-old tradition of indigenous leadership in Muslim society; in fact, some experts attribute the presence and persistence of political warlords and clans to the strong influence of armed following that characterized the strong and dominant leadership during the period of martial rule. In fact, political warlords and clans persist even in non-Muslim territories in the Philippines. The unregulated issuance, possession, proliferation, and purchase of arms added to the culture of political warlordism.

In a strongly clan-driven politics, the separation of powers or the checks and balances between executive and legislative, a principle upheld in the democratic governance system, is tremendously undermined. For example, whilst the RLA has oversight power over the executive branch, based on the provisions of the Organic Law these powers are rarely exercised given the fact that the regional governor is regarded as the top political patron in the regional government.

The RLA shows dismal performance in the passing of laws that promote citizens' welfare in the region. A Commission on Audit (COA) report showed that the RLA received 328.76 million pesos from the budget department and the treasury bureau in 2011, a year when the RLA passed only seven legislative measures.

The Regional Legislative Assembly is known to have accomplished the following:

Laws enacted by the RLA	*Number of laws*
Creation/division/revival/merger of barangays	102
Creation of municipalities	31
Revenue code of ARMM, provision of allotment & budget acts	25
Creation & strengthening of local regional offices	24
Amendment to the ARMM local government code and MMA	23
Regional public works act	16
Renaming of municipalities	11
Renaming hospitals/schools/highways	7
Renaming of barangays	6
Adoption of seal/emblem, posting of arabic signs	5
Establishment & conversion of hospitals	4

Corporate acts, business-related laws and investment code	4
Education assistance & education-related laws	3
Codes for children, youth and women	3
Location of seats of government (regional and municipal)	2
Creation of province	1
Total	**267**

In May 2012, President Benigno Aquino III appointed 27 members of the RLA as part of his administration's reform measures in the ARMM. Three members were named as representatives of women, indigenous groups, and farmers, respectively. The reform-oriented RLA has since passed the law creating the ARMM Human Rights Commission. The law is a landmark legislation that promotes and protects citizens' rights in the autonomous region. It has also completed in record time the proposals it was mandated to submit to Congress as amendments to the Organic Law to promote effective self-governance in the region. Whilst the current reform-oriented RLA appears to be doing the right things, the body is an ad hoc one. The reforms have yet to be institutionalized.

Since then, the seventh assembly of the interim RLA has enacted laws that show some change in the direction and quality of legislation of the legislative body. These laws are:

- *Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act #281 = An Act providing for a Regional Public Works Act of 2011, Appropriating Funds therefor, and for other purposes.* Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act # 289 = An Act Providing for a Regional Public Works Act of 2012, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for other purposes. MMA 281 and 289 were respectively passed into law as general guidelines for the Department of Public Works and Highways of the ARMM in bringing sustainable infrastructure and social development to the region. MMA 289 was passed to correct the flaws of its predecessor, MMA 281. This forms part of the reform agenda: optimization of resources, institutional transformation, simplification of systems and procedures, promotion of participation, and convergence with other regional line agencies, NGOs, and other key players.
- *Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act # 288 = An Act Operationalizing Section Sixteen Article Three of RA 9054, Establishing a Charter for the Human Rights Commission in ARMM, Providing Guidelines for its Operations, Appropriating Funds therefor and for other purposes.* MMA 228 is the region's Human Rights Charter under which the newly created ARMM Human Rights Commission will operate. It covers

a wide range of national and international laws pertaining to anti-torture, genocide, inhuman treatment, discrimination against women, rights of the child, and others. This law seeks to uphold and enhance respect for the primacy of human rights in the region. Lanao del Sur Assemblyman Zia Adiong was the principal author.

- *Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act # 290 = An Act Providing for a Special Appropriation of funds for the operation of the Autonomous Government in Muslim Mindanao for the year 2012, and for other purposes*. MMA 290 was enacted by the then nascent appointed regional legislature to appropriate funds for the operation of the autonomous regional government for the year 2012.
- *Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act # 291 = An act amending Sec. 129 Muslim Mindanao Autonomy act numbered forty-nine otherwise known as the Revenue Code of the ARMM providing additional powers and functions therein.* MMA 291 introduced amendments to the former ARMM Revenue Code, including the inclusion of Marawi City and Basilan into the expanded ARMM, and rendered applicable to newly devolved revenue generating agencies like the Regional Port Management Authority (RPMA).
- *Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act # 292 = An Act creating and establishing the Reproductive Health Care for the ARMM, providing funds therefor and for other purposes*. MMA 292 provides for an enabling environment that will protect and promote the right of individuals and legally married couples to make informed decisions when it comes to planning their families and safeguarding their right to reproductive health. The law provides that the Regional Autonomous Government recognizes and guarantees the universal basic rights to reproductive health by all persons, particularly of parents and legally married couples, with their religious convictions, cultural beliefs, and the demand of responsible parenthood. Assemblywoman Irene Tillah from the second district of Sulu province was the principal author of the law.
- *Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act # 293 = An Act establishing Free Birth Registration in the ARMM and providing Funds therefor.* MMA 293 is a regional law meant to hasten the documentation of children in all of ARMM's five component provinces. The law will effectively address the non-registration of a big bulk of the ARMM's Moro communities. Late registrations can also be facilitated for free under the law. The law requires all private and government hospitals, clinics, and birthing facilities to immediately document and report any childbirth to municipal civil registry offices and local

branches of the National Statistics Office. Assemblywoman Rahima Datumanong-Alba from the second district of Maguindanao was the author of the law.

3.8 Dimensions of Governance and Representative Democracy in the ARMM

The Aquino government has continued to negotiate with the MILF, a splinter group of the MNLF. A breakthrough in the negotiations with the MILF was achieved when the MILF and the government signed the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro on 15 October 2012 that lay down the processes and the desired outcomes for establishing a new political entity to replace the ARMM. The signing of the agreement signals the beginning of another stage in the evolution of political dynamism and governance in the Moro areas.

Key informants and experts in the ARMM provide deep insights on representative democracy in the ARMM. These local experts and informants from the ARMM note that there are various dimensions to governance and representative democracy in the region. These dimensions, which depict not only political but also development and economic/fiscal representation, are discussed below.

The quality of the relationship between the national government and the region. This means that the nature of the relationship must be clearly established, that respective powers are spelled out and delineated, and that the structures and processes to make the relationship work are effectively functioning. These require clear allocation of powers and resources. The lessons from the past should be able to correct the failures and weaknesses of the autonomous region. For example, the total fiscal dependency of the ARMM on the central government did not help to propel the political power and responsibilities assigned to the regional government.

The managerial capacities and competencies of the regional government did not match the accountabilities of the regional authority to its constituencies. Where the constitution provides additional powers to the region, the Organic Law did not spell out these additional powers and instead provided for matters that were outside the competence of the autonomous region. This means that adjustments in the powers of the region are necessary and are as equally important as the competence of the region to make the structure effective and functional. Otherwise, the regional leadership should have been empowered in the aspect of governance and regional administration.

The vague power relations between national government and the region resulted in a failure of devolution. In the meantime, the national government, wary of a weak accountability system in the ARMM, withheld the devolution of programs in the region. The process of devolution has been incomplete, with the supervision of powers given to the region but not the enforcement of programs and projects. For example, under the DOTC devolution, a Land Transportation Office has been established in ARMM, but this is authorized to register only two or three-wheeled vehicles. The Philippine Ports Authority, in its mandated transfer of funds and powers to the autonomous region, could not manage or supervise strategic minerals, such as watersheds and natural gas sources in the region, because the power to do so is withheld by the national government and delegated to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) offices. As the national government remains in control of implementing projects in the region, such as infrastructure, health, and education, the ARMM government only maintains idle personnel that turned the regional government into an employment agency rather than a genuinely self-governing Moro region.

In the meantime, the enforcement of programs and projects, including their management, should be made within the capability of the region. The autonomous region lacked the vision and the will to become a government that is responsive to its citizens. Similarly, the autonomous region failed, in turn, to devolve powers and resources to the local government units under it. In the ARMM, the Local Government Code 1991 does not require the autonomous regional government to devolve to the LGUs the delivery of basic services to communities. By virtue of such omitted provision in the code, the ARMM regional government effectively abdicated its responsibility to carry out devolution down to the LGUs. The LGUs are given a free hand in the use of the internal revenue allotment (IRA) from the national government. Health, agriculture, social welfare, and environment services are exercised by the ARMM government, and this arrangement undermines the mandatory devolved powers of the local government units. As a consequence, the municipal and provincial health officers, agriculture officers, social welfare officers, and environment officers are under the direct control and supervision of their respective regional departments. The power to appoint and dismiss these officials is vested in the Regional Governor of the ARMM and not with the local officials. The flawed arrangement of the devolution between the national and regional government, and between the regional and local government units are among the causes of a weak service delivery system in the ARMM. The ARMM government is relevant only because it maintains a bureaucracy

and will continue to hold on to it. The local government units find this convenient for as long as they can allocate their internal revenue allotment (IRA) as they please and be free from oversight by the ARMM.

LGU leaders in the ARMM are so totally dependent on the national government for resources and for maintaining their political power that they find no incentive in helping evolve one cohesive political entity for the Moros. Instead of looking at the ARMM as a source of more powers and resources, the LGUs consider the regional government as a competitor for scarce government resources. Unfortunately, the competition is one for boosting the wealth and political power of regional and local officials.

The ARMM Organic Act vests fiscal autonomy to the ARMM. The ARMM is empowered to generate its own revenues by collecting different types of taxes except income taxes. The ARMM can levy charges for registration of motor vehicles and for the issuances of all kinds of license or permit for drivers. It gets shares in the revenues generated from the operations of public utilities within the autonomous region.

The biggest source of funding for the ARMM is appropriations from Congress and from the shares in the internal revenue taxes, block grants, and other budgetary allocation coming from the national government. The ARMM is empowered to receive block grants derived from economic agreement or conventions entered into or authorized by the Regional Legislative Assembly, endowments, foreign assistance, and other forms of aid.

However, the ARMM does not enjoy fiscal autonomy. In fact, the local government units in the region are more fiscally independent than the autonomous region. From 2001 to 2005 almost all (99.96 percent) of the ARMM funds was provided by the national government and only 0.4 percent was generated internally in the region. The 2007 study by the International Center for Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGOV) showed that the funds provided by the national government were part of the national appropriations law approved by the Congress. Of the total funds provided by Congress to the ARMM, 84 percent was allocated for personnel services and administrative costs, leaving very little for infrastructure or development projects. If the region continues to be dependent on the internal revenue allotment from the national government, it is difficult to imagine how the region could exercise autonomy and deliver its services and development projects to its constituencies.

The Organic Act provides broad taxing powers to the regional government; however, these powers are grossly underutilized because of the inherent difficulty in taxing a local economy that has a high poverty

incidence. In 1995 the Revenue Code for the ARMM was enacted; however, it could not be implemented because of the lack of a database and mechanism for revenue generation. There is lack of support and incentives for LGUs to collect additional taxes in the region where leaders are perceived to be not accountable and transparent in handling public funds.

Competency building and empowerment of leaders and managers in the regional body particularly in the aspect of governance are among the lessons and the challenges of past administrations and leadership of the ARMM. Transparency and accountability are imperative for the regional and local governments to be trusted by their citizens with greater taxes and taxation powers.

The local government units under the ARMM enjoy greater shares of the IRA compared to their counterparts in the rest of the country. The LGUs in the ARMM get their shares from the central government. The local government units enjoy the 40 percent allocation share for LGUs nationwide based on population, land area, and equal sharing with other LGUs. In addition, the ARMM LGUs also get a share in the national taxes collected from the autonomous region, which under the Organic Law is 35 percent of national taxes collected from the region. However, taxes collected within the region are insignificant. Out of the total funds transferred to the region from the national government, 40 percent are shares of the ARMM local government units, which they have control over, whilst only 4 percent, which represents the ARMM share in the internal revenue collection, are regional revenues. Public works funds are completely within the control of the autonomous government.

The ARMM is supposed to be the central political authority and the fiscal seat of power that facilitates, provides, and devolves funds and programs to the local government units; however, the LGUs are in the best position to deliver services because of their proximity to the people. Under the current fiscal relations between and among the national, regional, and local governments, the autonomous government is no more than an agent of the national government with little influence on the local government units. The relationship and structure are not conducive to developing a cohesive Moro governance that promotes peace, development, and representative democracy in the region.

The central government and the ARMM officials blame each other for the anomalous fiscal state in the region. The central government argues that there are problems of transparency and accountability in the handling of public funds in the ARMM and, as such, no amount of funds from the central government will be enough. On the other hand, ARMM officials lament that the autonomous government is unable to access funds that are their rightful shares from businesses that operate in the ARMM. For

example, the autonomous government says that the ARMM does not get its share in the income taxes of the National Power Corporation, which operates hydroelectric plants in Lanao del Sur, because the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) does not account for income derived from the power plant's business in the ARMM. Instead, the BIR requires payment of income taxes where the main office of the company is located. Such blame game adds to the paralysis in the autonomous region. The paralysis renders ineffectual the mandate of the regional government to provide, maintain, and ensure the delivery of basic and responsive health programs, quality education, appropriate services, livelihood opportunities, affordable and progressive housing projects, and water resource development, among other development projects. In the end, the biggest casualty from such dysfunctional relations between the national and regional governments is the citizens of the region.

The current Bangsamoro Framework is designed to address the pitfalls of the regional government as the framework envisions the following:

- A democratic system for the new entity where basic rights for all the inhabitants of the Bangsamoro are guaranteed, such as the right to life, right to privacy, freedom of speech and the right to express political opinion and democratic aspiration, freedom of religion, right to seek constitutional change, rights of women to political participation, right to domicile, equal opportunity, and non-discrimination, right to cultural and religious association, right to due process, and so on.
- An opening to develop the justice system by strengthening the shariah courts, to expand their jurisdiction, to improve the working of local civil courts and alternative dispute resolution system that recognizes indigenous processes.
- The Basic Law of the Bangsamoro as a national law that would address the conflicting interpretations, policy gridlocks, and inefficient and ineffective administration of the shariah system.
- A way to effectively transform the clan-based political and electoral system in the region and establish a more representative system of governance.
- Provision of clear policies on relations and delineation of powers of the national government and the Bangsamoro and, by doing so, address the gaps that retard the fiscal autonomy and the due delivery of services to the people as well as other causes of failures that prevented the autonomy of the region.

- A sustainable livelihood among the people could be pursued, and the normalization of a quality life to be achieved through human security and commitment to basic human rights with the aid of an effective, professional, and partisan-free police and civil service.

Summary and Conclusion

Just like the rest of the Philippines, there are laws, codes, and policies that define the structure of representation and governance in the ARMM relative to the national government and to the local government units in the region. However, unlike the rest of the country, the arrangements as laid out have some loopholes and gaps in the sense that the necessary powers and authorization that would ultimately bring the ARMM to become a fully-empowered region are not clearly defined and cemented as to be able to clinch a full execution of autonomy. For one, whilst there is an Organic Act that is aimed at empowering the ARMM, some national policies and practices retain power at the national level, and local government units in the ARMM continue to show direct links with the national, effectively relegating the region to a night watch bureaucracy. For another, the political authority of the region has not been matched with fiscal autonomy required to make ARMM fully functional and effective. The result is an ARMM that is autonomous more on paper yet hollowed by the non-functionality of the region partly due to some inconsistencies in the structural arrangement defined above.

Whilst there are some structural and policy reengineering that must be addressed, the autonomy of the region is complicated by the politicized practice of a region and its local government units that for a long time have been subservient to the powers and whims of the national government. The long standing practice of political warlordism and the dominance of political clans contribute further to the weakening of representational democracy in the ARMM, and have added to the persistent violence, conflicts, and an embedded concentration of power among a few political clans and elites.

In spite of policies and laws that authorize autonomy, the non-functioning of posts and positioned personnel in the ARMM is due partly to an inadequate competency of elected and selected people in the bureaucracy and in top offices. This results in an ineffective and unresponsive delivery of services to people, sluggish performance in policy and decision making, and a weak professionalized bureaucracy. The lack of professionalization has reduced the autonomy of the ARMM.

Citizens observe the predominance of elites and politicians in many affairs of the region—political, development, social, and cultural—and have remained either silent or nonchalant to most of these. For some, such culture of political dominance, including the practices of vote-buying, flying voters, coercion and manipulation, and other forms of electoral distortion of the people's will, seem to have become regular observations and have become acceptable. Although many survey informants did not personally witness such occurrences, focus group discussion participants and key informants from the region observed these election-related practices to be part of the political culture in ARMM. There are enormous challenges for civic education and citizen involvement even as there are windows for representation and participation by citizens, at least on paper.

The shariah court system is a mixed bag. As it is, the shariah court deals only with domestic and family affairs. There are some people who think that just like the practice in other Muslim societies, the shariah court should deal with much more comprehensive cases and issues including crimes; however, there are those who think otherwise.

Participatory Democracy

Chapter 4

Participatory (sometimes called participative or direct) democracy denotes people participation in the democratic institutions of the State. It is embodied in various levels of engagements between the governor and the governed, from the lowest barangay assembly to the highest form of people's initiative, and the regular elections conducted to choose our leaders.

Public participation in government decision making is considered part of the very essence of democracy, according to Creighton (2005). Modern political theorists consider public participation as a defining characteristic of modern democracy. Pimbert and Wakeford (2001, 23) assert that "democracy without citizen deliberation and participation is ultimately an empty and meaningless concept." They claim that citizens more and more seek to be directly involved in decisions affecting their lives and augmenting, not necessary supplanting, the actions of their elected representatives in policy and decision making.

Bonn University professor Uwe Holtz (2008), in a position paper for former German parliamentarians, has said, "Participatory democracy complements and strengthens representative democracy… It is an indispensable complement of representative democracy." He noted that such participation had begun to manifest itself in many forms, including through the electronic media and in cyberspace through social networking.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution guarantees the people's right to suffrage but also acknowledges the right of citizens to take direct action through "a system of initiative and referendum … whereby the people can directly propose and enact laws, or approve or reject any act or law or part thereof passed by the Congress or local legislative body" (Article VI,

Section 32). This provision for direct popular action is reiterated in the Local Government Code (Republic Act No. 7160 of 1991) that envisions a responsive and accountable local government structure. Not surprisingly, this principle of participatory democracy is likewise upheld in the organic law on the ARMM

This section seeks to determine the extent of practice and implementation of participatory or direct democracy in the ARMM as a way of evaluating the practice of democratic government in the region and suggesting areas of improvement in the system. It takes into account the ways by which the residents of the region are heard and empowered as they deal with their problems and seek out government support and solutions. It also looks into the operations of the regional, city, and municipal governments (collectively called by the Constitution as the local governments) as they administer to the needs of their constituents. Basically, it answers the question of how effective resident participation is in supporting the regional and local governments' delivery of services to their people.

Institutions

4.1 Local Authorities and Participatory Democracy

In the assessment of participatory democracy, investigating the extent of public participation is key. Public participation is the process by which public concerns, needs, and values are incorporated into governmental decision making. Its overall goal is to achieve better decisions that are supported by the public and therefore, it entails a two-way communication and interaction (Creighton 2005). This implies that informing the public about its work is not enough; local government should reach out to people and endeavour to have them actively engaged in local decision making.

At its core, public participation applies to administrative decisions—that is, those typically made by government agencies (and sometimes by private organizations), not by elected officials or judges. Participatory democracy assessment in general can be the basis for administrative reforms. Administrative and public sector reform involves thinking about values, norms, and principles. With this argument, this local assessment in the ARMM, especially with regard to participatory democracy assessment, therefore looks at democracy values, which can also be applied in public administration as administrative values. Hence, a stable set of democratic

values can be translated into administrative values, which then become the bases for effective delivery of services.

For each democratic value—openness, fairness, transparency, and responsiveness—assessed in this study, people's narratives and perceptions are being captured against the backdrop of legal structures and processes. The value of accountability is seen as interspersed in the conversations under transparency and responsiveness of local government officials. A summary of the assessment of the values is attempted both at the beginning and at the end of each value assessment.

OPENNESS

What types of local government bodies' meetings—council meetings, hearings, etc.—were open to the public in the last 12 months? Please describe the ways in which the public has the opportunity to convey its views to elected representatives on matters of local governance. Are the methods by which citizens can provide input to local government council decision making widely distributed to the public?

The 1987 Constitution is unequivocal about its stated policy that citizens enjoy the right "to effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political, and economic decision making," and holding the State duty bound to establish adequate consultation mechanisms.

The Local Government Code of 1991 reiterates this policy by requiring that no project or program be implemented without consultations with local communities affected. The Code likewise mandated the creation of local special bodies in each of which a representative from an NGO or people's organization or the private (business) sector is supposed to sit. The local special bodies are supposed to discuss and recommend policies for the LGUs in the areas of health, education, peace and order, prequalification for bids and awards, and the people's law enforcement board (Villarin 1999). In the case of local development councils, one-fourth of the membership is supposed to come from locally operating NGOs.

In addition, the local legislative councils (*sanggunian*) are required to have elected one representative each from the women's sector, the workers' sector, and a third socially marginalized sector (such as the urban poor, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, and others identified by local officials.), respectively (referred to as sectoral representatives). The meetings or sessions of the local sanggunian are open to the public, except in special cases of closed-door sessions, and are held regularly once a week, at a minimum.

A more direct way by which local citizens can affect local legislation (proposing, enacting, or amending) is through the mechanism of local initiative. The law requires that a minimum number of registered voters at the relevant local government level file a petition for an initiative with the sanggunian. The proponents then have to acquire a certain number of signatures supporting the initiative within a specified time period to actually have it passed.

In these formal venues of participation, people usually participate by attending the sessions or meetings and presenting their positions on the issues under discussion. However, since they cannot actually vote on these issues, decisions are ultimately in the hands of local officials, who may or may not be swayed by popular sentiment. There are no known cases of anyone anywhere in the country resorting to the most direct form of participative democracy, the local initiative.

These formal venues of participation present opportunities for citizen participation in the discussion and debate leading to formal decision making. In practice, however, such opportunities do not directly translate into actual participation. In the ARMM, according to the focus group discussion (FGD) results for the study, participation by citizens in decision making was mostly at the barangay level, primarily because it was the most accessible venue. Less common, if not totally absent, was participation at the municipal, city, provincial, and regional level. One reason for this is that people ordinarily seem not to be broadly aware of the venues of participation open to them. In the FGDs, for example, only those participants from the academe and civil society tended to be aware of the mandated venues of local participation, while ordinary citizens did not think they are able to participate in local decision making at all.

Public participation in local special bodies as well as in the local development councils are reserved for people who belong to organized groups that moreover are recognized as such by the local governments concerned through registration. Nevertheless, the study's respondents seemed not to be particularly enthusiastic about citizen participation in these bodies. Some claimed that these bodies were not even functional, despite their existence being mandated by law. There were also claims that local officials restricted membership in these bodies to supporters or family members. Some officials were said to go so far as to form their own NGOs and POs and chose only representatives from these groups to sit in the bodies concerned.

For unorganized citizens, the usual venue for direct participation was in attending public consultations organized by local governments, usually in relation to the implementation of a program or project. Such consultations

were conducted because the international aid or development organization supporting the project or program required the public consultations. The study respondents, however, claimed that the consultations were not really designed to solicit people's opinions and misgivings about the project or program; they rather consisted of mere presentations by officials and proponents who solicited little or no inputs from those in attendance. Because of this lack of participation, it is likely that ordinary citizens do not take ownership of local projects, which can lead to further alienation and indifference among the citizenry.

Given this apparent lack of enthusiasm on the part of public officials for public participation, it is not surprising that the study respondents regarded voting in elections as the only venue actually provided them to participate in local decision making. This was the common sentiment in all the FGDs conducted in the five provinces of the ARMM. Key informants also lamented the lack of venues for true citizen participation. It was claimed, for example, that local special bodies in Tawi-Tawi generally were moribund; those that did meet invited participation only from the heads of organized groups (actually a limitation of the law, as pointed out above). This was unfortunate because the study respondents seemed to believe that more citizen participation would be good for democracy in the ARMM. However, they were also skeptical that local elected officials would actually welcome true public participation in decision making.

While the common perception was that citizen participation in the ARMM was minimal in practice, this did not mean that it did not exist at all. Some respondents did cite a few local elected officials who appeared to consult their citizens, gathering them in assemblies that discussed development strategies, for example, or the implementation of government programs. These consultations were generally held at the barangay or municipal level rather than at the provincial or regional level. Not surprisingly, those respondents who were positive about their experience of participation came from the few LGUs that were designated as "models" because their local officials took their responsibilities and duties seriously in line with the prescriptions of the Local Government Code. This seemed to be the case for the municipalities of Maluso in Basilan and Parang in Maguindanao, for example.

It was also not uncommon for some FGD participants, particularly those from Lanao del Sur and Marawi City, to mistakenly regard consultations conducted by government line agencies and NGOs as part of local government units' consultations. For example, some of the participants mentioned that they participated in consultations organized by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the

Magbassa Kita Foundation's Literacy for Peace and Development (LIPAD) program, Action Contre la Faim, or other NGOs. Nevertheless, the activities participated in by the FGD participants show that where venues for participation are present, such as the project Tulang I Ina (TII), citizens do participate in such public programs such as literacy, breastfeeding, and gardening/livelihood for mothers. As pointed out above, however, such consultations serve to disseminate information about a program or project rather than solicit public inputs for local strategies and policies.

Aside from speaking in meetings, other ways by which citizens said they could make their views known in the ARMM were through local media and social networking. Some participants also said that occasionally people have staged demonstrations and rallies as a way to convey their concerns and dissatisfaction with local governments' performance.

What announcement methods are used to inform the public about the local government meetings that are open for citizen's participation? Are the methods by which citizens can provide input to local government council decision making widely distributed to the public?

Local governments are mandated to post announcements of public meetings on the information boards of local government halls and possibly other public buildings. Leaflets announcing assemblies were also distributed to the public although it is difficult to say how wide a reach this method achieved. Word of mouth was also used, particularly at the barangay level.

The study respondents believe that there is a paucity of mechanisms for them to actually participate in decision making. This is despite the fact that the public appeared eager to participate in activities that they think will impact their communities. The people who participated in the FGDs seemed to think that local officials of the ARMM did not really encourage citizen participation in decision making. They were also skeptical about any possible improvement in the situation, saying that more public participation would only dilute the power and control of politicians on local governments. They also tended to believe that public meetings were organized merely for show, that mostly supporters were invited to such events, and that those who attended were there to be photographed as assenting to decisions already made.

In contrast, respondents who were part of local governments tended to say that local officials indeed encouraged and practiced public participation in decision making. They were eager to show that officials were actually aware of the provisions of the law on participation and that they were earnestly fulfilling them. Of course, fulfilling those requirements (or seeming to fulfill them in some pro forma way) does not necessarily

mean embracing their intent. The apparent chasm between public perception and supposed official compliance also puts in doubt how broadly public such claimed participation is in the region. This negative perception is, of course, mitigated by what appear to be truly sincere actions by socially responsible local officials to push for greater democracy in local government administration.

In the ARMM, there seems to be no genuine openness towards citizen participation as perceived by most of the respondents of this study. Citizen participation does not seem to take place independent of elections (a facet of representative democracy). Authentic citizen participation in government processes should develop and be mainstreamed or have a life of its own beyond the term of elected local officials. There is no full citizen participation yet in the ARMM since a process that instils citizen participation organically, fully known and actively engaged in by citizens, is still wanting in the region. On the other hand, the people in the ARMM need to be assertive of their rights in a democracy—to demand from the government to be more public or people-oriented, and to accept the people's participation as a requisite for a democracy to prevail in the region.

FAIRNESS

What policies and programs exist in the municipality to promote inclusion of different interests, including those of identity and specific-interest groups? Do you think certain groups are discriminated against in these processes? If so, which groups and why would they be discriminated against?

Participatory democracy is concerned with how unequal distribution of power and resources affects peoples' daily lives and how they can influence decision making that affects them. Participatory democracy implies that the power to make decisions should not be left to a small number of people, but that power should be more equally shared among all citizens so that everyone has an opportunity to influence collective affairs. The concern of participatory democrats is to achieve more egalitarian redistribution of power and greater democratization of the political process at both national and local level.

By law, discrimination against Muslims and indigenous peoples is prohibited. Discrimination against Muslims has already been protected and enshrined in a national plan. Also, in the education sphere, the recognition of *madaris* (Islamic schools) and professionalization of teachers in such schools are upheld.

Based on the 2004-2010 national peace plan's affirmative action agenda for Muslims, the following provisions seek to eliminate discrimination against Muslims and to promote their greater inclusion in society and in the benefits of development:

- proportionate share of appointments to senior government positions
- rehabilitation of Islamic banking
- creation of salaam police units for NCR and urban centers
- ensuring non-discriminatory policies and procedures in any police or military action against terrorism
- improved Hajj supervision
- promotion of Muslim holidays and religious festivals through official declarations and conduct of awareness programs on these important events
- policies to ensure elimination of discrimination, even affirmative action, in schooling and employment
- streamlining and strengthening of OMA (Office of Muslim Affairs, now the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos).

As regards madrasah education**,** the government's policies consist of the promulgation of standard basic education curriculum for public schools and madaris; and the professionalization of madaris teachers through capacity building; licensure exam; certification of competencies for teaching Arabic, Islamic values, and Islamic studies; and conduct of Accelerated Teacher Training Course (ATTC).

When asked if they thought specific groups were being discriminated against in the ARMM, the general answer by the FGD and KII participants was that in as far as gender was concerned, there was no discrimination. They acknowledged that discrimination existed against opposition figures, but that this was motivated by political reasons rather than economic or gender-based ones.

KIs from Maguindanao agreed that no individual or group of people was discriminated against. In Basilan, an FGD participant stated, "Generally speaking there is no discrimination; in fact we even helped construct a Christian church because we believe when people observe what is taught in their religion, everyone can find peace and live harmoniously in the community." Another respondent said there was no discrimination since IPs were recognized, as well as all other sectors in the community. However, and contrary to these assertions, some key informants acknowledged that

discrimination was directed against indigenous peoples, illiterates, and those who were not supporters of the political party in power. One possible sign of the discrimination against IPs is that they are not represented in proportion to their estimated population size through formal channels of representation, such as political parties.

For Sulu, discrimination was said to be directed against supporters of the opposition. Also, the poor and powerless were supposedly discriminated against as well since they did not have any influence during elections. The FGD participants for the province also said, "*Sa mga Badjao, kulang ang education and food supply para sa kanila.* (The Badjaos are discriminated since their education and supply of food are lacking)."

According to the key informants for Tawi-Tawi, acts of discrimination were often directed against people who opposed those in power. Similarly, another KI identified the Badjaos as victims of discrimination. The FGD participants confirmed that the Badjao, those of low social status, and political opponents were all discriminated against. Also, Tawi-Tawi FGD participants claimed that the "religious sector is seldom invited or sometimes they are not even invited" (to consultations). However, they also asserted that "we do not experience such (discrimination) because we belong to one tribe, the Sama; no other tribe will dare run in our barangay because outsiders have no chance to win," a statement that was revealing of inter-tribal attitudes.

Lanao del Sur and Marawi City FGD participants likewise observed that there was discrimination against women. This is because "women have a higher rate of illiteracy due to the fact that women stop going to school early, or if they are allowed to go back to school, there are no schools nearby." They also regarded the absence of infrastructure in the community (such as schools and farm-to-market roads) as, in a way, a form of discrimination.

Maguindanao FGD participants gave a contrasting remark, saying, "There are no sectors or groups which are discriminated in these processes because we make sure that each sector or group is represented during assemblies especially in the formulation of the barangay development plan."

TRANSPARENCY

Which local government documents can citizens access and how? What rules exist in ensuring transparency in discussing and adopting the local budget? What rules exist in ensuring transparency of public decision making and other processes (such as soliciting contracts for city purchases)?

The 1987 Constitution guarantees citizens' access to information on matters that are of concern to them. The relevant provisions states: "Access

to official records, and to documents and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to such limitations as may be provided by law." (Article III, Section 7) Various limitations, however, have been imposed on this access depending on the kind of information sought. Specifically, information on matters of national security, trade secrets and other types of confidential business information, and information deemed by the government as restrictive may not be accessed.

The process of access is initiated by any member of the public, who is required to formally request the information or document sought from the relevant government office that has it. The government office then must respond to the request within fifteen working days of receipt of the request, saying what action the office is taking. This means that the government can grant access, deny it, or delay any action on the request. Given the rather arbitrary way that government officials can define confidentiality, denial to access is easy enough to justify.

However, there are certain documents that are required by national laws and executive issuances to be disclosed to the public even without public request, in line with a full disclosure policy regarding certain documents having to do with local government procurements, financial status, and internal revenue allocations. The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) has issued Memorandum Circular no. 2010-83 to summarize and concretize all national policies on the full disclosure of public documents. The full disclosure policy is governed by the following laws:

- Section 352 of the Local Government Code requires the "posting within 30 days from end of each fiscal year in at least three publicly accessible and conspicuous places in the local government unit, a summary of all revenues collected and funds received, including the appropriations and disbursements of such funds during the preceding fiscal year."
- Republic Act No. 9184, known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, seeks to ensure that government procurement of projects, goods and services and the implementation of procurement contracts are done in a transparent manner. It obliges the "posting of the Invitation to Bid, Notice to Proceed at Approved Contract in procuring entity's premises, in newspapers of general circulation, the Philippine Government Electric

Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the procuring entity."

- Section 90 of Republic Act No. 10147, the General Appropriations Act of fiscal year 2011 on the use and disbursement of the internal revenue allotment of LGUs mandates "strict compliance with Sections 288 and 354 of RA No. 7160 and DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2010-83, entitled "Full Disclosure of Local Finances, and Bids and Public Offering", and, in addition, requires the publication or posting under Section 352 of RA No. 7160 in three (3) publicly accessible and conspicuous places in the local government unit, as well as the posting of detailed information on the use and disbursement, and status of programs and projects in the LGUs' websites. Failure to comply with these requirements shall subject the responsible officials to disciplinary actions in accordance with existing laws." The Commission on Audit Internal Memorandum of 8 October 2010 enjoins concerned COA officials and auditors to monitor management's compliance to DILG Memorandum Circular 2010-83, and warns that any deviation therefrom or non-compliance therewith shall be subject to an Audit Observation Memorandum, and eventually will form a part of the Annual Audit Report or Management letter, if necessary.

THE FULL DISCLOSURE POLICY

Under the government's full disclosure policy (FDP), local officials of provinces, cities, and municipalities are required to fully disclose particular financial transactions of the LGUs to keep their constituents informed of how the local budget is managed, disbursed, and used. LGUs are directed to disclose or post in conspicuous places within public buildings, in print media of community or general circulation, and in the LGU website their documents as mandated by Section 84 of Republic Act No. 10155 or the General Appropriations Act, Fiscal Year 2012. In general, the documents to be posted are budget reports, procurement reports, and special purpose fund reports. The FDP documents include the annual budget, revenue and expenditure streams, utilization of conditional funds, and procurement documents.

For a provincial or city government, financial documents are to be posted on the LGU website and at least three publicly accessible and conspicuous places within the province or city, or published in a newspaper of general circulation in the territorial jurisdiction of the local government unit.

For a municipal government, financial documents are to be posted on the LGU website, if any; or at least three publicly accessible and conspicuous places within the province or city; or published in a newspaper of general circulation in the territorial jurisdiction of the local government unit. The documents covered by the policy are listed in tables 4.01a, 4.01b, and 4.01c.

Table 4.01a Budget reports posting rules under the full disclosure policy

Type of Report	*Start of Posting*	*Frequency*
Annual Budget Report	On or before 20 January of each year or not later than 20 days after the approval of the Local Sanggunian	annual
Statement of Debt Service	20 days after the approval of Local Chief Executive (LCE) of the Statement of Debt Service Annual Report	annual
Statement of Receipts and Expenditures	20 days after the approval of Local Chief Executive (LCE) of the Statement of Receipts and Expenditures Annual Report	annual
Quarterly Statement of Cash Flow	Within 20 days after the end of every quarter	quarterly

Reproduced from: Local Government Regional Resource Center. 2013. Full disclosure policy. http://www.lgrrc6.org.ph/index.php?option=com_content&view=article &id=147:full-disclosure&catid=35:programs&Itemid=2.

Table 4.01b Procurement reports posting rules under the full disclosure policy

Type of Report	*Start of Posting*	*Frequency*
Annual Procurement Plan or Procurement List	On or before 31 January of each year.	annual
Items to Bid	Within the prescribed period under the Government Procurement Reform Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, and to be updated quarterly	quarterly
Bid Results on Civil Works, Goods and Services, and Consulting Services	Within the prescribed period under the Government Procurement Reform Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, and to be updated quarterly	quarterly
Abstract of Bids as Calculated	Within the prescribed period under the Government Procurement Reform Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, and to be updated quarterly	quarterly
Supplemental Procurement Plan, if any	Not later than 20 days after the approval by the head of Procuring Unit	monthly

Reproduced from: Local Government Regional Resource Center. 2013. Full disclosure policy. http://www.lgrrc6.org.ph/index.php?option=com_content &view=article&id=147:full-disclosure&catid=35:programs&Itemid=2.

Table 4.01c Special purpose funds report posting rules under the full disclosure policy

Type of Report	*Start of Posting*	*Frequency*
SEF Income and Expenditure Estimates	20 days after the approval by the Local School Board of the SEF Income and Expenditure Annual Report	annual
Report of SEF Utilization	20 days after the end of each quarter	quarterly
Annual GAD Accomplishment Report	Not later than the end of January of each year	annual
Trust Fund Report (PDAF)	20 days after the end of each quarter	quarterly
20% Component of the IRA Utilization	20 days after the end of each quarter	quarterly
Report of Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (LDRRMF) Utilization	20 days after the end of each quarter	quarterly

Reproduced from: Local Government Regional Resource Center. 2013. Full disclosure policy. http://www.lgrrc6.org.ph/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=147:full-disclosure&catid=35:programs&Itemid=2.

To ensure its adoption at the local level, the full disclosure policy of the DILG requires local government units to post their budgets and finances, and bids and public offerings in government websites, newspapers of general circulation, and in other conspicuous and appropriate places. In summary, the following documents and transactions are required to be posted by LGUs:

- Annual Budget of the current calendar year
- Quarterly Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Receipts and Expenditures of the previous calendar year
- Special Education Fund (SEF) Utilization
- 20% Component of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) Utilization
- Gender and Development Fund Utilization
- Statement of Debt Services
- Annual Procurement Plan or Procurement List
- Items to Bid
- Bid Results on Civil Works, Goods and Services
- Abstract of Bids as Calculated
- SEF Income and Expenditures Estimates
- Trust Fund (PDAF) Utilization
- Supplementary Procurement Plan

Other legal bases for local governments' provision of relevant information to the public and adopting the principle of transparency in governance include the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) and the Government Procurement Act.

According to Republic Act No. 9485, otherwise known as the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2 June 2007,

> All government agencies including departments, bureaus, offices, instrumentalities, or government-owned and/or controlled corporations, or local government or district units shall set up their respective service standards to be known as the Citizen's Charter in the form of information billboards which should be posted at the main entrance of offices or at the most conspicuous place, and in the form of published materials written either in English, Filipino, or in the local dialect, that detail
>
> - the procedure to obtain a particular service;
> - the person/s responsible for each step;
> - the maximum time to conclude the process;
> - the document/s to be presented by the customer, if necessary;
> - the amount of fees, if necessary;
> - the procedure for filing complaints.

Table 4.02 below shows the rate of compliance of the region's provincial, city, and municipal governments to specific elements of the anti-red tape law.

Table 4.02 ARMM LGUs ARTA compliance (2010)

Elements	*Province*	*City*	*Municipality*	*Total*	*Percentage of Compliance*
Citizen's Charter	1		61	62/123	50
Public Assistance Desk or Complaint Desk	2	1	75	78/123	59
One-Stop-Shop or Walk-in Service Counter	1	1	14	16/123	13
Courtesy Lane for pregnant women, senior Citizens and persons with disabilities	1	1	16	18/123	14

Sources: DILG-ARMM website. http://www.dilg-armm.ph; ARMM website. http://www.armm.gov.ph.

In the fourth quarter of 2011, the ARMM did not have any data on compliance. While most regions of the country had partial or no compliance, the DILG was still able to track the progress of the LGUs in those regions, as table 4.03 shows.

Table 4.03 Report on Compliance with Full Disclosure Policy (4th quarter of 2011)

Region	FULL COMPLIANCE			PARTIAL COMPLIANCE			NO COMPLIANCE			NO REPORT		
	PROVINCE	CITY	MUNICIPALITY	PROVINCE	CITY	MUNICIPALITY	PROVINCE	CITY	MUNICIPALITY	PROVINCE	CITY	MUNICIPALITY
1	2	6	63	1	2	56				1		
2	3		36	2	3	50			4			
CAR		1	5	4	1	38				1		37
3	2	1	15	5	12	91			11			
4A				5	13	126						1
4B			3	5	2	60			8			
5				6	7	90			4			12
6	4	15	78	2	1	37						
7	1	3	50	3	9	68			1			
8	1	2	15	5	2	87			38			
9					2	17			6	3	3	2
10		1	13	4	6	67		1		1		5
11					3	6				4	2	38
12	2	3	19	2	2	25						
13	2	1	9	3	5	54			4			
ARMM	NO REPORT HAS BEEN GENERATED FROM ARMM DESPITE REPEATED REQUEST FOR UPDATE									5	1	

Source: Bureau of Local Government Supervision 2011.

The 2011 Survey on Local Governance pointed out the lack of transparency and accountability in the ARMM, as shown in table 4.04 below. The overall opinion of respondents on transparency and clarity of transaction procedures in the ARMM rated equal to that of the Visayas at 68 percent—higher than for the whole of Mindanao (59 percent) but lower than that for Luzon (80 percent). The survey also looked into compliance with the full disclosure policy (FDP) set by the DILG in 2010. The FDP required the posting of specific documents in conspicuous places for the benefit of the public. The ARMM consistently lagged behind the rest of the country when respondents were asked whether the development plans and LGU financial documents of the region were easily seen or found. While the rest of the country registered more than 50 percent response for the presence of the FDP documents, a majority of the ARMM respondents said that the documents could not be easily seen or found. Furthermore, prior awareness of the Citizens' Charter was high in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, but in the ARMM 70 percent of the respondents said that they only heard about it from the survey.

Table 4.04 Percent of respondents who said they did not see or find the FDP documents

FDP Document	*Balanced Luzon*	*Visayas*	*Mindanao*	*ARMM*
Development Plan	46	48	44	53
Budget	47	44	48	55
Procurement	42	46	43	52
Expenditures	49	48	44	52

Source of basic data: Social Weather Stations 2011.

The purposive survey conducted by the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy (PCID) showed that 56 percent of respondents said they either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that public documents and proceedings of LGU decision making in the ARMM were accessible, while 28 percent were unsure and 15 percent did not agree that the documents were accessible, as shown in table 4.05. However, since the PCID survey was not a random process in contrast to the SWS survey, it (the PCID survey) can only account for the perception of the particular groups of respondents that were questioned. Also, the PCID survey asked a general question about access without specifying any particular public document.

Table 4.05 Citizens' access to the public documents and LGU proceedings

Response	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Strongly Agree	648	16.2
Somewhat Agree	1603	40.1
Undecided whether Agree or Disagree	1136	28.4
Disagree	431	10.8
Strongly Disagree	174	4.4
Missing Values	8	0.2
Total	4000	100.0

It should also be noted that the PCID survey was done a year after the SWS survey and after a vigorous campaign by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) for LGUs to comply with the FDP. The comparatively better performance by LGUs in the PCID survey could be interpreted as an indication of somewhat improved compliance due to this campaign.

A government policy on full disclosure of local financial management is mandated by law, yet it seems the policy is not being implemented on a wide scale based on the responses by the key informants and FGD participants. There seems to be a failure on the part of local leaders to implement such policy, as pointed out by the respondents. But more fundamentally, it seems that most citizens are not aware of such a rule. According to the results of the study, most key informants from Basilan were unaware of any such rule. However, quite interestingly in Sulu, according to some key informants, council sessions discussing the local budget are usually open to the public. Answers from Lanao KIs can be synthesized as follows: local government officials do not make a solicited effort to ensure that there is transparency in government processes especially in terms of the budget; LGU officials are trying, by all possible means, to hide the flow of the distribution of the budget probably because of fear that corruption

charges might surface. Maguindanao KIs seemed to agree with the Lanao KIs on this question.

Overall, the observation of the respondents is that it is not easy to access public documents. At the validation workshops held in Zamboanga City and Cotabato City last September and October 2012, respectively, it was evident that the participants did not agree that public documents are that easily accessible in local government offices, especially financial reports. The access and full disclosure policies promoted by the national government do not seem to have yet filtered down to the LGUs. It may be that there is a lingering reluctance to full disclosure at the local level considering that this was not demanded or enforced with any vigor in the past. It may also be the case that local communities are not fully aware of their rights to access information that may affect their lives, or past and unpleasant experiences with uncooperative officials keep them from fully demanding such access.

In general, key informants in the ARMM seem to think that there exists an attitude of secrecy on the part of local officials regarding public documents. Or, if there is apparent access to public information, the citizens fear asking for public documents because they believe that their lives may be threatened. There was no answer from Maguindanao KIs. Lanao KIs were not sure about this because they observed that no local government documents were open to the public. They said that the LGU website only contained information on the history of the office and other mundane matters. Secrecy of documents is rampant in many local governments where officials can easily forge and manipulate them, according to the KIs. They had not observed concrete evidence that a policy was created to promote public access to information and official documents.

In Basilan, most had no answer to the question. An informant who believed there was public access to government documents said, "No one dares to dig for official documents, especially with regards to budget and finance. When a person does that then death is waiting at his door." Others were divided on whether there were local policies promoting public access to information. In Sulu, according to the key informants, such policies did not exist. Some Tawi-Tawi informants, however, believed that disclosure policies were in place and that some government agencies did provide access to information.

Apparently there are some local governments in the ARMM that encourage transparency; however, if there are mechanisms in place, the citizens may not be aware of these. Therefore, as perceived by the citizens, transparency and accountability, which are necessary elements of a

democracy, may not exist locally. There is a general sentiment from the participants that if the ARMM is to have democracy, such transparency rules must be followed by the public officials.

Do the LGUs have websites for communication through the Internet to provide information about the city, its governance, its administration, and its economy? Do citizens regularly use these technologies to access information or for other purposes?

The ARMM regional government has a website, www.armm.gov.ph, and each province in the region supposedly has its own website as well, except for Tawi-Tawi. A quick check of the status of these websites revealed that only the regional government and the provinces of Maguindanao, Sulu, and Basilan had websites that could be accessed on 1 May 2013. There is no requirement for local governments to create their own websites although the national government encourages them to do so. The posting of public documents, particularly those related to local government budgets, finances, bids and public offerings, on respective local government websites are required under the full disclosure policy. Local governments without their own websites are required to post the documents on the DILG regional office website or the central office website. The DILG is supposed to monitor compliance of this directive by local government officials and to encourage the public to file complaints against those local governments that fail to comply. The quick check revealed that only the website of Basilan province had a panel on its homepage that provided downloadable links to financial and other documents required by full disclosure. The other websites, including the one for the regional government, did not so it is not easy to tell if those websites contained the documents necessary for their compliance to the full disclosure policy. The ARMM website had pages for each of the region's provinces, but they seemed to be not-yet-functional templates for each local government's full disclosure documents.

It is difficult to gauge how accessible these websites are to the public and how often members of the public access them. In the case of the ARMM, the consensus is that people rarely do. Key informants seem to be divided on how useful and informative local government websites are. This was supposedly because some local officials were not interested in transparency and therefore were remiss or delayed with their compliance on full disclosure through public postings, including website postings.

Those respondents who were aware of their local governments' websites said that the contents were mainly information about activities, accomplishments, and future plans of the LGUs. In Maguindanao, for example, the provincial website reportedly contained information on

current events, projects, and the province's demographic data, as well as the required financial data and documents. Respondents in Lanao del Sur, however, said that this was not the case for their provincial government website.

The quick check revealed the websites that were accessible to be mostly informational of the mundane kind. The information accessible on each website's homepage focused on a profile of the governor (and maybe other local officials), a profile of the province, a link to each province's tourism spots, a feature on the local culture, some data on the local economy, and updates on what was happening in the province.

How are vacancies in local government advertised (including method and period of announcement)?

Regarding vacancies, there are requirements for the posting of announcements when certain government positions become open. These are spelled out in existing executive orders and laws on local governments.

Once the local chief executive (LCE) decides to fill a vacancy, the position to be filled should have a qualification standards approved by the Civil Service Commission, according to Executive Order No. 292 or the Administrative Code of 1987. The Local Government Code requires that notices of vacancy be posted in at least three conspicuous public places for a period of not less than fifteen days and published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the LGU concerned. Qualified applicants are then screened by the Personnel Selection Board (PSB). The PSB also assists the LCE in evaluating personnel for promotion. The PSB evaluates the applicants and rates each of them on the basis of education, training, experience, eligibility, interview, and possibly on the results of a written examination. The PSB then submits to the LCE a list of recommended candidates from which the LCE is supposed to select the appointee to the vacant position. It is clear, then, that vacancies are to be filled following a transparent process that vets qualified applicants according to prescribed standards so that the appointing authority (the LCE) is able to pick the best person for the job.

However, in practice, nepotism in ARMM seems to be rampant. One key informant from Basilan alleged: "Once officials are in power, they feel that they own the government, as if it's their private property. It starts to become a family affair; you see their close relatives holding critical positions in different offices." This nepotism is supposedly so common that locals refer to it with special terms, such as "*kapamilya* incorporated" (*kapamilya* means of one's family). The other proof offered to show that local

authorities in the ARMM disregard the official hiring process is the proliferation of so-called ghost employees.

Maritess Danguilan-Vitug (1996) of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) has described the ARMM as "an administrative unit that is saddled with an oversized, demoralized and mostly inept bureaucracy staffed by people hired for their political connections and family ties rather than their skills." She reported that when Lininding Pangandaman assumed the office of regional governor in 1993, he appointed 15 key officials who were actually related to him: his wife Ester, three nephews, and 11 cousins and in-laws. She said that it was these kinds of appointments that bloated the ARMM bureaucracy to more than 19,000 personnel (Danguilan-Vitug 1996). While this is a rather dated report, feedback from the study respondents seems to indicate that the practice is still widely followed.

While there may be national laws, policies, and rules that guarantee transparency and the posting of information for public consumption, more essentially, participatory democracy in terms of the value of transparency in ARMM may still be far from being realized as far as the respondents were concerned. It is not enough that national laws are existent and information is available. More local policies and laws may need to be instituted to mandate transparency of information at the provincial, municipal, and barangay levels.

The ARMM respondents seemed to lack awareness on pertinent public information that affect their lives. The people of the ARMM need to have access to information on laws and on the programs, projects, and activities of their local governments. The public participation process should more significantly involve ARMM residents by defining how they can actually participate in government activities and especially how they can demand local officials to account for the local financial system since such documents seem very difficult to access.

What might be needed is to further explore indicators that measure meaningful participation by citizens. Public participation processes should provide citizens with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way. Also, as regards transparency, what may be needed is to communicate to participants how their input has affected decisions regarding development projects.

RESPONSIVENESS

What types of system are in place to hear and address citizen concerns about issues of service delivery or other functions of the local government? How many complaints about service provision were submitted by citizens in the last 12 months? How many complaints did the local government act upon in the last 12 months? What is the percentage of recurring complaints? What percentage of citizens is satisfied/dissatisfied with the provision of service?

The PCID survey results show that less than half (44.6 percent) of those who answered the survey question on local government responsiveness thought their local officials to be always or often responsive (table 4.06). More than half felt that their LGUs were responsive only sometimes or even less than that.

Table 4.06 Public perception on LGUs' responsiveness

Response	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Always Responsive	663	16.6
Often Responsive	1120	28.0
Sometimes Responsive	1350	33.8
Rarely Responsive	668	16.7
Never Responsive	183	4.6
Missing Values	8	0.3
Total	4000	100.0

Such negative results may be attributed to the pathologies that arise from the legal framework, the structures in support of autonomy, and ultimately to the quality of the ARMM leaders. The Organic Act (1989) creating the ARMM preceded the Local Government Code (1991) by two years, which ushered in an asymmetrical level of autonomy for the ARMM as compared to non-autonomous regions or local governments. Because the ARMM has a unique autonomous arrangement and yet has a very similar structure to most sub-national governments, its performance is often compared to its less autonomous counterparts in the rest of the country. It was designed to have almost plenary authority over the autonomous region and its development for the benefit and promotion of the general welfare of its people (Boncodin et al 2007). The Organic Act serves as a quasi-constitution for the autonomous region, which provides a broad legal framework that identifies its powers and its limits, as well as supporting legislation needed in order to further define the powers and functions of the regional government (that is, Local Government Code, Administrative Code, etc.).

The ARMM is often characterized in national statistical studies as consistently underperforming. The region and its provinces are ranked as one of the poorest, basic services are difficult to access, and its public officials are less than forthcoming regarding the reasons for this poor performance. Aside from self-determination, the autonomy granted to the ARMM also prompted the expectation that having decision making powers at the regional level—that is, closer to the citizens—would make government more responsive and more sensitive to the peculiarities of the region.

Since the implementation of the Organic Act and the Local Government Code, the ARMM has received more funds from combined national sources than most other regions in the Philippines. These include shares in internal revenue of the regional government and the LGUs and national grants-in aid. Most of these funds are given to the ARMM as block grants, meaning that the regional government is able to tailor its expenditures with less national government intervention. Measured on a per capita basis, the ARMM ranked second in terms of amount of national funding received (Boncodin et al 2007). However, regional development seems to be a distant goal in spite of the resources being poured into the region. Viewed by sectoral expenditures, the public funds in the ARMM are being spent on general public services, infrastructure, and social services.

The regional government annual budget is usually spent on salaries and infrastructure. Expenditures on personnel services have hovered around 65 percent of the total funds within the locus of control of the regional government (Boncodin et al 2007). This is 10 percent above the personnel services limitation or cap imposed on low income LGUs for the rest of the country. This puts stress on the delivery of basic services since the remaining 35 percent will have to be split among the competing costs of maintenance and other operating expenses, capital outlays, and development projects.

Health services have been one of the hallmarks of devolution in the Philippines with the successful devolution of health workers to the LGUs even though it was considered to be one of the most contentious. While many regions in the Philippines continue to struggle in achieving universal health care and meeting the required standards, the ARMM is a glaring case of underachievement in this field. Even compared to regions that have smaller populations—the Cordillera Autonomous Region, Cagayan Valley, Caraga, and Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan (MIMAROPA)—the ARMM has a very low number of hospitals and other health facilities, as table 4.07 shows.

Table 4.07 Number of hospitals and other health facilities (2005 to 2009)

Region	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*Population (2010)*
NCR	182	180	181	178	179	11,855,975
CAR	55	55	56	55	50	1,616,867
Ilocos Region	124	122	118	121	121	4,748,372
Cagayan Valley	77	87	86	87	90	3,229,163
Central Luzon	197	195	201	197	197	10,137,737
CALABARZON	222	236	233	232	234	12,609,803
MIMAROPA	56	57	60	63	65	2,7,44,671
Bicol Region	120	118	117	116	113	5,420,411
Western Visayas	82	85	86	86	86	7,102,438
Central Visayas	107	107	107	107	104	6,800,180
Eastern Visayas	69	72	72	7	73	4,101,322
Zamboanga Peninsula	73	70	71	70	67	3,407,353
Northern Mindanao	105	104	107	109	109	4,2,97,323
Davao Region	111	109	108	107	110	4,468,563
SOCSKSARGEN	97	93	103	103	106	4,109,571
Caraga	53	63	55	57	58	2,429,224
ARMM	37	30	21	26	34	3,256,140
	1767	1783	1782	1784	1796	92,337,852

Sources: List of Hospitals and Other Facilities, Department of Health (various years); National Statistics Office.

The ARMM has some of the worst health governance statistics in the country. According to ARMM Regional Health Secretary Kadil Sinolinding Jr., the ARMM has the "poorest health status in the country." Each municipality is expected to have one rural health unit (RHU) to take care of devolved health care services. Barangays or a cluster of barangays must also have a barangay health center or station that provides primary health services. However, 21 out of 113 municipalities in the ARMM do not have RHUs. Only 398 barangays out of a regional total of 2,504 have a health center or station. The ARMM also has one of the lowest numbers of government hospitals (24), only nosing out Region 11 for last place (Lavado et al 2010).

Some of these hospitals have been inactive and have been reopened only recently, such as the Sumisip District Hospital and the Unayan District Hospital. Health workers are also very scarce in the region. While it is normal to assume that there will be at least one doctor in every municipality, that is, the municipal health officer, there are still towns that do not have a government doctor, which confirms the absence of RHUs in 21 municipalities of the region. Even the number of midwives, who take care of primary health care in the barangays, is below the national standard.

Table 4.08 Health personnel in the ARMM

Health Personnel	*Health Worker to Population Ratio*	*Actual Standard*
Physicians	1:17,989	1:10,000
Dentists	1:113,333	1:50,000
Nurses	1:13,127	1:20,000
Midwives	1:8,970	1:5,000

Reproduced from: Jose 2011.

In the PCID survey, respondents were asked how many public clinics were servicing their communities. Fifty-nine percent said that there were no doctors in the public health facilities and 46 percent added that there were no nurses either. On the other hand, 42 percent said there were midwives who attended to them.

This scenario is confirmed by the average travel time that patients spend in order to get to a health facility. The ARMM registered the highest travel time to a health facility at 83 minutes. The mountainous Cordillera region averaged only 63 minutes (National Statistics Office and ICF Macro 2009). Considering that the nearest health facility would be the barangay health center or station, having only 15 percent of barangays serviced by a health center or station explains the longer time that patients have to travel to get to the nearest available facility.

Health services and social welfare are intertwined with the PhilHealth insurance system, which has given local governments the task to enroll poor families in an indigent program in which the LGU will cover the insurance cost of the beneficiaries. In the National Demographic and Health Survey of 2008 (National Statistics Office and ICF Macro 2009), the ARMM has the lowest enrolment (18 percent) compared to the highest enrolment of 68 percent in the neighboring region of Northern Mindanao. Eighty-two percent of de jure household families are uninsured in the ARMM. With a 55 percent poverty incidence in the ARMM, only 34.4 percent of insurance holders in the ARMM are indigent beneficiaries.

The problems with devolved services in the ARMM may be due to the confusing state of decentralized powers and functions. Section 3 of the Organic Act of the ARMM states,

> The regional government shall adopt a policy on local autonomy whereby regional powers shall be devolved to local government units particularly in areas of education, health, human resource, science and technology and people empowerment. Until a law implementing this provision is enacted by the Regional Assembly, Republic Act No. 7160, the Local Government Code of 1991, shall continue to apply to all the provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangay within the autonomous region. The Regional Assembly may not pass any law to diminish,

> lessen, or reduce the powers, functions, and shares in the internal revenue taxes of the said local government units as provided by Republic Act No. 7160, the Local Government Code of 1991.

In 1994, the ARMM RLA enacted its own regional local government code as Muslim Mindanao Act 25. MMA 25 is a replica of the Local Government Code except for some strange yet significant omissions. While section 17 of the LGC specified that the LGUs will "discharge the functions and responsibilities of national agencies and offices devolved to them," section 14 of the MMA 25 did not reiterate this as a principle of the ARMM's version of the Local Government Code (Parcasio 2011). Parcasio (2011) contends that this legal loophole has given the LGUs that still directly receive their internal revenue allotment from the national government wide latitude to misuse and abuse their freedom to allocate such funds. They can (and presumably do) disregard the provisions of section 17 that mandate them to take responsibility for the delivery of basic services, leaving this task to the regional government instead.

While it can be argued that the autonomy of the regional government allowed it to modify the spirit of devolution and assigned upon itself the bulk of the service delivery function, the fact that the regional government has to defend 80 percent of its budget in the national legislature for authorization means that the regional government is far less fiscally autonomous than its lower tier counterparts, making it more wholly beholden on the national government for its funds (Boncodin et al 2007). This has led to claims, echoed by this study's respondents, that the ARMM's autonomy is less than real and that the regional government acts merely as the representative of the national government in the region. They (the respondents) also pointed to what they perceive to be political support from Malacañan Palace as the crucial and necessary ingredient for winning the elections in the ARMM, further proof that the regional government cannot act independently of the central government.

Satisfaction on the part of the citizens may also be an indicator of responsiveness of local officials. In the previously cited Survey on Good Local Governance (Social Weather Stations 2011), the ARMM regional government received the lowest satisfaction rating among the four tiers of government present in the region. While the nominal score is still positive, compared to the LGUs, the regional government seems less relevant to the people of the ARMM. The perception of the ARMM from outside the region is much worse, as table 4.09 shows. Only 17 percent of respondents in the Visayas were satisfied with the ARMM, 29 percent in the rest of Mindanao, and 28 percent in Luzon.

Table 4.09 Trust rating of government officials in the ARMM (in percent)

Subnational government (official)	*Satisfied*	*Undecided*	*Not satisfied*
ARMM Government	63	17	18
Governor	78	15	6
Mayor	77	15	8
Barangay Chair	80	12	7

Source: Social Weather Stations 2011.

The PCID survey showed similar results expressed as trust rating, as table 4.10 shows. Barangay chairpersons were rated highest for trust among government officials, with 71 percent of respondents saying they trusted them. Mayors had a rating of 65 percent, provincial governors 55 percent, and congressmen 49 percent. However, religious leaders outranked barangay officials as the most trusted persons in the community, garnering a rate of 89 percent. Elders were also more trusted than mayors. NGOs, leaders of voluntary organizations, and the police outpolled provincial governors. Congressmen were the second least trusted persons in the community.

Table 4.10 Trust rating of persons or institutions in the ARMM

Persons/ Institutions	*Very Much*	*%*	*Some what Much*	*%*	*Undecided If Much or*	*%*	*Somewhat Little*	*%*	*Very Little*	*%*	*Refused*	*%*	*Not Aware*	*%*
Religious Leaders	2672	67	880	22	269	7	121	3	30	0.8	11	0.3	4	0.3
Barangay Captain	1581	40	1246	31	468	12	345	8.6	250	6.3	48	1.2	27	0.7
Elders in the Area	1567	39	1505	38	490	12	223	5.6	106	2.7	40	1	28	1
Mayor	1316	33	1284	32	573	14	380	9.5	297	7.4	48	1.2	35	1
NGOs	1311	33	1182	30	725	18	316	7.9	149	3.7	88	2.2	206	5
Leaders of Voluntary Organizations	1089	27	1245	31	762	19	348	8.7	172	4.3	138	1.7	82	4
Police	928	23	1308	33	785	20	452	11	401	10	55	1.4	41	1
Governor	870	22	1321	33	789	20	462	12	329	8.2	62	1.6	42	1
Traditional Leaders	803	20	993	25	789	20	419	11	351	8.8	188	4.7	423	11
Congressman	713	18	1222	31	910	23	528	13	433	11	75	1.9	71	2
Business Associations	608	15	1048	26	999	25	544	14	425	11	130	3.3	186	5

It can be inferred that the higher in the regional political hierarchy a government official is, the less trusted he or she may be. While the ARMM regional government officials were not included in the PCID survey, it may be assumed that they would have gotten even lower ratings for trust, following the pattern established in the SWS survey.

Furthermore, respondents were asked to rate local government responsiveness. Forty-five percent said that the local government always or often responds to their needs. Those who said that the LGUs are sometimes responsive were 34 percent, while those who thought that LGUs are not responsive comprised 21.3 percent. In spite of more fiscal autonomy in the provinces, cities, and municipalities of the ARMM, the survey responses confirmed the sluggish delivery of basic services in such localities.

Moreover, it is not only in the matter of basic services that the ARMM has underperformed. An analysis of the legislation passed by the Regional Legislative Assembly points to a preoccupation with political or symbolic legislation, such as the creation of barangay and the renaming of public facilities. Of the 267 pieces of legislation passed since the establishment of the RLA, 145 (54 percent) were for the creation or merging or renaming of barangay and municipalities, and the creation of a new province, Shariff Kabunsuan, which was later disallowed by the Supreme Court. Another 15 percent of MMAs consisted of annual appropriations and public works acts that need to be passed in order to authorize the regional government budget, as shown below in table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Regional Legislative Assembly Laws

Laws Enacted by the RLA with Symbolic or Practical Political Implication	*Number of Laws*
Creation/Division/Revival/Merger of Barangays	102
Creation of Municipalities	31
Revenue Code of ARMM, Provision of Allotment and Budget Acts	25
Creation and Strengthening of Local Regional Offices	24
Amendment to the ARMM Local Government Code and MMA	23
Regional Public Works Act	16
Renaming of Municipalities	11
Renaming Hospitals/Schools/Highways	7
Renaming of Barangays	6
Adoption of Seal/Emblem, Posting of Arabic Signs	5
Establishment and Conversion of Hospitals	4
Corporate Acts, Business-related laws and Investment Code	4
Education Assistance and Education-related laws	3
Codes for Children, Youth and Women	3
Location of Seats of Government (regional and municipal)	2
Creation of Province	1
TOTAL	267

Source: ARMM Regional Government updated by PCID 2012.

In one particular case of legislation, the autonomy of the Regional Legislative Assembly was tested. MMA 201 and a subsequent plebiscite in 2006 created the new province of Shariff Kabunsuan out of the province of Maguindanao. The plebiscite result was an overwhelming affirmation of its creation—285,372 in favour and only 8,802 against. The creation of the new province was based on Republic Act No. 9054's section 19 that empowered the Regional Assembly to "create, divide, merge, abolish or substantially alter the boundaries of provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays." In 2008 the Supreme Court declared MMA 201 void and unconstitutional, saying that the power to create provinces and cities rested solely with Congress. Section 19 of the law was subsequently declared unconstitutional. While this creation of a new province can be seen as an assertion of the ARMM's autonomy, it was possibly tainted by the RLA's reputation for gerrymandering and fragmenting LGUs in the ARMM. When a legal challenge to the constitutionality of Section 19 finally came, the national government (the Supreme Court in particular) withdrew the powers of the regional government to manage its territory as it saw fit.

The underperformance of the regional government and the LGUs in the ARMM are reflected in the opinions of their constituents who put a higher trust on non-governmental actors. Furthermore, the only government official who received a respectable trust rating was the barangay chairperson who is the most visible and accessible government official in the ARMM. This implies that higher level officials appear to ordinary citizens to be distant and inaccessible.

The relatively low rating for trust that survey respondents placed on their local government officials may indicate a need for such officials to cultivate better social relations with their constituents in order to build up social capital among them. As revealed by secondary data and statistics and as perceived by the respondents, the local governments in the ARMM have not been responsive to the need for basic services of the citizenry, nor has the regional government been performing well in the area of legislation that has developmental value.

4.2 Civil Society, the Private Sector, the International Community and the Media

Civil society organizations play a major role in the promotion of democracy in the Philippines. The policy of the state, as stated in the 1987 Constitution, is to broaden the role of civil society organizations in all spheres of national life. This is in grateful recognition of the role that these

organizations played in toppling the authoritarian Marcos regime during the People Power Revolution of 1986. Several laws and executive issuances have been issued to put this policy into practice.

Article II, Section 23 of the 1987 Constitution stipulates, "The state shall encourage nongovernmental, community-based, or sectoral organizations that promote the welfare of the nation." This provision ensures that the Philippine government recognizes the capacity of CSOs to effectively represent and lobby for the people's interests in various public consultations and deliberations on varied local and national issues, most especially in the realm of governance and policy making (Lowry, 2008).

The Local Government Code of 1991, the current decentralization code of the country, enjoins local government units (LGUs) with devolved powers and responsibilities on service delivery to promote the establishment and active participation of NGOs in these functions. The LGC encourages and allows the NGOs to take part in the areas of socio-economic development, environmental protection, health, education, and even in the work of pre-qualification bids and awards committees (Lowry 2008).

To further strengthen CSO participation in the local government, the DILG issued Memorandum Circular 2012-114 mandating LGUs to implement the Civil Society Participation Fund (CSPF). It is a small grants facility of the DILG managed by the Bureau of Local Government Supervision (BLGS) CSO Partnership Coordination Office (CPO) in partnership with the Task Force Participatory Local Governance (TF-PLG), a broad coalition of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) with a common advocacy of civic engagement in local governance. The fund seeks to enhance the contributions and roles of civil society engagements in participative, accountable, and transparent local governance and to build on collaborative partnerships with LGUs. Specifically, the CSPF endeavors to

- promote efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and responsiveness of government service delivery;
- strengthen local mechanisms for CSO participation;
- promote capacity development of CSOs and the dissemination and institutionalization of good practices in participatory local governance;
- create and replicate models of good practice in participatory local governance.

In the ARMM, Section 8 of Republic Act No. 9054 (Organic Act) stipulates that "the Regional Government shall protect and promote the

rights of people's organizations." To implement this provision, the RLA passed Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act No. 25 (MMAA 25), the Local Government Code of ARMM, under the original Organic Act (Republic Act No. 6734). Section 24 of the said law says that the "regional or local government units shall promote the establishment and operation of people's and non-governmental organizations to become active partners in the pursuit of local autonomy." Section 108 of MMAA 25 also mandates that NGOs and POs should comprise one-fourth of the membership of the local development councils.

These laws and pronouncements clearly acknowledge the contributions that civil society groups can make in realizing democracy in the ARMM and making its autonomy productive and beneficial for its people. NGOs, POs, and other like-minded associations are not just encouraged to actively work with local governments, they are expected to do so for the common good.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

How many civil society groups are estimated to exist in the region? How many NGOs and Community-based Organizations?

Quite a large number of CSOs and NGOs abound in Mindanao. Basilan and Maguindanao top the provinces in the ARMM with the most number of CSOs. Table 4.12 below lists the CSOs registered in the ARMM as of 2011.

Table 4.12 List of registered CSOs in the ARMM

Province	*CSOs*	*Total*
Basilan	• BANGPO- Basilan Association of Non-Government and Peoples Organizations [Affiliation: Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society (CBCS)] • Basilan Small Farmers Organization Federation, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS] • Basilan Yakan Cultural and Tourism Council, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS] • Basilan Yakan Women Initiative Foundation [Affiliation: CBCS] • Cabengbeng Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative [Affiliation: CBCS] • Maligue Farmers Association [Affiliation: CBCS] • Mindanao Autonomous College [Affiliation: CBCS] • Namadzqoon Adzeem Foundation, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS] • United Mujahidin for Islamic Development, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS]	12

(Table 4.12 continuation)

	• Yakan Weaving Foundation, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS] • YIRDFI - Yakan Integrated Resources Development Foundation, Inc. [Affiliation: AF, CBCS] • YUADPA - Yakan Upland Agricultural Development Program Assistant [Affiliation: CBCS]	
Lanao Del Sur	• AMDF - Al-Mujadillah Development Foundation, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS] • Association of Lanao GAD Advocates [Affiliation: CBCS] • AWID - Association of Women in Development [Affiliation: CBCS] • BAISA - Bangsamoro Islamic Society, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS] • Kalimudan Foundation, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS] • Ma'ahad Moro Fissalam Watanmiyah [Affiliation: CBCS] • MARADECA - Maranao People's Development Center, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS] • Maranao Alliance [Affiliation: MINCON] • Salam Women Group, Inc.[Affiliation: CBCS]	9
Maguindanao	• Al-Jumiyah Al-Khairiah Al-Islamiyah Bil Filipin, Inc. (Islamic Welfare Society of the • Philippines, Inc.) [Affiliation: CBCS] • Bangsamoro Integrated Professionals Multi-Purpose Cooperative [CBCS Member]	10
	• BGMPC - Busikong Greenland Multi-Purpose Cooperative [Affiliation: CBCS] • Islamic Multi-Purpose Cooperative [Affiliation: CBCS] • Kabug-kabug Community Association [COSSA Member] • KM 21 Multi-Purpose Cooperative [Affiliation: CBCS] • Moro Youth Workers Association [Affiliation: CBCS] • NETDEV- Moro Network and Development Center [Affiliation: CBCS] • United Muslim Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative [Affiliation: CBCS] • UNYPHIL - United Youth of the Philippines [Affiliation: CBCS]	
Sulu	• Jolo Integrated Cooperative [Affiliation: MASS-SPECC] • Notre Dame of Jolo Multi-Purpose Cooperative [Affiliation: MASS-SPECC] • PAKAPASUG Organization [Affiliation: CBCS] • Partabangan Ha Kasambuhan Sin Raayat [Affiliation: CBCS] • SFK Children Program [Affiliation: CBCS]	5
Tawi-Tawi	• MUFTI - Muslim Upliftment of Tawi-Tawi, Inc. [Affiliation: CBCS]	1

Source: CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation. 2011. State of civil society. Johannesburg, South Africa: CIVICUS.

In Mindanao, the Caucus of Development NGO Networks acts as an umbrella of CSO networks, having amongst its members the Association of Foundations, the National Federation of Cooperatives, the National Council for Social Development, and the Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas. Large federations of trade unions exist, such as the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines and the Alliance of Progressive Labour. There is also an extensive network of faith-based groups, including the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, the National Council of Churches, and the National Ulama Conference for Muslim groups. The National Council for Social Development has existed for over 60 years.

Around 63 percent of CSOs are members of networks, while 71 percent have recently held a meeting with another CSO and 64 percent have exchanged information, but these are globally low figures, perhaps reflecting the challenges of networking in a country of over 7,000 islands. Networking rates are lower for farmers' and fishers' groups, which have the least resources among CSOs. There have also been government interventions to support networks in the form of area-based standards networks, which bring together different groups working with the socially marginalized.

Table 4.13 NGOs operating in the ARMM (as of 2005)

Bangsamoro Development Agency	Community and Family Services International	Philippine Business for Social Progress	Women in Enterprise Development
Mindanao Emergency Response Network	Mindanao Land Foundation	Federation of United Mindanawan Bangsamoro Women Multi-Purpose Cooperative	Notre Dame Foundation for Charitable Activities, Inc.
Peace Weaver's Network	Kadtuntaya Foundation, Inc.	Balay Rehabilitation Center, Inc.	Balik Kalipay
Bangsamoro Women's Foundation for Peace and Development	Immaculate Concepcion Parish Association	Maranao People's Development Center	Tiduray Lambangian Women's Organization
Philippine National Red Cross	Tabang Mindanaw	Movimondo	Handicap International
Lumad Development Center	CO-Multidiversity	Muslim Youth Religious Organization	Save the Children-UK
Save the Children-US	Catholic Relief Services	OXFAM	Accion Contra el Hambre
TRIPOD	Consuelo Foundation, Inc.	Kahapan Foundation, Inc.	Parent-Teacher-Community Associations

(Table 4.13 continuation)

International Committee of the Red Cross	Maranao People's Development Center	CARE	I Sincerely Love All Muslim (ISLAM) Foundation
Institute for International Dialogue	Feed the Children-Philippines	Pikit Parish	Lihuk-Iligan
Pakigdait, Inc.	Panglingkawas Foundation, Inc.	Hong Kong Youth Foundation	Toscadar
Volunteers in Service Overseas	Cooperatives	Asia Foundation	Association of Recipient Families

Source: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank. 2005.

The ARMM had the highest growth rate of registered cooperatives from 2010 to 2011, resulting in a 41.5 percent increase in the total number of registered cooperatives.

In the ARMM, CSOs and in particular, NGOs, have served as the government's third eye. CSOs and volunteer partners work closely with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in the ARMM. In line with the fulfillment of President Benigno S. Aquino's platform of Good Governance and Poverty Reduction, a system of cooperation between DSWD and CSOs for the purpose of delivering basic social services to the poor, implementing development projects of the government, and instituting transparency and accountability mechanisms to fight corruption has been established. This is being done in any of the following four ways:

- *Bantay* – projects and activities geared towards fighting corruption
- *Gabay* – a mechanism for extending technical assistance
- *Kaagapay* – anti-poverty projects and activities
- *Tulay* – refers to facilitating action, feedback and monitoring

(Department of Social Welfare and Development. n.d. Civil society organizations. http://pantawid.dswd.gov.ph/index.php/civil-society-organizations)

Table 4.14 Number of registered cooperatives

REGION	CREDIT	CONSUMER	PRODUCER	MARKETING	SERVICE	MULTI-PURPOSE	ADVOCACY	AGRARIAN REFORM	DAIRY	FISHERMEN	HOUSING	ELECTRIC	WORKERS	TRANSPORT	FINANCIAL SERVICE	HEALTH SERVICE	WATER SERVICE	COOP BANK-SECONDARY	FEDERATION-SECONDARY	FEDERATION-TERTIARY	UNION-SECONDARY	UNION-TERTIAARY	INSURANCE-SECONDARY	GRAND TOTAL
I	139	102	17	20	20	958								1					9		3			**1,269**
II	148	18	25	53	21	482		1											6	1				**755**
CAR	112	56	18	22	16	473					1		2						5		6			**711**
III	242	62	156	73	133	1,300		3	6				2	4					20		4			**2,005**
NCR	371	141	25	15	291	1,222	1			1	1		5	14				1	26	2	12		1	**2,129**
IV	293	85	83	98	145	1,698	1	2	1	3			6	4	1		2		22		6			**2,450**
V	100	18	60	11	51	536		1	2		1		2	1					7		3			**793**
VI	80	28	30	47	15	1,113													18		1			**1,332**
VII	136	32	21	11	68	1,232		1	4					1		1			13		3			**1,523**
VIII	111	43	27	17	61	401			1										5					**666**
IX	44	28	29	10	17	600	1	1		2									9					**741**
X	154	50	57	45	56	1,050	1				2		3	2		1			14		2		1	**1,438**
XI	130	69	77	53	112	1,191	1	1		2	1			1	1				10		4			**1,653**
XII	96	25	48	34	68	721			1	1				3					9					**1,006**
CARAGA	92	73	102	23	22	718		1					1						8		2			**1,042**
ARMM	20	20	174	221	52	711				9		1							5		1			**1,214**
CENTRAL OFFICE					12							1						44	2	3		1	2	**65**
GRAND TOTAL	**2,268**	**850**	**949**	**753**	**1,160**	**14,406**	**5**	**11**	**15**	**18**	**6**	**2**	**21**	**31**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**45**	**188**	**6**	**47**	**1**	**4**	**20,792**

Source: Cooperative Development Authority. 2012. Selected statistics 2011. http://www.cda.gov.ph/index.php/en/stat2 on November 22, 2012.

The situation of civil society organizations in the ARMM is quite complex and different from other areas in the country where there are no armed ideological groups. As noted below, the economic status, presence of armed ideological groups, discrimination, or the domination of Christian groups may account for the relatively weak civil society or the lack of democratic space for civil society organizations in the ARMM. Steven Rood in his study of civil society in Muslim areas explains this weakness.

> Given that NGO activists are largely drawn from the middle class and that Muslim areas are the poorest in the Philippines, it should come as no surprise that it is these areas that have a less developed civil society.
>
> But the widely cited lack of separation of church and state in Islam could indeed have implications for the prospects of nonreligious groupings among Muslims. It is worth noting that Guiam (2003) classifies "Daw'wah" or proselytizing groups as civil society organizations, indicating a different dividing line than in Christian societies (where religious orders themselves are typically not considered "civil society"). Another facet of this "lack of ideological space" for civil society would be the presence of armed ideological groups—the Moro National Liberation Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front—that claim to speak for the grievances of Muslims. To the extent that a shared identity as Muslims is strong (as the data indicate), then religion and armed struggle may fulfil the need for collective public action between the private sphere and the state in place of civil society organizations.
>
> A third reason for the weakness of civil society in Muslim areas might be discrimination, oppression, and marginalization. In the context of an armed insurgency, it is quite difficult for aboveground organizations to articulate grievances in ways that might resemble the rhetoric of underground organizations. Security organizations of the government, both police and armed forces, may well hamper their activities. Or, more benignly, the hegemony of the mainstream Christian society may shoulder aside Muslim organizations. Many of the strongest "civil society" organizations in the area, the ones that get grants from donors and visits from dignitaries, are in fact Christian (often connected to the system of Notre Dame schools run by the Oblates). These organizations have track records, accounting systems, and fund-raising skills. Most of them also have laudable motives. But, in the end, when an organization based in a Christian school gets funds for working with Muslims (on, say, madrasa curriculum), it means that a Muslim organization is not getting that funding. (Rood 2005, 17-18)

To what extent are civil society groups represented in the ARMM?

The strategic role of civil society in the ARMM is clearly established by the ARMM's Organic Law. The regional government is mandated to

protect and promote the rights of people's organizations. Regional bodies, such as the Regional Economic Planning and Development Board, are required to have representatives from the private sector. Like its national counterpart, the regional local government code promotes the participation of people's organizations and their representation in local bodies.

The presence of civil society organizations is a bright spot in the ARMM. The number of civil society groups is increasing, although many of these are involved in peace and development advocacy because that is where the funds are concentrated. The civil society groups in the region face unique challenges, including the unstable peace and order situation, the threat of kidnapping for ransom, and uncooperative local government executives.

In what ways do local NGOs and CBOs contribute to policy formulation and implementation?

The Local Government Code also considers NGOs and POs to be major partners and stakeholders in local development. Section 34 of the LGC directs local governments to "promote the establishment and operation of people's and nongovernmental organizations to become active partners in the pursuit of local autonomy." The Code also encourages joint undertakings among LGUs and NGOs/POs, and even allows LGUs to provide financial and other resources to the latter.

In addition, the LGC created various local special bodies (LSBs) that are intended to serve as mechanisms for NGOs/POs to participate in the task of governance. These LSBs are the local development council (LDC), local health board (LHB), local school board (LScB), and peace and order council (POC). Each of these bodies requires a specific type and number of CSO representatives.

A former Cabinet Secretary in the ARMM commented that NGOs and CSOs in the region were both strong and weak. She said that CSOs and NGOs were strong in the sense that there were quite a number of local CSOs actively working in the spheres of peace building and conflict resolution, human rights, women's issues, and governance reforms. For example, there were around 200 peace and development advocates (PDAs), former Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) combatants, who had chosen to engage in community development work instead of war. The Philippine Development Coalition Programme (PDAP), a coalition of six Philippine NGO networks, had a major peace and development program in Muslim Mindanao in the late 1990s to early 2000 that provided both training and financial assistance to cooperative members in the form of a

micro-lending program. As cooperative members, women and men would go into such ventures as vegetable and fruit selling, cattle fattening, farming, trading, and welding and steel fabrication with the support of the cooperative. PDAP's work on peace and development in Muslim Mindanao has been well-documented. They provided advice to donors and other funding institutions, as well as the government, with regard to peace and development programs in the region.

However, there are only a few notables in terms of the impact of their advocacies, according to this former government official. She cited the Mindanao Human Rights Action Center (MinHRac) in human rights, Nisa Ul-Haqq Fi Bangsamoro for gender justice, and Al-Mujadillah for women in conflict as among the advocacy-oriented NGOs that had left some impact.

On the other hand, the weak points concerned the sustainability of programs and advocacies. She described some CSO's as closely allied with politicians or political clans that fund their operations and as such, can be used as tools to serve political interests. She observed that several CSOs and so-called 'umbrella' organizations were endorsing political candidates for the elections in May 2013. In order to consolidate the impact of CSOs in Muslim Mindanao, there must be greater independence from the interests of politicians and less political patronage.

Women's groups have also been active in advocating peace. The Mothers for Peace (M4P) was created as a response to the government bombing of the MILF camp in 2003, an event that ended the then existing ceasefire. The members of the organization attempted to convince the government and the MILF to immediately resume peace negotiations. The strategy included speaking to cabinet-level officials, lobbying the leadership of the Armed Forces and the MILF, and getting the voices of women, particularly mothers, out to the Philippine population.

Steven Rood of the Asia Foundation, Miriam Ferrer, notable journalist and peace advocate, and Father Jun Mercado, a Catholic priest who is an ally of both Christians and Muslims, have written on the role of CSOs in Muslim Mindanao, There seems to be general agreement that CSOs have been vital to the progress of the peace process. Secretary Ging Deles of the Office of the Presidential Adviser to the Peace Process (OPAPP) has also mentioned the key role of CSOs in the signing of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro. She had also written a paper, together with Presidential Assistant for Muslim Concerns Yasmin Lao, on horizontal peace building, women, and CSOs in Muslim Mindanao in which the authors argue that while CSOs have come a long way, there is a need to further strengthen advocacy groups in the region.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

How many public–private partnerships exist between the local governments and private-sector firms for delivering services or responding to community needs? Have these partnerships received high praise or have they been the subject of sharp criticism?

The Constitution and the Local Government Code have provisions on the concept of public-private partnerships (PPPs). In the ARMM, there exists a handful of public-private partnerships for delivery of services. Some examples are given below.

- *Public-private partnerships for Family Planning-Maternal and Child Health (FP-MCH) Private Sector Mobilization for Family Health Project – Phase 2 (PRISM2)* is part of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) continuing initiative to build enduring public-private partnerships that assure Filipinos the availability of and access to quality family planning and maternal and child health products and services. Specifically, PRISM2 provides support to the Department of Health, the Department of Labor and Employment, local government units (LGUs), and other national and local partners in their provision of technical assistance to the private sector to strengthen its role in the delivery of such products and services.
- *Lakbay Buhay Kalusugan (LBK)* is a public-private partnership for health promotion and basic health care services. It is made possible by a partnership among the Department of Health - National Center for Health Promotion, local government units, the USAID, and private partners.
- *The EQuALLS Project* has also forged public-private partnerships under USAID's Global Development Alliance model with a number of leading local and international entities.
- *The Alliance for Mindanao Off-Grid Renewable Energy (AMORE)* is a rural electrification project that uses renewable energy technologies. It is a joint undertaking of USAID with private sector partners, such as the Mirant Foundation, SunPower Foundation, the Philippine Department of Energy (DOE), and the government of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Since 2002, AMORE has helped over 100,000 people in 474 villages in Mindanao gain access to electricity using clean energy technologies. AMORE has also worked with private sector partners such as the

Coca-Cola Foundation, Intel Foundation, and Rotary Clubs to support water supply and education services in remote off-grid villages. More than 40,000 people have gained access to improved potable water supply systems and more than 18,000 students now benefit from distance education facilities powered by solar photovoltaic systems.

Public-private partnerships have also been organized at the provincial level. Some examples of these are listed below.

- *Basak, Lanao del Sur Public-Private Partnership Synergy Community Services.* Tamparan Medical Foundation Inc (TMFI) was funded by Islamic Development Bank (IDB). The facility is the first phase of the Comprehensive Integrated Community Health Development Plan "Lanao Center for Health and Wellness" (CICHD-CHW) formulated by TMFI.
- *Tawi-Tawi Micro-insurance for the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program.*
- *Liguasan Marsh Development Project through the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC).* The project involves extraction of natural gas in the marshland area largely occupied by Moro communities. The MILF has claimed the marsh as part of their ancestral domain and they control significant portions of it.
- *Power supply agreement (PSA) between the Basilan Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BASELCO) and Coastal Power Development Corporation the New Power Provider (NPP).* The PSP program in Sulu and Tawi-Tawi were deferred indefinitely due to certain contractual and management impediments.
- *Maguindanao Kabulnan 2 Power Project.* This power generation and supply project was to benefit the municipalities of Bagumbayan, Isulan and Esperanza in Sultan Kudarat Province (Region XII); and Datu Abdullah Sangki and Ampatuan in Maguindanao Province (ARMM).
- *Jolo Water Supply Project.*

Such partnerships seem to have gotten plaudits for their work in delivering services to the people. COMELEC Commissioner Sarmiento has said, "We have high praise for C-CARE (local counterpart of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV). They are active in helping the COMELEC in the registration [of voters].

INTERNATIONAL DONORS

Are international donors and international NGOs active in the region? How much have international donors contributed to programmes for development aid and/or humanitarian assistance? How many international NGOs are active in the region?

Because it has been an area of conflict and has suffered from stubborn poverty for decades, Mindanao has drawn (and continues to draw) the attention of international donors and NGOs, which have been quite active in ARMM. Donors have poured considerable amounts of official development assistance into the area.

For example, in 2004 the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) commenced the Local Governance Support Program for ARMM to assist the Government of the Philippines and the Autonomous Regional Government (ARG) in achieving poverty reduction and sustainable peace and development through excellence in local governance, including local government leadership and management, effective service delivery, resources generation and management, and participatory governance and peace building. The project aimed to strengthen the enabling regional environment for good governance, peace, and development.

To build capacity in local governance as a key to poverty reduction and peace, LGSPA engaged all 118 municipalities and the two cities in ARMM, all six provincial governments, the ARMM Regional Government, the LGU Leagues, civil society organizations, peace networks, academe, media groups, and Muslim religious leaders. Networks and cooperation among municipalities, regional and national government agencies, LGUs, NGOs, donors, and the private sector were strengthened to develop sound local government leadership and management, and improve service delivery, economic development and environmental management, resource generation and management, participatory governance, and peace building.

The project mainstreamed four cross-cutting themes: gender equality, environmental sustainability, poverty alleviation, and cultural integrity. It also worked with the demand side of governance by developing capacity in civil society and the private sector to participate in governance and strengthen the LGUs' ability to deliver services in sectors such as agriculture, education, economic development, natural resource management, water supply and sanitation, and solid waste management. (Agriteam Canada Consulting Ltd. 2012).

The following is a list of major projects by international donors for the ARMM:

The World Bank

- ARMM Social Fund Project (World Bank Component)
- ARMM Social Fund Project Additional Financing
- Mindanao Rural Development Program Adaptable Program Loan 1 (MRDP-APL)
- Mindanao Rural Development Project MRDP II -APL 2 (2007-2011)
- Mindanao Trust Fund-Reconstruction and Development

Japanese Government

- ARMM Social Fund Project (JICA Funding)
- Malitubog-Maridagao (MALMAR) Irrigation Project
- ARMM Human Capacity Development Project (AHCDP)
- Forestry Sector Project Loan II (ADB-JBIC)
- Central Mindanao Road Project (Awang-Upi-Lebak Section)
- Other JICA-Assisted Projects
- Study on Local Industry Promotion (LIP) in ARMM
- PhilRice Program (JICA funded)
- Germplasm Plant Nursery, 2005-2007

Canadian Government

- Local Governance Support Program in ARMM (LGSPA), 2005-2010

United Nations

- Local Governance Support Program in ARMM (LGSPA), 2005-2010
- Strengthening Response to Internal Displacement in Mindanao (StRIDe-Mindanao), 2009-2010
- Country Program for Children (CPC) by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- Reproductive Health and Advocacy by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)World Food Programme (WFP)

United States Agency for International Development

- Mindanao Peace and Development (MPAD) Program
- Growth with Equity in Mindanao
- Transparency & Accountable Governance (TAG) Project
- Credit Union Empowerment and Strengthening (CUES) Program
- United States Provident Loan (USPL)

Asian Development Bank

- Agrarian Reform Communities Projects-ADB (ARCP 1), 2002-2007
- Agrarian Reform Communities Project (ARCP II)
- Infrastructure for Rural Productivity Enhancement Sector (InFRES, ADB funded, 2005-2007
- Mindanao Basic Urban Services Sector Project (MBUSSP)

Australian Government

- Basic Education Assistance in Mindanao (BEAM)

European Union

- Support for Displaced Persons by European Commission (EC), 2008
- Support to Agrarian Reform Communities in Central Mindanao (STARCM), European Union, 2004-2008
- Belgian Integrated Agrarian Reform Support Program (Belgium), 2002-2007
- Western Mindanao Community Initiatives Project (Italian Government), 2005-2007
- Solar Power Technology Support (SPOTS), Spain, 2008-2009
- Tulay ng Pangulo sa SZOPAD/ UK, Completed

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

- Mindanao Roads Improvement Project Phase I, Saudi Fund
- Mindanao Second Road Improvement Project by Kuwaiti Fund for Arab and Economic Development (KFAED)

In terms of Official Development Assistance (ODA) for 2011, table 4.15 below shows that next to the National Capital Region at 3.17 percent, the highest percentage of ODA grants to a single region went to the

ARMM (2.82 percent). By island region, Luzon got the biggest bulk of ODA grants (5.41 percent) compared to Visayas (0.81 percent) and Mindanao (3.58 percent).

Table 4.15 Distribution of ODA grants by region (2011)

Region	Number of Grants	Grant Amount (US$M)	Percentage Share
Luzon	86	113.06	5.41
II	5	11.19	0.54
III	4	10.76	0.52
IV-A	4	5.61	0.27
IV-B	2	12.77	0.61
V	12	5.45	0.26
CAR	1	0.95	0.005
NCR	58	66.33	3.17
Visayas	9	16.98	0.81
VII	5	4.59	0.22
VIII	4	12.39	0.59
Mindanao	34	74.78	3.58
X	9	7.69	0.37
XII	4	0.68	0.03
XIII	5	7.48	0.36
ARMM	16	58.93	2.82
Multi-regional	265	1,278.18	61.19
Nationwide	90	606.04	29.01
TOTAL	484	2,089.04	100.00

Reproduced from: National Economic and Development Authority 2012, table 3.8, pp. 20-21.

This aspect of the democratic process (i.e., share of official development assistance) gives a seemingly good indication that the ARMM is getting a larger share of the development pie compared with what it used to get in 2009 with just 0.63 percent of total ODA, as shown in table 4.16 below. This liberal pouring of aid into the ARMM has fostered the view that international donors were being less than truly altruistic. An FGD participant in Maguindanao said that there was a perception that local NGOs were being "dictated to by international NGOs."

Table 4.16 Distribution of ODA loans (2009)

Coverage Area	Number	Amount (US$ M)	% Share to Total
CAR	2	36.6	0.38
I	4	266.2	2.76
III	8	1,150.5	11.94
IV	2	26.3	0.27

(Table 4.16 continuation)

IV – A	1	93.0	0.97
NCR	9	1,355.1	14.06
V	1	25.0	0.26
Luzon-Wide	3	75.2	0.78
VI	3	122.2	1.27
VII	1	65.5	0.68
VIII	1	56.8	0.59
Visayas-Wide	1	72.2	0.75
X	1	92.2	0.96
XI	1	25.0	0.26
XII	1	47.2	0.49
ARMM	**2**	**60.5**	**0.63**
Mindanao-Wide	6	241.8	2.51
Multi-Regional	20	878.4	9.11
Nationwide	28	3,022.6	31.36
Project Total	95	7,712.2	80.03
Program Loans	11	1,925.0	19.97
GRAND TOTAL	106	9,637.2	100.00

Source: NEDA 18th ODA Portfolio Review (2009).

In 2009, the total amount of ODA granted to the ARMM was larger compared to what it received in 2011, although in terms of share of total ODA, ARMM had a higher percentage, as already mentioned above. Within Mindanao, the ARMM received the second largest allocation of ODA in 2009 (table 4.17). Also, before that year, there was an influx of grants from international organizations and donors.

Table 4.17 Distribution of ODA within Mindanao (2009)

Coverage Area	Amount (US$ M)	% Share to Mindanao
Region X	92.2	19.8
Region XI	24.99	5.4
Region XII	47.18	10.1
ARMM	60.52	13.0
Mindanao-Wide	241.81	51.8
Mindanao Total	466.7	100.0

Source: NEDA 18th ODA Portfolio Review (2009).

As regards ODA availment, the Mindanao Development Authority's Mindanao 2020 report stated that the region's weaknesses in handling development projects point mostly to a lack of capacity for planning and identification of projects and the inability to correct delays in project

implementation—in sum, a generally low absorptive capacity for handling ODA grants in general. The report said,

> ODA availment and utilization by LGUs face a number of issues. As in many cases, lack of capability in various aspects of project development and implementation tops it all. For ODA availment, commonplace are: (a) weakness in planning and identification of programs and projects, (b) weakness in project proposal development, and (c) inability to put up required counterpart funds. For implementation, issues are usually project specific but the most common are lack of capabilities to address implementation bottlenecks and delays, cost overruns, right-of-way problems and coordination problems. All these may be summed up to low absorptive capacity, which has been the reason cited for the lower than desired ODA level for Mindanao (Mindanao 2012, 175).

Are there formal or regular processes or forums in which the international community is involved in policy formulation and decision making in the region?

The Philippines Development Forum, or PDF, is the primary mechanism of the government for facilitating substantive policy dialogue among stakeholders on the country's development agenda. It also serves as a process for developing consensus and generating commitments among different stakeholders toward critical actionable items of the government's reform agenda.

Meanwhile, as an offshoot of the visit of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to Washington in 2001 and upon her request for continued World Bank assistance to the Government of the Philippines' peace and development efforts in Mindanao, the World Bank initiated discussions on the setting up of a Mindanao Working Group (MWG) as a mechanism under the PDF that aims to facilitate the coordination of all foreign-assisted development efforts in Mindanao.

In assisting the PDF or the Consultative Group, the MWG works towards attaining peace and development in Mindanao by

- providing a forum to discuss coordination and areas for collaboration in foreign-assisted development efforts in Mindanao;
- providing a venue for the national government to update the Donors Group on the peace process and ODA-related concerns;

- providing a forum for the Donors Group to share security concerns as these relate to their programs, projects and activities in, as well as updates on interventions for, Mindanao.

The MWG is a mechanism or sub-group under the Consultative Group that facilitates information exchange between the national government and the Donor's Group. It has not been designed to act as an implementing body or have power over any development bodies existing in the area.

The MWG Secretariat is supported by a joint secretariat of the Mindanao Development Authority and the World Bank. For MWG-related regional concerns, the secretariat collaborates with the Regional Development Councils and the Regional Economic Development Planning Board-ARMM through the NEDA Regional Offices and the Regional Planning and Development Office-ARMM (Mindanao Development Authority 2012.).

Thus, beyond the State there has been support for development programs in the ARMM. It is up to local officials to use the funds and other resources made available to the region wisely and in a more accountable and responsive manner.

THE MEDIA

What sources of news do people turn to for information on local affairs? Are these sources privately owned, community-owned or owned by government? Are there local news media in ARMM, either regionally or locally? How independent are these sources of government or local political interests? How unbiased are local media organizations?

In general, the majority of the survey respondents believed that various news and information media were present in the ARMM, but were weak and very few, forcing the people to rely on other means of information dissemination in the region. For Basilan, according to the key informants, there were local news media in the ARMM. Most got their news from radio, TV, and newspapers. However, they believed that some news did not make it on air since some of the local media were state-owned.

The key informants from Sulu agreed about the presence of local news media in the ARMM, both private and government-owned. They were divided on whether such media sources were independent of government or local political interest. One informant said that financiers of these media

usually called the shots, while others said local media was only partially biased. One key informant believed that local media was unbiased.

The Lanao KIs said that the scant media in their area presented a problem. There was no local print media, for example. However, they identified two local radio stations, which they called *Saksi* and *Pilandok*. They said that media could play a role in reform if they started to tell people about the activities and projects of the government. In order to supplement these media sources, people in Lanao de Sur used two-way radios to spread the news.

Table 4.18 below shows that there are probably more media outlets, at least for radio, than people seem to be aware of. This low awareness further complicates the problem of information access for the people of the ARMM.

Table 4.18 AM and FM radio stations in the ARMM by province (2011)

Province	*Name of Radio Station*	*Owner/Operator*	*Type*	*Remarks*
Basilan	DXOS-AM	Public Affairs Service, Armed Forces of the Philippines	AM	Inactive
Lanao del Sur	DXSO-AM	Philippine Broadcasting Service (PBS) "Radyo ng Bayan"	AM	
	DXAD-AM	Muslim Mindanao Development Multipurpose Cooperative "Radio Ranao"	AM	
	DXFM-AM	Ranao Radio Broadcasting and TV System Corporation	AM	
	DXSK-FM	Ranao Radio Broadcasting and TV System Corporation	FM	
	DXEM-FM	Pacific Broadcasting System / Manila Broadcasting System (MBC) / "Radyo Natin"	FM	
Maguindanao	DXCH-AM (DZRH)	Pacific Broadcasting System - Affiliate of MBC	AM	Cotabato City;
	DXMY-AM	Radio Mindanao Network (RMN)	AM	Cotabato City
	DXMS-AM	Notre Dame Broadcasting Corporation	AM	Cotabato City
	DXRO-AM	Nation Broadcasting Corporation (SonShine Radio)	AM	Cotabato City
	DXBM-AM	Republic Broadcasting System (Super Radyo)	AM	Cotabato City
	DXCM-AM	University of Mindanao (Radyo Ukay)	AM	Cotabato City
	DXYC-FM	Baycomms Broadcasting Corporation	FM	Cotabato City

(Table 4.18 continuation)

	DXCC-FM	Radio Mindanao Network (RMN)	FM	Cotabato City
	DXFD-FM	Consolidated Broadcasting System (Star FM)	FM	Cotabato City
	DXPS-FM	ABS-CBN	FM	Cotabato City
	DXOK-FM	Nation Broadcasting Corporation Philippine Broadcasting Corporation (PBC)	FM	Cotabato City
	DXUP-FM	(Upi for Peace)	FM	Barangay Nuro, Upi
	DXOL-FM	Notre Dame Broadcasting Corporation	FM	Cotabato City
Sulu	DXTC-FM	MBC	FM	Cotabato City
	DXSM-AM	Philippine Broadcasting Service (PBS) (Radyo ng Bayan)	AM	
	DXRT-AM	Nation Broadcasting Corporation (Angel Radyo)	AM	
	DXMM-AM	Sulu Tawi-Tawi Broadcasting Foundation (Catholic Media Network) (Radyo Totoo)	AM	
Tawi-tawi	DXPO-FM	MBC (The Beat)	FM	
	DXGD-AM	Sulu Tawi-Tawi Broadcasting Foundation	AM	
	DXPT-AM	PBS (Radyo ng Bayan)	AM	

Source: Davies, Alan G. 2011. Radio stations in the Philippines. In *Asiawaves: Radio and TV broadcasting in South and South-East Asia.* Accessed at http://www.asiawaves.net.

Has government tried to interfere in local news media (within last 3 years?)? What forms of interference, if any, occurred and how did it affect the media's ability to report the news accurately?

For Basilan, several key informants said that there have been instances of interference from local officials though no one cited an example. A key informant divulged that local officials "are utilizing it for personal use in preparation for the upcoming election." No other information was available on this issue for the rest of the region.

Are the editors of the sources of local news editorially independent of government authorities?

The Mindanao News and Information Cooperative Center (MNICC) is a cooperative composed of independent, professional journalists who believe and practice people empowerment through media. The group also

believes that in Mindanao it is not all bad news and that the responsibility of journalists and information providers is to ensure a mixed balance of reports beyond the usual fare published in national newspapers or aired on radio and TV. Other media groups that are independent of government authorities are the Broadcasters' Association of the Philippines and the Council on Media Freedom and Responsibility. In general, news media, unless owned by government, are generally independent of the authorities.

Do the local news media have ombudsman or other procedures for investigating and responding to allegations of inaccurate or irresponsible reporting?

In some cases, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) conducts an in-depth investigation over irresponsible reporting by a local radio program, but there are no reported incidents in the ARMM. Broadcast media owners and operators (radio and television) are organized into an association called the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP). It is the agency that self-regulates the industry "for responsible broadcasting" through the enforcement of a code of conduct, according to its website (http://www.kbp.org.ph/about-kbp). Self-regulation of the media is in lieu of a formal ombudsman for overseeing the industry's conduct in reporting the news.

In the last three years, how many significant allegations of government interference in the reporting of local news have occurred?

There are no reported incidents of this sort in the ARMM. Having said that, the Philippines is regarded as one of the most dangerous places in the world for journalists, according to the U.S.-based NGO Freedom House (2012). Threats to journalists come not from the government itself but from politicians and corrupt officials afraid or enraged by news disclosure of criminal behavior in government. The worst case of killing of media people was the Maguindanao massacre of 2009 in which about 34 journalists died. What is worse is that many of these murders remain unsolved. For this reason, the Committee to Protect Journalists ranks the country third in its index of impunity, behind only Iraq and Somalia (Committee to Protect Journalists 2013).

On the other hand, the Freedom House report (2012) identified two official issuances, Executive Order No. 608 and the Human Security Act (Republic Act No. 9372), both issued in 2007 during the term of Mrs. Arroyo, as possible tools for curtailing press freedom. Executive Order No. 608 installs additional barriers to information access, particularly

information that is deemed to be classified or damaging to the government. The Human Security Act allows the wiretapping of journalists on the mere suspicion of involvement in terrorist activities.

In the last three years, how many times have the news media been criticized by government or the community for seriously inaccurate or irresponsible reporting?

There are no reported incidents in the ARMM.

Processes

4.3 Forms and Methods of Citizen Outreach

Summary of Findings from a Quick Survey on Citizen Outreach from FGDs and KIIs[1]

A quick survey on the forms of citizen outreach experienced by respondents using the matrix provided in the Local Democracy Assessment Guide was conducted among the FGD participants. The following paragraphs summarize the results, qualified by the outcomes noted in the footnote below.

In general, the majority of the respondents in ARMM indicated that in the last twelve months there was hardly any citizen outreach used for public information. For those who said that they were aware of public information being used by local officials for citizen outreach (in Lanao del Sur and Basilan), the more common forms were printed materials, such as leaflets and newsletters. Although the region has a website, and all the provinces, except Tawi-Tawi, have their own websites, the respondents felt that these were hardly used as a way to convey important information to citizens.

Computer-based information was also hardly pointed out as a form of citizen outreach for public information, as well as scheduled local programs in the area, which were hardly used by the respondents to access public information. The government should focus more on developing local-based programs to reach out to the citizens and develop literacies and skills for Web-based public information.

In general, close to half of the respondents in Basilan and Tawi-Tawi revealed that public consultations and public decision making activities were used for citizen outreach from one to three times in 2011. For Lanao del Sur,

[1] There are no data for Maguindanao and only provincial results were collected for Sulu. The analysis covers only the data on citizen outreach for Lanao del Sur, Basilan, and Tawi-Tawi collected from FGDs and KIIs last October to November 2011 and therefore indicative only of responses from those respondents.

also close to half of the respondents said public consultations and public decision making activities were used as citizen outreach more than three times in the past twelve months.

Although the participation by citizens in public consultations and decision making activities was a good indication of efforts to reach out to citizens, it cannot be determined fully whether local leaders actually held public consultations and decision making activities more than three times the past year. Nevertheless, the number of citizens (around half of the respondents) who said these public activities were indeed organized and information about them conveyed to the public was only average, and not a majority.

The respondents from Tawi-Tawi were more at a disadvantage as more than one-third said they were not aware that public consultations and public decision making activities were used as forms of citizen outreach. The majority of respondents were not aware of any citizen outreach activities for public information.

It is important to note the relatively large number of respondents in the ARMM who said that public-private partnerships as a form of citizen outreach were not used. This form of outreach to citizens should be explored more.

4.4 Evaluating Citizen Outreach

EVALUATING GOVERNMENT OUTREACH

Are evaluation and assessment methods built into the design of community outreach processes conducted by local officials? Is there a process for using the evaluation findings when introducing policy or other changes to improve local governance? Which forms and methods of community outreach have been evaluated as being either especially effective or as being less effective?

There are existing government systems, such as the Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS), Local Governance Performance Management System (LGPMS), Regional Planning Monitoring and Evaluation System (RPMES), and System on Competency Assessment for Local Governments, that are designed to assess or evaluate local officials' performance, but not specifically on community outreach. The RPMES was established through Executive Order No. 376, dated 2 November 1989 and amended by Executive Order No. 93 dated 1 June 1993. It is a system that facilitates project implementation, devolves project facilitation to the various levels of governance, conducts problem-solving sessions, and proceeds with monitoring and evaluation through the creation of different levels of project monitoring committees (PMCs) as required by Memorandum Order No. 175 issued on 25 May 1988. The Project Monitoring Committee (PMC) at the provincial, city,

and municipal levels are tasked to monitor government projects funded from foreign and national funds, including development projects funded from the IRA and projects funded from locally-generated resources.

To be clear, these evaluation systems are for programs and projects. No evaluation and assessment methods seem to be built into the design of community outreach processes. As such, it is impossible to provide appropriate responses to the other questions.

Evaluating CSO Outreach

Are evaluation and assessment methods built into the design of community outreach processes conducted by NGOs and CBOs? What are the rates of participation in community outreach processes? What are the principal barriers to citizen participation (for example, literacy, apathy, access, time, or culture)?

Such a mechanism is not uniformly designed into the outreach process of NGOs and CBOs, apparently due to cost considerations. Since NGOs and CBOs implement outreach activities funded by grant-making agencies, it is often up to the funder to ask its partner CSO to build such evaluation and assessment methods into its process and provide the necessary funds to accomplish it. The lack of such evaluation and assessment methods in the work of NGOs and CBOs in the ARMM make it impossible to say what the principal barriers to citizen participation are that such methods are supposed to uncover or otherwise help determine.

Local Government Planning and Visioning

Does the region and its LGUs have a statement that describes their longer-term vision, goals, and aspirations? Have the region and its LGUs conducted a community 'visioning' process by which alternative futures for province/municipality/barangay are systematically designed and considered through a process of community consultation? Does the region and its LGUs have a charter or policy document that establishes a strategic plan for realizing long-term goals and aspirations through community outreach and engagement?

The Local Government Code seeks to enable each local government to manage its local development. This is to be done with the aid of two planning instruments, a comprehensive land use plan (CLUP) and a comprehensive development plan (CDP) that every LGU (province, city and municipality) must put together, usually at the beginning of the term of elected local officials. The CLUP is implemented through the issuance of land zoning ordinances; the CDP is put into action by way of three components: a local investment plan, a

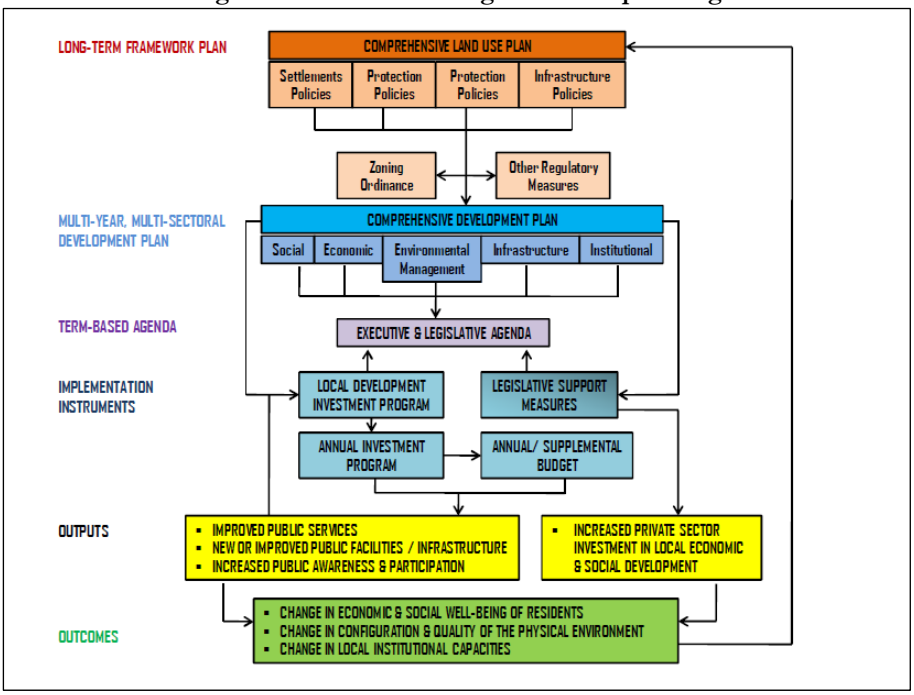
legislative agenda, and an executive and legislative agenda. Such plans are supposed to be regularly reviewed and updated, particularly when a new administration in Manila takes over with its own development agenda. The latest request from the DILG for LGUs to update their plans was in 2010 at the start of the term of the current president.

As the DILG guide to making the plan says, "The making of the CLUP is assigned to the Sanggunian as provided for in Sections 447, 458, and 468 (Powers, Duties, Functions and Compensation of the Sangguniang Bayan, Panlungsod and Panlalawigan, respectively) of the Local Government Code. The CDP, however, is the responsibility of the Local Development Council as provided for under Sections 106 (Local Development Councils) and 109 (Functions of Local Development Councils) of the Code. The Code has correctly assigned responsibility for the CLUP to the Sanggunian considering that most if not all of the instruments for implementing the CLUP involve regulating the use of lands that are mainly privately held, and this requires the exercise of the political powers of the LGU through legislative action by the Sanggunian" (Department of the Interior and Local Government 2008, 1-2). The plans are aimed at guiding or influencing public and private investments, which in turn have the effect of providing jobs, goods, and services to the LGUs' constituents, thereby positively affecting their level of welfare.

The Executive and Legislative Agenda (ELA) is a planning document covering a three-year period corresponding to the term of local elective officials that is mutually developed and agreed upon by both the executive and legislative departments of an LGU. The ELA serves to move the CLUP and the CDP forward to implementation and monitoring. Implementations of plans are supposed to bring changes to the community, and these changes are monitored as to their impacts. These then serve as inputs to the next cycle of community planning. The process is summarized by the chart below reproduced from the DILG (figure 4.01).

Part of the preparation of the plans is a visioning process that the different levels of local governments are supposed to undergo. The vision states what the local people and their officials desire their community to be, what is commonly referred to as a shared vision or image of the community (Department of the Interior and Local Government 2008, 37). The process is supposed to be highly participative, While the DILG does not prescribe a specific process for creating this vision, it does note that "household surveys, barangay consultations, seminar-workshops, and interviews" may be conducted and involving as many of the different stakeholders in the community as possible (Department of the Interior and Local Government 2008, 38).

Figure 4.01 Chart of local government planning



Reproduced from: Department of the Interior and Local Government 2008.

The CLUP and the CDP are not posted on LGU websites so it is difficult to know how many of the ARMM LGUs have actually undergone the exercise of creating such plans. However, Vice President Jejomar Binay, in 2012, was reported to have said that the majority of the LGUs in the ARMM had not submitted their plans (Mindanao Times 2012). The ARMM regional government does not have an equivalent CLUP and CDP for the region as a whole, even though it seems it should. Instead there is a document called the Peace and Development Framework Plan for Mindanao 2011-2030 (referred to as Mindanao 2020), that the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) led in creating. The document is supposed to provide a roadmap for local governments, including the ARMM regional government, in planning and strategizing their local development programs. The process of creating the document was also supposedly a "highly participatory process, consisting of countless forums, workshops, focus group discussions, interviews, [and] surveys" (Mindanao Development Authority 2020, 1). None of the participants in this assessment mentioned having taken part in this process.

4.5 Referenda and Citizen's Initiatives

Are referenda or direct ballot initiatives used to resolve difficult policy issues in the province/municipality/barangay? What are the procedures for drafting, presenting and finalizing referendum questions? Are referendum questions decided during normal elections or are special elections held? What is the decision rule for the approval or rejection of a referendum question (e.g., 50 per cent, 66 per cent, or higher)?

According to former COMELEC Commissioner Sarmiento there has been no recent direct ballot initiative in the ARMM. He did recount a petition for a mayor recall in Maguindanao related to the Ampatuan case. Aside from the referenda that created the ARMM and determined its composition (in 1977, 1989 and 2001), there has not been any more held to resolve issues in the region. In fact, the use of referenda and direct ballot initiatives is not common in the country at all.

There seems to be set procedures for drafting, presenting and finalizing referendum questions. Usually, it is the responsibility of the COMELEC to provide the referendum questions. Referendum questions are decided on special elections held for such a purpose. It seems a simple majority is sufficient to decide on a referendum question.

None of the referenda conducted in the ARMM had been initiated by citizens. Instead they were all organized by the national government and mainly to resolve the issue of which provinces would like to join the ARMM. No other referendum has been initiated in the ARMM or any other part of the country to settle any other dispute or controversy regarding government policy. This is certainly one avenue for influencing policy direction or government action that citizens have not turned to, and maybe it is this lack of experience that is keeping people from pursuing this form of direct action.

Summary and Conclusions

Respondents of this study tended to attribute what seems to be minimal participation in the ARMM to several factors. One of them, according to key informant Commissioner Rene Sarmiento, they may be due to a combination of several cultural weaknesses that exists among the people of the ARMM. He illustrated this with the "what the datu says" principle: "*Kung ano sinabi ng datu nandun po* (Whatever the datu says goes)." This can be taken to mean that command votes exist. Because of this, some people may feel that other forms of participation (other than voting) are futile.

The other factor affecting citizen participation is poverty. Because of poverty, people in the ARMM feel helpless when dictated upon and imposed on by private armed groups. The ARMM is recognized as one of the country's election hotspots. The presence of private armed groups in the region is notable. The ARMM is infamous for its dynasty politics and the private armed groups that such politics engender. In terms of number, there are more private armed groups in the ARMM, particularly in Maguindanao province, than anywhere else in the country.

The third barrier cited by the respondents is the lack of education. Illiteracy contributes a lot because it has made people dependent on politicians. There is also the practice of rido. Because some people are afraid of vengeance, they are afraid to go out even during elections, and this affects voters' participation.

The results of the KIIs and FGDs in the ARMM also reveal that citizen participation in government processes is affected by local officials' seemingly lack of political will; inconsistency between words and actions of public servants; morally irresponsible attitudes; fear of militarization; and lack of governance skills to carry out the legal mandate of encouraging and instilling citizen participation in government processes. On the part of citizens, it was pointed out that they seemed to lack awareness of their basic right to be involved in government decision making (as mandated by Philippine laws), do not trust their local leaders, are fearful, have limited capacities to assert their rights to participate in government decision making processes, or simply have feelings of hopelessness.

Sulu respondents pointed to the frequent absence of their leaders as a factor for lack of citizen participation. In Tawi-Tawi, it was the same: the frequent absences of the local officials raised doubts about their regard for the people. One participant stressed that they could not consult or raise complaints with their local officials because they were always in Manila, Davao, or Zamboanga City. The informant said, "How can anyone of us do consultation with them when they are always unavailable? Our mayor and other elected officials are sometimes in Davao or Zamboanga, even our councilors are in Bongao, or other provinces. Seldom do we find them doing their work in the office." One respondent in the Province of Tawi-Tawi noted, "Tandubas municipality is not serious with its obligations to the people. The LGU officials are in Bongao or elsewhere. But they seem to be functional especially on cases of marriage or elopement. Perhaps this may be due to the somewhat frequent incidence of elopement."

One informant pointed out a lack of awareness of basic rights on the part of citizens as a reason for lack of citizen participation. In Tawi-Tawi, one key informant asked, "How can people participate if they do not even

know their basic rights? Unless you have educated people who know their basic rights and know that they should participate, of course they will not do that. If you also erase the fear, that fear of their life, then you can be empowered to participate." In particular, a key informant in Tawi-Tawi said that local officials chose who to invite, so ordinary citizens were not encouraged to attend such gatherings. Those who said no consultations occurred in Tawi-Tawi believed that even if they tried to attend such staged gatherings, they would not be entertained.

The lack of participation and involvement by some people may be due to fear and militarization. In Sulu, a respondent said, "We don't understand why at every meeting, military men are always present … For the sake of being said that we participated, we participate during candid discussions, but we do not expect that our suggestion will be considered…It's farcical!"

The lack of venues for ordinary citizens to participate is unfortunate as some of the people said they were willing to participate. Some of the respondents expressed this eagerness, wanting to be more proactive, and were therefore ready to participate in local governance. However, in Tawi-Tawi, the respondents suggested that for them to be heard, "We should first be trained and equipped to know the process of lodging a complaint, for instance against an official. We do not even know where to go and file a complaint."

Some of the respondents seemed to have lost their enthusiasm in actively approaching their local officials. One participant from Tawi-Tawi further shared his perception on why some barangay chairpersons shied away from serving and consulting their constituents. He said that there was the misconception that people were always asking for financial assistance. "We don't approach them anymore because it is embarrassing for them to think of us in that manner—that we always ask for money."

Still, there is a feeling of helplessness among the people. One respondent from Maguindanao pointed out that when people file a complaint, no action is taken. Another participant from Tawi-Tawi preferred the old mechanism of eliciting participation. "Prior to ARMM I can say that we have better participation as we have traditional leaders who can represent us. At present we just remain silent. Look at the case of CCT (conditional cash transfer) anomalies, for example. We reported it through the national hotline number, but we did not get any solution."

A respondent from media related, "What happens is that it is failure of the government to install a program or activities where the people can participate in the decision making process of the government." Similarly, another respondent pointed out that aside from frequent absences on the

part of local officials, other impediments to citizen participation were the seemingly non-functioning local special bodies as well as the working committees; these would have helped elicit citizen involvement in government processes.

In Sulu, for example, the respondents revealed that the local school boards, which had been created during the past 30 years or so, have been mostly inactive. However, respondents from the provincial government said that invitations were sent to people to attend local assemblies, but only the heads of organizations came. In Basilan, the same dysfunctional mechanisms existed. As one respondent stated, "In our place, we have created several committees, but up to now there has been no session conducted after the oath taking of the leaders."

In addition, another weakness noted in making citizens participate in consultations is that not every sector of the community is invited to such consultations; the process of inviting participants to consultations can be selective. In Maguindanao, there were participants who said that participation is not equal and not open to everyone. They said "those who are powerful dominate the discussions and those who are known to contradict are no longer invited." A respondent in Tawi-Tawi said, "Suggestions from the people are not given emphasis as a requirement to be included in the decision making of the mayor; only a selected number of individuals are invited by the mayor for consultation; no direct access to mayor, only to the assistants." A respondent from the academe said they were rarely invited to consultations, making citizens indifferent to such activities.

One KI from Tawi-Tawi blamed the central government for controlling the local people, and that "the voice of Muslims is not recognized." Illiteracy, lack of personal benefits, fear, distance from the center, and the habit of leaving decision making to the higher-ups were cited as reasons that hinder greater participation in such processes. A respondent from Maguindanao said, "People do not participate because they are illiterate. People from different organizations who go to remote areas speak in English and the local people do not understand them and just let their datu speak and decide on their behalf. Due to illiteracy, inferiority complex is developed."

Citizen participation in the case of the ARMM is weak, as can be deduced from the results of the study. Meaningful participation is hardly felt by most of the respondents. This points to the need for institutional reform of local governments in the region. It is important to note that one of the ingredients for the success of citizen participation is an organized process, according to Creighton (2005), and based on the experiences of public participation advocates. On the other hand, the stong democracy

notion of Barber (1984) means that public participation is not something that happens accidentally or coincidentally; public participation has to be planned and executed. In the case of the ARMM, the local government has to exert more effort in the practice of citizen participation. Laws and policies already provide the legal framework, but operationalizing such laws and informing people about such laws and what the local government is doing is a primary concern. Local officials should also strive to educate the local people on their basic rights.

CONCLUSION

The future of democracy lies in strong participation; literally, it is self-government by citizens rather than representative government in the name of citizens. Active citizens govern themselves directly, not necessarily at every level and in every instance, but frequently enough and in particular when basic policies are being decided and when significant power is being deployed. Self-government is carried on through institutions designed to facilitate ongoing civic participation in agenda setting, deliberation, legislation, and policy implementation (in the form of common work).

This assessment on participatory democracy in the ARMM serves to underline the following points regarding democratic values:

- Administrative and public sector reform involves thinking about values, norms, and principles.
- More often, democracy is beyond the statement of vision, values. and norms.
- In the long run, the emphasis on the pursuit of democracy may change from time to time and from country to country.
- However, in the long run, administrative reform seems to be founded in a rather stable set of administrative values.

References

Agriteam Canada Consulting Ltd. 2012. Philippines, Local Governance Support Program in Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (LGSPA), September 2004–March 2010. http://www.agriteam.ca/projects/profile/local-governance-support-program-in-autonomous-region-in-muslim-mindanao/.

Barber, Benjamin. 1984. *Strong democracy: Participatory politics for a new age*. Berkeley and Los Angeles; London: University of California Press.

Boncodin, Emilia T., Teresita Quintos-Deles, Suharto Ambolodto, Miraflor Villanueva, and Rosalie Romero. 2007. Towards strengthening the fiscal capabilities of ARMM. International Center for Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov), Pasig City.

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation. 2011. *State of civil society*. Johannesburg, South Africa: CIVICUS.

Committee to Protect Journalists. 2013. Getting away with murder. 2 May. http://cpj.org/reports/2013/05/impunity-index-getting-away-with-murder.php#more.

Cooperative Development Authority. 2012. Selected statistics 2011. http://www.cda.gov.ph/index.php/en/stat2 (accessed 22 November 2012).

Creighton, James L. 2005. *The public participation handbook: Making better decisions through citizen involvement*. San Francisco, California: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Danguilan-Vitug, Maritess. 1996. Misuari faces big headaches in ARMM. http://pcij.org/stories/print/armm.html.

Davies, Alan G. 2011. *Radio stations in the Philippines. In Asiawaves: Radio and TV broadcasting in South and South-East Asia*. Accessed at http://www.asiawaves.net.

Department of the Interior and Local Government. 2008. Guide to comprehensive development plan (CDP) preparation for local government units. Memorandum Circular No. 2008-156, 22 October 2008. http://www.dilg.gov.ph/PDF_File/reports/DILG-Reports-2011712-1939d5d3d3.pdf.

Freedom House. 2012. Freedom in the world 2012 – Philippines. 24 July. http://www.refworld.org/docid/500fda3328.html (accessed 26 May 2013).

Holtz, Uwe, 2008. Representative and participatory democracy. Position paper of the German Association of former MPs to the Colloquy of the European Association of former MPs, Athens, 18 October 2008. http://www.vemdb.de/files/rd_pd.pdf.

Jose, Jerry. 2011. ARMM cohort: Responding to ARMM health challenges. *Zuellig Family Foundation Updates,* January.

Lavado, Rouselle F., Abigail Barbara Sanglay-Dunleavy, Jeanette Jimenez, and Yasuhiko Matsuda. 2010. How are government hospitals performing? A study of resource management in DOH-retained hospitals. *PIDS Discussion Paper Series* No. 2010-02, January. http://www.eaber.org/sites/default/files/documents/PIDS_Lavado_2010.pdf.

Local Government Regional Resource Center. 2013. Full disclosure policy. http://www.lgrrc6.org.ph/index.php?option=com_content &view=article&id=147:full-disclosure&catid=35:programs&Itemid=2.

Lowry, Cameron. 2008. Civil society engagement in Asia: Six country profiles. Asia-Pacific Governance and Democracy Initiative, East-West Center, Honolulu, 14-16 July. http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/resources/research/PDFs/Combined_country_reviews.pdf.

Mindanao Development Authority. 2012. *Mindanao 2020: Peace and development framework plan (2011-2030)*. Davao City: Mindanao Development Authority. http://www.minda.gov.ph/site/About-MinDA/downloads/Mindanao-2020.

Mindanao Times. 2012. VP Binay checks on land use plan of ARMM; memorandum of understanding signed by gov't agencies, LGUs. 8 August. http://www.mindanaotimes.net/vp-binay-checks-on-land-use-plan-of-armm-memorandum-of-understanding-signed-by-govt-agencies-lgus/.

National Economic and Development Authority. 2012. *CY 2011 ODA portfolio review report.* Pasig City: National Economic and Development Authority.

National Statistics Office [Philippines] and ICF Macro. 2009. *Philippines national demographic and health survey 2008: Key findings.* Calverton, Maryland, USA: NSO and ICF Macro. http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/FR224/FR224.pdf.

Pimbert, M. and Wakeford, T. 2001.Overview: Deliberative democracy and citizen empowerment. *PLA Notes* 40, 23-28. http://pubs.iied.org/6345IIED.html?s=PLA&b=d.

Rood, Steven. 2005. *Forging sustainable peace in Mindanao: The role of civil society*. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington. http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/bitstream/handle/10125/3491/PS017.pdf?sequence=1.

Social Weather Stations. 2011. *The 2011 Survey on Good Local Governance.* Quezon City: Social Weather Stations. http://www.sws.org.ph/.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank. 2005. *Joint needs assessment for reconstruction and development of conflict-affected areas in Mindanao.* Vol. 2, December. Pasig City: The World Bank.

Villarin, Tom S. 1999. The Philippine experience in strengthening people's participation in governance. http://kaisahan.net/pdf/op1999_06.pdf.

The Prospect of Democracy in the ARMM: Summary and Recommendations

Chapter 5

A participant in one of the focus group discussions conducted for this assessment, upon pondering the question of whether or not there was democracy in the ARMM, said that it could not be otherwise as the ARMM was part of a nation that had a democratic system of government. The statement may seem obvious and therefore trivial but it serves to underline a particular point—that the people of the region valued their freedoms, such as the freedom to practice their own Islamic faith in a country that was overwhelmingly Christian, and their rights, such as the right to live their indigenous Moro ways, precisely because they lived in a democratic society, even though that democracy, as some other of the respondents liked to point out, was an alien imposition by a foreign Western country. The participants also recognized that democracy in the Philippines was far from perfect, but that democracy in the ARMM was even more flawed. The participants cited many possible reasons for these shortcomings of democracy in the ARMM, as already discussed above. For this concluding part, the discussion will focus on the debilitating effect of poverty in the ARMM to the promotion of democracy, and to certain aspects of Moro tradition and culture that prevent the people of the ARMM from fully participating in the affairs of their society. The final part will list and discuss the recommendations that have been solicited from the study's respondents throughout the conduct of this assessment, that is, from the focus group discussions, the key informant interviews, and the validations workshops conducted to review the findings of the assessment.

Lest it be forgotten, the decades long armed conflict in Mindanao has had a deleterious effect on Moro society. While the rebellion was taken up as a protest against perceived historical wrongs against the Moro, to reverse the economic backwardness of Muslim Mindanao, and to gain for its people a measure of self-determination, the interim results of Moro autonomy and self-government have been far from producing any real positive results. Few have benefitted from the autonomy, albeit limited, that has been gained—the same people who have always lorded over Moro society. The current ceasefire with the MILF and the on-going negotiations for a Bangsamoro Framework Agreement have been touted as real efforts to address the shortcomings of past negotiations and towards a final end to the separatist conflict (although the rise of small breakaway groups such as the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters and the persistence of bandit groups such as the Abu Sayyaf may temper the anticipated end-of-war celebrations).

A fundamental condition of the people of the ARMM is that they are collectively among the poorest group of people in the country. This was not just a perception problem, even though the survey did in fact reveal how low the respondents perceived their incomes to be. Official statistical data show this to be the case. This poverty was one of the significant push factors that drove the Muslims to rebel and seek independence from the rest of the country. It was this poverty, and the historic neglect by the central government that was blamed for its persistence, that drove Moro society to set itself apart from the rest of Filipino society and to struggle for self-determination. The negotiated settlement that initially, albeit temporarily, ended the conflict with the MNLF was agreed upon on the basis of the establishment of regional autonomy. Nearly four decades of regional autonomy, however, has not put a dent into the poverty of the region. Some have argued that the autonomy is badly flawed and that may be true. The continuation of the rebellion by the MILF most probably also made it very difficult to make any inroads on improving the people's wellbeing. But it is also true, as the assessment's various participants pointed out, that the region's leaders failed to make autonomy work to the advantage of their people. Instead, they chose to consolidate their traditional hold on power and wealth and to keep the people poor.

Poverty and Democracy

Most models of political participation are based on the standard socioeconomic status model developed by Sidney Verba, an American

political scientist, and Norman H. Nie, an American social scientist in 1972 (Verba and Nie 1972). The theory argues that political participation is determined by the resources available to individuals, such as income, time, and ability, as well as their political preference (Lieghley 1995). Thus, individuals belonging to the higher strata of society with higher education, civic skills, and understanding of the political system are more likely to participate than less fortunate members of society. The model explains why most of those who run for elections in ARMM belong to the higher echelons of society—from wealthy and influential families. The poor's non-participation in running for office is not due to lack of interest or indifference but rather to lack of resources, both financial and human, required to win. As one key informant, an academic, said of the participation of the poor in ARMM:

> Poverty can cause democracy not to work properly because poor people are more vulnerable to influences by politicians and susceptible to sell their votes to the highest bidder during election. Moreover, poor people rarely participate in decision making because they are less educated and ill-informed about what's happening in their particular area.

The key informant interviews and focus group discussions revealed that the poor were indeed marginalized in political participation exercises, were rarely invited to the various decision-making activities, and were unrepresented in democratic processes in their respective communities. The poor served as mere ornament to show monitoring agencies that they were being consulted about the various projects and programs affecting their communities. Most of them were only invited to consultations to validate those things that were already agreed upon by their local executives. Even such participation by the poor was selective in nature. Most of those invited were related to or supporters of incumbent officials. Such exercises excluded the rest of the community who were not aligned with the current officials.

Democratic Values of the Poor

The political values of the poor in the ARMM are characterized by passivity and submissiveness. The poor lack formal education and, coupled with no established manner of regular consultations with local officials, have been made politically dormant. Most of the poor were not aware of the issues confronting their respective communities. Field interviews of participants at the barangay level revealed that the poor had a vague

understanding of autonomy or of the principles of democracy. Most of them were unaware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Their access to media and public information was also mostly negligible as they relied mainly on word of mouth for information about programs and affairs of the government in their respective localities. This passive nature of the poor is borne by their belief that local government unit positions are there for elite families or traditional leaders to occupy. They do not expect the government to care for their needs or provide social services. For example, rural areas, where most of the poor are usually found, are rarely visited by local officials and receive poor basic services from government. This has been the trend in the ARMM for most of its existence, consequently shaping the minds of the poor to be passive in dealing with government. Moreover, the poor also feel incapacitated to make any contribution or to influence the behavior of local officials. Generally, the poor simply submit to their officials or are nonchalant as to what is going on in their community.

Voter turnout in ARMM at 95 percent is higher than in the rest of the country, which averages around 75 percent. However, people's involvement in elections is mostly motivated by pecuniary gains to be had from candidates. As one participant in the FGD stated, "*Kung nasaan ang malaking pera nandoon din ang mahihirap* (Where the money is the poor will follow)." The interviews and survey reveal the endemic nature of vote selling among the poor. This is not surprising since most of the poor see elections as a way of reaping benefits from their patrons, who unusually become benevolent during elections. The involvement of money in exchange for votes requires candidates to make sure that the people they had bought out do actually vote. Candidates generally require those who sell their votes to swear on the Holy Quran that they would keep their end of the bargain. Another regretful implication of vote selling is the need for private armies to enforce such agreements. There have been many reports of losing candidates seeking retribution against those people or families who sold their votes, but did not deliver as promised. Such acts have resulted in severe physical harm, burning of houses, destruction of property, or even death, eventually sparking rido (clan feuds).

The interviews as well as the survey show that the poor accept the principles of democracy and agree that some aspects of democracy are being promoted and practiced in the ARMM. Unfortunately, their immediate concern about basic needs, such as for food, clothing, and medicine, compels the poor to have a short-term horizon in the exercise of their democratic rights. Although they said that selling votes was regretful and against the

teaching of Islam, they felt that they had little choice but to do so. They seemed to understand that good governance and productive local officials may bring change to their lives, but that such remained to be seen and may happen only in the long run. Selling one's vote to the highest bidder is therefore based on a rational decision brought about by the necessity of the moment. Such short-term view of the poor makes political reform arduous since it takes time for change to happen, a luxury the poor cannot afford. Their participation in political reform movements, as advocated by NGOs, religious groups, and others, becomes mere lip service because in the end they will do the most rational and human thing to do, which is to take care of their family's survival before anything else; good citizenship or conscience voting is not a priority in their list.

An election is a triennial affair for renewing family ties and strengthening the bonds of kinship. Removing non-performing and corrupt local executives from office is not a motivation to participation. Rather, people vote as a way to pledge and show their continued loyalty to the family or the clan. Thus, the head of the family usually decides whom to vote for—members of the family simply follow without question. One key informant said that the "poor are usually left to fend for themselves after the election and are called again [only] if the need arises." In fact, it is common practice among candidates in the elections to summon their supporters living outside the ARMM to return to their communities in order to vote. Most of these supporters are poor people who live by peddling in various markets in Metro Manila, Cebu City, Davao, and other urban areas. They are promised money and free transportation for themselves and their families in exchange for their votes. This usually happens in mayoral or barangay election where a few votes could decide the winner. Thus, barangay and mayoral candidates will mobilize every supporter they can muster, including those registered voters no longer residing in the locality. Such modus operandi of politicians also includes the recruitment of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in evacuation centers to serve as flying-voters. For IDPs, such recruitment augments their meager incomes and is generally welcomed.

Aside from participation that is limited to elections, the poor are mostly excluded in decision-making processes and are rarely represented in public bodies or institutions. The selective nature of participation in decision-making process and the particular loyalty of the poor to certain leaders or political families create divisiveness within the community. Oftentimes, the poor are caught in the middle of competing political families, putting them in harm's way. This usually happens when a poor family in dire need will

promise to support one candidate in exchange for money, but then turn around and ask for help from a rival candidate.

In the ARMM, local political rivalries are usually drawn along clan or family lines and do not depend on competing advocacies or platforms of governance. A candidate does not represent himself but rather his entire clan; a loss in the election means the defeat of his clan and the lowering of the clan's standing in the community. Allegiances to kinship and personal connections also affect every day experiences in local areas as some villages are in constant enmity with each other because each one's loyalty belongs to competing political families. This results in a less cohesive community and erodes the social capital that is essential for society to develop and progress.

Representation of the Poor

In the ARMM, poor people are largely isolated and collectively disorganized. There are neither associations nor forums where they can voice their grievances or demands, making it very hard for these people to be heard.

Nevertheless, there are NGOs in the ARMM that cater to the needs of the poor. These NGOs provide temporary help and assistance, mostly in the form of food, clothing, and shelter. There are also some cooperatives—mostly of farmers, women, and entrepreneurs—whose advocacy is more on livelihood and in which the poor marginally participate. There are advocacy groups, such as the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), that seek to educate the poor to be politically active and responsible in their voting behavior, but the reach of these NGOs is limited mostly to urban areas. Even in rural areas, NGOs often interact only with the richer middle class.

When respondents for this assessment were asked whether local governments encouraged the participation of the people in decision making, most said participation was selective and often limited to those supportive of and with close links to incumbent officials. They also pointed out that even when they were asked to choose who should represent them in such processes, their tendency was to choose people close to or related to the local officials, rationalizing that those people were the ones the officials would listen to. Thus, local forums turned out to be exercises for legitimizing decisions favored or already made by local officials.

Traditional Leadership and the Poor

The strong-man rule of the late Sultan Ali Dimaporo in Lanao del Sur in the 1980s and recently by the Ampatuans in Maguindanao leave behind an indelible mark in the political values of the populace in these two major provinces of the ARMM, especially among the poor. This authoritarian leadership is also prevalent in the provinces of Sulu, Basilan, and Tawi-Tawi where LGU executives are feared, unchallenged, and never criticized in the open. One respondent from Lanao del Sur pointed out that "you only need to wait in the road and watch how local executives drive by with convoys of bodyguards armed with high caliber machine guns to realize that they are here to rule and not to serve the people." The practice of *datuism* is very much alive. It is a traditional form of governance where the village leader, or *datu,* is followed unchallenged, and political activities are usually drawn along family lines.

The datu is the patron of the community, and his decisions are considered the decisions and choices of all. It is a form of political patronage in which the local political leader, through his close relationship with family elders and a client network, controls the democratic process and outcome. Thus, in modern times democratic processes like elections only serve as mere veneer to justify the continued rule of the datu.

Indeed, political administration in the ARMM is managed like personal property by local officials, closely resembling what Weber (1968) described as genuinely patrimonial office where the ruler treats public office as part of his personal property. Traditional leadership and cultural dynamics exert a powerful influence on the political participation and representation of the poor. As one interviewee opined,

> Before democracy was introduced to the Moros there was already an existing form of government that allows people to participate and represent themselves in their society. Traditional Moros still feel that democracy is eroding their culture and traditional form of governance. They do not claim ownership of the government and their values are not attuned with democratic principles. That's the reason they don't protest nor complain [about] mismanagement and corruption in the government. Most people participate because they can get something from politicians, either monetary assistance or employment. (Participant from the religious sector)

The implication of political rivalry based on kinship and lack of social coherence among local communities in the ARMM are prejudicial to poverty

programs and livelihood projects aimed at alleviating the plight of the poor. For example, the poor who are qualified and deserving beneficiaries of the government's conditional cash transfer program are excluded by local officials if they are identified to be supporting rival political families. There have been many instances of livelihood projects or economic infrastructures associated with previous and rival politicians that were abandoned and left to rot by incumbent LGU executives to erase their rivals' legacy and influence. This vindictiveness goes both ways: when incumbent LGU executives try to implement projects, their rivals try to find ways to sabotage them. One example is a water reservoir built for the community by an incumbent official on land owned by a political rival, who then claimed the reservoir as his own when it was completed.

The spilling over of political rivalries to everyday life in the ARMM has detrimental impacts on programs addressing the needs of the poor and community-building projects. Due to politics and favoritism, many poverty alleviation programs do not reach their intended targets. As one participant described it (translated from the original),

> There were many qualified and deserving 4P's recipients, but because they were not close to local officials, they were excluded. Meanwhile, there were residents who were better-off and employed who received conditional cash transfers from the government because they were supporters or relatives of local officials. (Participant from Maguindanao)

The *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program* (4P's) aimed at breaking the vicious cycle of poverty by providing cash assistance to the poor to meet their immediate needs has become a political tool in areas in the ARMM where the barangay chairmen are tasked to help identify recipients. Since these barangay chairmen are usually under the influence of the municipal mayor, it is the latter who dictates who should be included in the program.

Respondents also said that some people have lost interest in participating in the electoral process, largely people from the academe, the middle class, the professional class, and the religious sectors. They have allegedly lost hope that something meaningful will come out of ARMM politics. One disgruntled resident quipped, "All candidates are just the same whether I vote or not in the election. It doesn't make any difference at all; all winners will eventually end up stealing money from the government." Most blame the lack of truly alternative candidates for this disenchantment. A participant in an FGD said that "many professionals do not involve themselves in the elections. Like me for example, I did not register because

I find it a waste of time." Most candidates belong to the same ruling families, and anybody who wins will not bring about meaningful change.

It is public knowledge that to win in an election in the country requires the three "G's" of success: guns, goons, and gold. Another "G," referring to genealogy, is also required in the ARMM. A candidate may possess the first three "G's" but without the right genealogy his or her chances of winning an election will still be in doubt. For example, in 1959 the late Sultan Ali Dimaporo, although possessing the three "G's", opted to run in Lanao del Norte, winning by a mere 275 votes, rather than confront the Alonto-Lucman clan that had complete hegemony in Lanao del Sur. Eventually, Sultan Ali Dimaporo became the provincial governor when he got the backing of the late President Marcos. This genealogy requirement is what has spawned the proliferation of political dynasties in the ARMM.

Autonomy and Poverty

Autonomy has not made any significant dent in the widespread poverty in the ARMM. In fact, the standard of living even declined during the period 1991 to 2006. The real per capita income of residents in the component provinces of the ARMM before its creation was around 18,292 pesos in 1988; by 2006 it was 17,939 pesos, a slight decline indicating the failure of autonomy to raise the economic wellbeing of the people. The benefits from autonomy have accrued mostly to those connected with local government executives; the benefits have come in the form of employment. One participant recounted how easy it was to earn a living prior to the ARMM; now he had a hard time making both ends meet. He related that "previously there were only few fishermen in my village; with the increase in population, so too the number of fishermen. It's very hard now to get the same amount of catch as before" (translated from the local language).

From a policy point of view, the ARMM has no specific regional agenda or program to address widespread poverty. The task remains with the national government. Unfortunately, national poverty alleviation programs seem detached from the realities of the ARMM. For example, the 4Ps program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) requires all recipients to regularly visit health centers for maternal education. In the ARMM, this is not always possible since there are municipalities without health centers or places that provide maternal education.

In a way, the ARMM is a microcosm of what is happening in the country, albeit in an exaggerated way. Democracy in the Philippines has been

variously described as elite or cacique democracy, a form of patrimonialism and bossism (Kerkvliet 1995; Hutchroft 1991; Anderson 1988). There exists a patron-client system thriving in effete state institutions where competing political families vie for power during elections, promising their followers a share of the spoils. It is a model that is based on filial ties and family alliances where the key element of success lies in kinship and connection rather than advocacy or political agenda. These are the same features present in the political landscape of the ARMM but further amplified by existing cultures and traditional forms of governance. Democratic processes, like elections, simply become a means of affirming the allegiance of the people to their traditional leaders, legalizing the continued dominance of these leaders in modern times.

In summary, it can be said that

- There is extensive poverty in the ARMM and poverty serves as a serious constraint for the poor in exercising their rights. This is because they are dependent on the largesse of the rich (who also tend to be the politically powerful) in order to alleviate their poverty, particularly during periods of elections when the people can "sell" their votes.
- The poor are also unable to participate in decision and policy making because political power in the ARMM is exercised through family and clan ties. Members of the clan have no say once the leaders of the clan make the decisions. Opponents of the clan have no say at all; they are specifically excluded from processes of decision making.
- The power of traditional leaders, such as the datu, is largely uncontested particularly in the poor villages of the ARMM. The people submit to the will of the datu because that is what they are used to by tradition and that is what they are expected to do. People who dare to stand up against such leadership are silenced violently and permanently.
- Political rivalries and disagreements in election results often lead to inter-clan clashes (rido). Warlordism therefore becomes a way for clans to impose their will on recalcitrant community members and opponents. Since guns are such a powerful tool for taking on and holding political power, guns become valuable assets, leading to their proliferation. This stranglehold on the avenues to political positions by powerful clans serves to discourage the political

participation of the middle classes who are supposed to constitute the principle force for democratic reforms in societies in transition. This virtual monopoly effectively limits the choice of candidates to those fielded by the political clans, with apparently little or no regard to individual merits. It is this genealogical factor that leads to the dominance of political dynasties in the ARMM.

- This culture of traditional leadership based on wealth, power, and in some cases claims to royal blood, clashes with the basic principles of democracy that are founded on the people's sovereign will and that put a premium on the performance of service rather than claims to leadership positions based on tradition and genealogical ties. With people perceiving little or no choice in election contests, the selling of votes is a no brainer. Fundamental reform therefore will have to include changes in attitudes and values, something that will take a long time and are usually very difficult to accomplish. Only when the people believe that it is in their and their children's long-term interest and welfare will political contests be decided on merit and potential to deliver needed services.
- The ARMM therefore is sorely lacking in the institutions that guarantee that the processes of democracy can work. These include institutions of rule of law and justice.

The prevalence of poverty and the cultural and traditional values that prop it will take a while to change. Ending poverty in the ARMM is fundamental for promoting and improving the quality of democracy in the region, but it will take a sustained effort over the long term to do so. Changing values is also a long term challenge usually associated with education. In the meantime, there are deficiencies in how the ARMM structure has been set up that can be tackled at once and should have almost immediate beneficial effects.

Structural Weaknessses

As pointed out elsewhere in this report, the Organic Act, both original and amended versions, created a structural flaw that weakens the effectiveness of regional administration. Many allege that this flaw allows the national government to dominate the regional government, effectively robbing it of its supposed autonomous authority through the national government's continuing control of the purse strings that determine how

and on what things the regional government can spend for. This has led to calls for granting the regional government more fiscal autonomy that would effectively match its political autonomy.

The other structural flaw engendered by conflicting legislations is the ambiguous relationship between the regional government and the local government units in the ARMM. Under devolution, LGUs are supposed to be primarily responsible for the delivery of basic services to their constituents; however, the Organic Act, having been passed before the enactment of the Local Government Code, assigned the responsibility of service delivery to the regional government. This incongruence has been blamed for the poor delivery of services in the region, with the regional government and the LGUs blaming each other for such failure. These structural flaws can be addressed immediately, possibly through the Bangsamoro Framework Agreement that is now being drafted and that will determine the structure of the new Bangsamoro entity that will replace the ARMM.

Another weakness of the ARMM that can be addressed over the medium term is the lack of competent elected and selected people in the bureaucracy and in top offices. This results in an ineffective and unresponsive delivery of services to people, sluggish performance in policy and decision making, and a weak professionalized bureaucracy. The lack of professionalization has reduced the effectiveness of the ARMM to tackle the immediate problems that face its citizens. This problem has to do with training local people with the necessary skills and the correct attitudes to be public service workers, curtailing the tendency of local officials to put their incompetent relatives in local government positions. It also calls for measures to put in place more effective mechanisms of incentives and sanctions that will make officials and local government staff to be more accountable, transparent, and service-oriented in their dealings with the public.

Furthermore, there are enormous challenges for civic education and citizen involvement. Increasing the participation of citizens in decision making processes is clearly a two-way street. Government must provide the venues and opportunities for participation and this it has done in a number of ways, although it can be argued that those venues should be expanded. On the other hand, the people must demand meaningful participation as well as be prepared to do so in a way that brings real benefits to their communities. A precondition for the latter is that the people must be aware of their political rights and how certain traditional ways of doing things deny

those rights (such as the right to choose their leaders freely instead of acquiescing to the clan leader's wishes), that selling one's vote, despite immediate economic returns, has deleterious long-term consequences in terms of the quality of local political leadership and the delivery of services, and that active involvement in the community's political life, even in the face of threats from seemingly powerful warlords, is necessary to defend the democracy that people seem to value.

The future of democracy lies in strong participation; literally, it is self-government by citizens rather than representative government in the name of citizens. Active citizens govern themselves directly, not necessarily at every level and in every instance, but frequently enough and in particular when basic policies are being decided and when significant power is being deployed. Self-government is carried on through institutions designed to facilitate ongoing civic participation in agenda-setting, deliberation, legislation, and policy implementation (in the form of common work).

Validation Workshop Results

A number of validation workshops were conducted in order to solicit feedback from various stakeholders regarding the results of this assessment. In general, that feedback has been positive. The most jaded observers of Muslim Mindanao affairs may not find anything new in what the assessment report says but they do seem glad that the situation of democracy in the autonomous region has been documented and verifiable data and information have been compiled to make the case for reforms even stronger. In addition, the validation workshops produced recommendations for improving the practice of democracy in the region. The recommendations encompass most of the points already discussed above but some do address specific issues, such as increasing the participation of marginalized groups. While this should be taken seriously, it should also be pointed out that this is only an aspect of the absence of broad participation in general. However, it does point out the need to keep an eye on specific aspects of participation by marginalized sectors when the effort to broadly raise participation is applied to the ARMM.

- Fix the Organic Law, such as amending it, so as to create a regional government that is truly autonomous and able to work for the Moro communities without having to depend on largesse from the national government. This implies giving the regional government real fiscal autonomy as well.

- Improve the quality of the leadership through values formation and education. The region's leaders should serve as models for the local officials in terms of good governance, transparency, and accountability.
- Use the democracy assessment report as a way to disseminate actionable information and to generate a reform agenda for the region. The audience for the dissemination should include, in particularly, the Transition Commission, civil society organizations, and the LGUs.
- Empower citizens for greater participation by raising the level of functional literacy among the adults, considering that the ARMM has the lowest rate of adult literacy in the country. Education should include teaching citizens their rights and responsibilities, making them aware of existing venues for participation as well as advocating for new ones, including those based on good traditional practices, that encourage local people to participate more substantially in community affairs. One suggestion was to explore new technologies, such as social media networks, for expanding the reach of voter education.
- Improve the quality of local leaders and the bureaucracy through training on skills and proper conduct, such as being accountable and transparent. This will increase trust in local leaders and raise the level of social capital in Muslim Mindanao society.
- Tap the religious sector and madrasah as sources of change in values and attitudes.
- Reach out to the mass media so that they can assist in the dissemination effort and to advocate for more coverage of regional issues and concerns, including how well local democracy is practiced.
- Strengthen civil society groups, non-governmental organizations, and the media as conduits of active advocacies for meaningful change in Moro society. Ensure that they remain independent of political interests.
- Enhance representation of women in governance and the participation of marginalized groups such as the youth and ulama. There was also a call to prioritize the distribution of resources to the most disadvantaged and underserved of Muslim society.

Conclusion

When the incumbent Aquino government postponed the regional elections last year and appointed a set of regional officials, "true" democrats lamented the violation of a basic democratic principle. When the appointed governor, Mujiv Hataman, initiated substantive (rather than just cosmetic) changes in the ARMM, however, they then turned around and said that the postponement must have been the best option to counter the culture of impunity that had increased during the reign of the Ampatuans. These reforms initiated a more spirited discussion and dialogue about the changes necessary to enable the regional government as well as the ARMM local governments to deliver services to the people. Because of this welcome development, some the respondents of this study even said that elections in the ARMM should be abolished and that the whole lot of regional and local officials should be appointed instead. Fortunately, that sentiment seems to have dissipated with the recent election of Hataman and other reform-minded officials, mostly party mates of President Aquino, to the regional government, which may bode well for democracy in the ARMM. That is the good news. The bad news is that traditional clans appear to continue their domination of local government positions.

It is difficult to see what the peace agreement with the MILF will mean for democracy in the ARMM. At the end of the terms of the newly elected ARMM officials in 2016, a new Bangsamoro entity will likely take over the ARMM as envisioned in the framework agreement. The MILF has no love lost for the ARMM, which they regard as a failure. No one knows what will happen to the reforms that the new administration will supposedly continue to make, whether the MILF will build on the foundation of this reform or decide to rebuild completely on a new foundation. It is hoped, of course, that the new political entity to rise in the region will build on the positive changes that hopefully will now be instituted. To adequately tackle the roots of the problem in the region—the debilitating poverty, the rule of the clans, the patronage politics built on the people's impoverishment and ignorance, and eliciting their apathy—will take more than the three years that is available before the new entity begins to take effect, but action needs to be taken now. It is difficult to imagine that the Moro people, the Bangsamoro, will stand for another failed experiment in self-rule within a democracy that gives them the freedom to determine their lives in accord with their cultures and religious convictions.

References

Anderson, Benedict. 1988. Cacique democracy in the Philippines: Origins and dreams. *New Left Review* I/169: 3-33.

Kerkvliet, Benedict J. Tria. 1995. Toward a more comprehensive analysis of Philippine politics: Beyond the patron-client, factional framework. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 26(2): 401.

Hutchcroft, Paul. 1991. Oligarchs and cronies in the Philippine State: The politics of patrimonial plunder. *World Politics* 43(3): 414-50.

Leighley, Jan. 1995. Attitudes, opportunities, and incentives: A field essay on political participation. *Political Research Quarterly* 48(1): 181-209.

Verba, Sidney and Norman H. Nie. 1972. *Participation in America: Political democracy and social equality.* New York: Harper & Row

Weber, Max. 1968. *Economy and society*. New York: Bedminster Press.

Annexes

List of Key Informants

Key Informants interviewed in Manila

Focus Group Discussion Participants

- Basilan
- Sulu
- Tawi-Tawi
- Lanao del Sur
- Maguindanao

List of Key Informants

Province/ Municipality	*Key informant*	*Sector*
Basilan	**Argie Sarco**	**Academe** Instructor I and Assistant Director Office of Student Affairs and Services Basilan State College
	Fr. Cirilo Irinco	**NGO/CSO-Church** Priest, Order of Friars Minor (OFM)
	Jamju Rivera	**Business Sector** CEO/Chairman of the Board of Directors Juan S. Alano Corporation President/CEO/Chairman of the Board of Directors, Basilan Estates, Inc. General Partner & Co-Manager, MyRivera.com Integrated Technologies Company Corporate Treasurer & Chief Finance Officer, Basilan Pioneer, Incorporated
	Ella Quatrocruz	**NGO/CSO Women**
	Amado "Boy" Lim	**NGO/CSO** Senior Citizen, Eastside Barangay, Isabela City, Basilan
	Mabel L. Burgos	**Business Sector** Proprietor, Mabel's Place Restaurant
	Henry Tura	**Academe/Education** ALS Coordinator, DepEd, Isabela City, Basilan
	Dr. Agnes Yu	**Health Sector** Physician Eastside Barangay, Isabela City, Basilan
	Ceferino Victor Malcampo	**Government** Jail Officer
	Col. Ramon Yogyog	**Military** Deputy Commander/ First Scout Ranger Regiment

Province/ Municipality	*Key informant*	*Sector*
Lanao del Sur	**Rev. Bert Soganub**	**Religious Sector** Parish Priest, MSU Marawi, Chairman, PPCRV
	Dr. Ali Panda	**Academe** Civic Leader and Professor, International Relations, MSU-Marawi
	Col. Daniel Lucero	**Military** Commanding Officer, Armed Forces of the Philippines, Lanao del Sur
	Dr. Sukarno Tanggol	**Academe** Chancellor, MSU-IIT, Civil Leader and Author
	Sultan Somerado S. Bayabao	**IP Sector** Traditional Leader, Former Provincial Cooperative Officer and Planner
	Dir. Amer Pangandaman	**Academe** Director, Community Relations Office, MSU System Sultan and Traditional Leader
	Baealabi Shora Sabdullah-Sarigala	**Media** Media Practitioner and Women Empowerment Advocate
	Ibra Macapanton	**CSO**
	Dama Faridah M. Cauntongan	**Professional/Government Official** Supervisor, DepEd
	Allan Guinar	**NGO/CSO** NGO Worker
	Bin Laden Sharief	**CSO/NGO** Activist
	No name	**IP/Traditional Leader** Marawi Council of Elders
	Nanayaon Tagoranao	**Professional/Government Official** DepEd Principal
	Omar Sharief	**Youth** President PMTC College

Province/ Municipality	*Key Informant*	*Sector*
Maguindanao	**Fr. Eliseo Mercado**	**Religious and CSO** Priest, Oblates of Mary Immaculate Executive Director, Institute of Autonomy and Governance
	Rafael D. Nabre	**NGO/CSO** Executive Director, Development Consultants, Inc. (DEVCON)
	Prof. Shiela Algabre	**Academe** Vice-President for Identity and Mission, Notre Dame University
	Edwin Fernandez	**Media** Radio Announcer/Commentator, DXMS
	Engr. Sadat Rajahpandalat	**Local Government Official** Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO)
	Engr. Aida Silongan	**Women/CSO** Field Operations Officer, Bangsamoro Development Agency, MILF
	Dir. Isa Romancap	**Professional/Government Official** Director, DILG
	Atty. Naguib Sinarimbo	**Regional Government Official** Former Executive Secretary, ARMM Regional Government
	Atty. Udtog Tago	**Professional/Government Official** Officer, COMELEC Provincial Office-Maguindanao
	Ali Macabalang	**Professional/Government Official** Executive Director, Bureau of Public Information (BPI)
Sulu	**Engr. Saad Rasul Yusah**	
	No name	Member, Knights of Columbus
	Zeny Masong	
	Hon. Edsir Tan	

Province/ Municipality	*Key informant*	*Sector*
Tawi-Tawi	**Aisa Bud**	**Women/Religious Sector** Provincial Aleemat Leader of Tawi-Tawi Instructor, Arabic and Islamic Studies MSU Tawi-Tawi Noorus Salam Member
	Hja. Sittirihana U. Asdala	**Health Sector** Public Health Nurse 2 Tandubas Health Center
	Refused to give basic bio	**NGO/CSO** NGO worker, Bongao
	Mr. Boon So Koo	**CSO/NGO** Educator and former secondary principal (Retired), Tandubas, Tawi-Tawi Community leader and co-founder of the Farmers Cooperative in Tandubas
	Ms. Alen Pasaforte	**Municipal Government Official** Executive Assistant to the Bongao Municipal Mayor
	Dr. Sukarno Asri	**Provincial Government Official/Health Sector** Public Health Officer 2
	Lt. Col. Temoteo Ferdinand D. Blasco, PN, (M) (GSE)	**Military** Commanding Officer (CO), MBLT 5, Province of Tawi-Tawi
	Hadji Sulay Halipa	**Business Sector** Businessman and former Mayor of Bongao
	Lt. Charles Dennis Tan	**Military** Civil Military Operations Officer (CMO)

List of Key Informants Interviewed in Manila

Name	*Profile*
Ms. Idiosa Ursolino	Vice President Amanah Bank
Maharlika J. *Alonto*	Head, Accounting and Finance Amanah Bank
Atty. Nasser Marohomsalic **Prof. Max Jundam**	PCID Convenors
Nur Jaafar	Representative Lone District of Tawi-tawi
Jim S. Hataman-Salliman	Representative Lone District of Basilan
Simeon A. Datumanong	Representative Second District of Maguindanao
Edilwasif Baddiri	Commissioner representing the Youth National Commission on Muslim Filipinos Central Office, Quezon City
Ms. Emma Salmani	Program Manager of Workforce Preparation and Governance Growth with Equity in Mindanao III (GEM3) Program Davao City

Basilan FGD Participants

Provincial

1. Jarah Hamza
2. Jocelyn Zabala
3. Modyr Tupay
4. Arnel Lagman
5. Sar-ana Misuari
6. Altun Angeles
7. Masid Yacob
8. Nurkaisa Alidain

Municipal: Isabela City

1. Jayson Tubil
2. Dr. Fatima Abubakar
3. Joel Zanoria
4. Dr. Nujum Sattar
5. Abdulkuddus Salihin
6. Jesielyn Puno
7. Richard Falcatan
8. Nizzah Asmawil
9. Ustadz Abdulrahman Tanjil
10. Marie May Julhari
11. Michael Jojo

Barangay: Tabuk, Isabela City

1. Hadji Mohammad Isa Palaw
2. Ustadz Hussein Manatad
3. Faida Saradji
4. Jamil Baning
5. Basir Angkaan - Sanuuk
6. Shehah Wahab
7. Sonny Garcia
8. Kadhiza Palaw
9. Safa Arola
10. Evelyn Domingo

Municipal: Maluso, Basilan

1. Ismael Basa
2. Husin Abdulhalim
3. Rowena Ampuan
4. Jojo Camlian
5. Abdua Abubakar
6. Reylan Sulan
7. Adzrie Bud
8. Gacib Abdulla
9. Georgina Carpio

Barangay: Townsite, Maluso, Basilan

1. Gil Castillo
2. Mercedita Longcob
3. Marylene Pallong
4. Suaida Abdulla
5. Aradji Amat
6. Amir Abtahi
7. Mary Amineth Mariano

Sulu FGD Participants

Provincial

1. Moh. Taha Jundam
2. Sarah Tan
3. Hja. Muniyra Isnirul
4. Hannbal Bara
5. Mohamar Hamid
6. Alrasher Kulani
7. Hadji Eufremio Canaria
8. Fr. Romeo Villanueva
9. Madzda Ghazali
10. Hja. Nurhata Salahuddin

Municipal: FGD, Siasi

1. Nasul Imlah
2. Isay Jim
3. Jameel Mataharul
4. Khaliph Imlah
5. Elsa Lim
6. Aldin Aminulla
7. Satra Askali
8. Murshid Rajis
9. Alcibal Salahuddin
10. Samira Aquino

Municipal: FGD, Jolo

1. Aisa Akalal
2. Almonier Uddin
3. Farida Hadjulani
4. Sitti Amla Esmael
5. Adzfar Usman
6. Sahie Udjah
7. Abdel Jalani
8. Rugaiya Ibba
9. Benhar Hayudini

Barangay: Siasi

1. Neneng Imdani
2. Hja. Merhama Abdulrasad
3. Dadang Hadjiri
4. Zhadat Tulawie
5. Ahmad Siddik Pillok
6. Ruaina Alfad
7. Fatima Ryzza Darrai
8. Kee Miong Hailani
9. Darwina Rasul
10. Ernie Rasul

Barangay: FGD, Jolo

1. Arabia Tibbani
2. Moh. Musin Matarul
3. Ghavier Utam
4. Jerwin Jumaani
5. Al-Ghandi Mansani
6. Salmiya Simbajon
7. Parisia Laimuddin
8. Sur-Aini Amanon
9. Candice Lim
10. Almarkhan Han

Tawi-Tawi FGD Participants

Provincial

1. Basit Damsik
2. Nilma Abubakar
3. Nakim Nakano
4. Nursali Taha
5. Edwin Tahir
6. Marvin Natino
7. Donia Jailani
8. Boon Soo Khu
9. Parsan Ganih

Municipal

1. Dayang Ambang
2. Amil Kaddin
3. Almida Amil
4. Hamad Asmad
5. Panglima Alimubdin
6. Jan Tahir
7. Fatra Jalil
8. Nurbiya Sangkula
9. Ganih Dulahid
10. Romel Alih
11. Aljibar Amil
12. Hadja Mariam Sali
13. R-lyn Saddalai
14. Nurahma Abantas
15. Sheila Abu
16. Flordeliza Mohammad S.
17. Alasa Reyes
18. Benzar Malandi
19. Fauzi Jailani
20. Hadje Sawagal

Barangay

1. Ferdiliza Hussin
2. Doriza Asakil
3. Jayne-Raida Sulaiman
4. Aisa Bud
5. Mardy H. J.
6. Haidit Astarani
7. Jerry Jimmy
8. Saturnino Apdal
9. Rosemarie Samuddin
10. Carolina Tarang
11. Julmin Jikri
12. Abubakar Abdulla
13. Abdulbasit Dabbang
14. Haddani Labbay
15. Nurana Abdulla
16. H. Fatima Jawad
17. Ridzma Nuruddin

Lanao del Sur FGD Participants

Provincial

1. Abdulcader Ayo
2. Board Member Ansary Maongco
3. Ahmad Guro
4. Wedad Ramos Mirador
5. Nasroding Mustapha
6. Pesigue Camid Tomawis
7. Subaida Mala
8. Calima Mamad
9. Jashim Abdulrahman
10. Dr. Depsiy Marohom
11. Sultan Farouk Sharief

Municipal and Barangay: Kapatagan

1. Ahmad Pasandalan
2. Kamar Bansil
3. Mesrin Laolao
4. Allan Bansil
5. Samsoden Bansil
6. Zenaida Aliman Ting
7. Naima Bansil
8. Khalid Bansil
9. Camsa Bansil
10. H. Rasul Manabilang
11. Ustadz Ismail Pandi
12. Ibrahim Ang-gen
13. Guiling Inog
14. Sansarona Bansil
15. Serimah Laguindab
16. Bailanie de los Santos
17. Acsara Ogka
18. Saripoden Mamacol
19. Abdulhalim Cabugatan

Municipal and Barangay: Marawi City

1. Nasroding Abubacar
2. Kilala-an Minalang
3. Omar Amor
4. Alandoni Disomangcop
5. Sarahjane Manabilang
6. Noronisa Manabilang
7. Jamillah Asama
8. Raquel Pusaral
9. Ali Macaindig
10. Deftawie Pamlian
11. Ali Baragona
12. Naimah Mahdali
13. Amerah Mapupuno
14. Dr. Pamela Tabao
15. Fatima Macapodi
16. Ibrahim Macapanton
17. Mosa Pangandaman
18. Sultan Macalayo Atha, Al Hadj
19. Sultan Macod Santican
20. Faridah Cauntongan

Maguindanao FGD Participants

Provincial

1. Ray K. Pelaez
2. Mama D. Binangon
3. Datukon S. Mokamad
4. Menen D. Abdul
5. Renato P. Gacayan, Ed.D.
6. Nurhadi Guiam
7. Anisa T. Arab
8. Jonaib M. Usman
9. Bai Cabayan D. Cabar
10. Dr. Susan Salvador Anayatin

Municipal: Talayan

1. Zalave M. Dinas
2. Alimama S. Nhor
3. Guiabai S. Guialudin
4. Pelong U. Guialudin
5. Charisma Midtimbang

Municipal: Parang

1. Dr. Bai Macalawan-Caro
2. Zacarias G. Palarang
3. Sittie Anida A. Tomawis
4. Norah D. Momariong
5. Sukarno Akamad

Barangay: Linamonan, Talayan

1. Baimon A. Kalipa
2. Teres Kasim
3. Mabang Dagedengan
4. Hon. Abdulrahman Esmael
5. Ali Guiabel
6. Faisal Nandong
7. Zubaina Kasim
8. Hassan Kalipa
9. Abdulsaid Kadtigan
10. Daud Angguso
11. Loyd Tamayo
12. Abdullah Guialuson
13. Baiking A. Ebrahim

Barangay: Poblacion, Parang

1. Candidia L. Pendinatar
2. Zainodin O. Ito
3. Jahidin Ayob
4. Hon. Zainab Madidis
5. Hon. Nor Guiamadin
6. Haron Wahab
7. Guadencio Mohamad
8. Jamil P. Teves
9. Mohaidin U. Madidis
10. Jewell Ryan Sespene
11. Naima Odin
12. Duma Salazar

Index

This assessment of democracy in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao was initiated by the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy (PCID), in partnership with the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance, in order to gauge the quality of democracy that has existed in the autonomous region since its creation in 1989. The region was established in response to the clamor of the country's Muslim population for self-determination in a country that was overwhelmingly Christian in religion and determinedly Western-biased (because of its Spanish and American colonial past) in its regard towards the Muslim community. Because the Philippines is nominally a democracy, styled after its U.S. mentor's political system, this autonomous unit was created in the image of its "parent" central government with a Regional Governor as local executive and a Regional Legislative Assembly as the law-making institution. This autonomous region was to give Muslim Filipinos a free hand in running their local political affairs in consonance with local traditions and beliefs. Unfortunately, this concession in regional autonomy has failed to produce that results that were expected as the plight of Muslim Filipinos barely improved in the twenty years since autonomy was granted. In the light of the many conflicting evaluations of this failure, this assessment was undertaken to try to clarify the factors that led to this underperformance in democratic practice using the framework refined by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, an inter-governmental organization that advocates democracy worldwide. The assessment comes at an auspicious time as the Philippine government has just signed a Framework Agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front that promises to finally end the decades-long secessionist conflict in Mindanao. PCID and UP NCPAG offer this democracy assessment as part of their contribution to bring about peace and development in Muslim Mindanao.

with support of and in partnership with