INTER-ETHNIC DIALOGUE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES: Access to Community and Civic Enrichment

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International Training Office and Center for Southeast Asian Studies
Northern Illinois University
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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the youth of Mindanao, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, and the Sulu Archipelago. It is also dedicated to the peace efforts of all groups in Mindanao and to a brighter future for the ethnically and religiously diverse—Bangsa Moro, Lumad, and Christian—peoples of the southern Philippines.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Context

The Philippines is a land of diversity. There are hundreds of ethnic groups scattered in over seven thousand islands. People from different ethnic groups speak different languages. The vast majority of the people are Malay Filipinos. There are also non-Malay minorities, such as Chinese Filipinos and Indian mestizos. Due to migrant labor, there are new Filipino mestizos of Arab, Japanese, and other descents. Malay Filipinos profess indigenous, Islamic, or Christian faiths. In short, there is ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity in the Philippines. Diversity is both the strength and weakness of the Philippines. Diversity is a strength because it provides the cultural wealth of the Filipino nation. However, diversity is also a weakness because it pulls the people of different ethno-linguistic and religious backgrounds apart. More often than not, people of different cultural backgrounds do not talk to each other. Oftentimes, they harbor stereotypes of each other. At worst, they are engaged in conflict with each other.

Because of inter-ethnic conflict in the Philippines, especially in the south, the International Training Office (ITO) and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) of Northern Illinois University (NIU) jointly hosted a four-week program in April 2004 and 2005, and are doing so again in 2006. Every year, from 2004 to 2006, over 30 Muslim and non-Muslim Filipino students and adult leaders from the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and its surrounding areas in southern Philippines come to NIU to participate in a training program that promotes inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution. The goal of the program is to transmit knowledge and build strategies among participants about ways to foster interethnic cooperation and conflict resolution. By drawing on the example of civic society and diversity in the United States and by understanding the larger regional context in which contemporary conflicts in Mindanao exist, participants acquire new perspectives to support future grassroots efforts to build closer cooperation and understanding among the different cultural, religious, and political groups in the southern Philippines. This project is undertaken in partnership with Capitol University in Cagayan de Oro City and with the International Visitors Program-Philippines, and builds on the Philippine expertise of the major project supervisors.

The participants were selected from all geographic parts of the ARMM and nearby areas in an open, merit-based, recruitment strategy. The institute focuses on four key teaching modules: 1) volunteerism and civil society, emphasizing particularly the institutions and organizations that mediate between the national government and individuals; 2) contemporary American institutions in state and civil society that support ethnic diversity, affirmative action, and religious pluralism; 3) the underlying premises and practices of conflict resolution; and 4) the ethnic, ritual, historical, and moral dimensions of similarity and difference that underlie majority/minority ethnic and political ties in Southeast Asia. Through a variety of academic experiences and cultural visits to important historical landmarks and civic organizations in the Midwest, participants meet, learn, and exchange views with key individuals about ways to support a peaceful but ethnically and religiously plural society. The project is funded by the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (BECA) of the U.S. Department of State.

This Book

This book is the product of the four-week training program on inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution conducted at Northern Illinois University. This book has two major components. One, it is a collection of essays of our reflections related to the 2005 training program. Two, it is also a collection of workshop mechanics of our best practices from both the 2004 and 2005 programs. The authors of this book (Davide-Ong; Russell; Ty) argue that the content of the training program must be contextualized and respond to the particular needs of the local communities. We caution readers to consider its contents as one of many possible guides to advance inter-ethnic dialogue and settlement of conflicts. Moreover, we expect trainors who
use this book to modify the content and process of workshops they see in this book to meet the needs of their local contexts.

There are two target beneficiaries of this book. The primary recipients of this book are the participants of the 2005 program, who are now back in their residential, academic, and professional communities. They are youth leaders involved in continuing efforts to promote inter-ethnic communication and harmony at the grassroots level. The secondary readers of this book are people who are interested or actually engaged in training in general as well as those who are involved in actual inter-ethnic work in their daily lives. In both instances, this book helps guides them in the conceptualization and implementation of their programs that promote inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution.

**Organization of this Book**

The first two chapters of this book provide the contextual background to the more practical chapters that follow. Chapter 1 identifies former participants of the training program as the primary beneficiaries of this book and all others who are engaged in building inter-ethnic communities, either in a training program or in real life. It weaves together the whole book. This chapter explains that socio-cultural context provides the foundation upon which collaborative efforts for inter-ethnic dialogue is based. Furthermore, Chapter 1 emphasizes that nothing—including training—is more important than actually getting involved, in one’s own little ways, to make this world a better place. Training for social transformation helps the participants not only to open up their minds but more importantly to be exposed to social realities as well as to be immersed in actual inter-ethnic work. When different cultural groups get together to build community, they form relationships in order to learn more about each other’s identities, learn about their similarities, and appreciate their differences. By doing so, harmony is established and conflict is avoided.

Susan Russell wrote Chapter 2 which details global, national, and regional contexts within which people of diverse ethno-linguistic backgrounds co-exist. As the world gets more and more globalized, more frequent contacts among diverse people are inevitable. These interactions have both positive and negative repercussions. One the one hand, intensified socio-economic and political activities across countries and improvements in communication technologies have brought people closer to one another. On the other hand, the gap between the rich and the poor widens. Gendered social inequality, hunger, environmental degradation, and other forms of structural violence lead to ethnic conflicts, especially after the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s. Oppressed ethnic minorities in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe organize separatist movements and wage armed hostilities in order to attain social justice.

The Philippines is no exception. The predominantly Muslim areas in southern Philippines lag far behind the rest of the country in terms of social and economic development. Compared to Christian Filipinos, both Lumads (or the indigenous peoples of Mindanao) and Muslim Filipinos have not benefited from the wealth of the land and the fruits of development projects in their own land. As a result, Muslim Filipinos have organized different liberation movements and wage armed revolutions to assert their right to political and economic equality. Chapter 2 identifies the following, among others, as the root causes of ethnic conflicts and separatism in southern Philippines: poverty, marginalization, malnutrition, poor health, injustice, human rights violations, land conflicts, corruption, and intolerance. These problems are rooted in economic, political, social, and cultural inequalities. Thus, to end ethnic conflicts, the root causes of the hostilities in all fields of human endeavor must be addressed and resolved. Conducting training programs that encourage inter-ethnic dialogue is only one of many steps to pave the road to the fulfillment of justice and peace. The other, in fact more important steps, are coalition building and community building as well as engaging in inter-ethnic work to benefit and empower the economically, socially, and culturally marginalized groups of society. Chapter 2 provides the context and explains why there is a need for education and training that encourage inter-ethnic dialogue.

Rey Ty wrote Chapter 3, which starts with a theoretical foundation upon which critical education and training for social transformation are based. The framework explains that education and training must neither be acontextual nor ahistorical; rather they must respond to actual social needs. Furthermore, it explains that in order for real changes at the grassroots level to occur, the learning experience must be participatory. Therefore, workshop activities are great tools by which to provide critical, reflective, and creative thinking.
that advance both individual and societal transformation as well as emancipation. This chapter is a “tool kit for barefoot facilitators” for conducting training that encourages inter-ethnic dialogue and promotes conflict resolution. Rey Ty coined the term “barefoot facilitators” defining them as “popular educators and trainers who, depending on the historico-social contexts, use whatever resources and methodologies are available, from chalk talk to high-tech gadgets, and engage in open dialogic exchanges that help individuals and groups raise their consciousness and build structures from below that respond to the problems and needs of the poor, oppressed, deprived and exploited in civil society.” Workshop activities provided in Chapter 3 have self-explanatory titles, objectives of each session, a list of resources needed and procedures. Trainers who will use these workshop activities must understand the context within which they conduct their training and modify these activities to suit their specific needs. This chapter identifies and acknowledges the institutions and resource persons who are the source of the workshops.

April Gonzalez-Anderson compiled documents found in the last two chapters. These documents include essays, poems, a song, a pledge of commitment, as well as an inter-ethnic and interfaith prayer. The different essays include reflections of participants about (1) the conflict situations in their communities, (2) how the training program has impacted on them, and (3) how they envision improving the inter-ethnic situation in their communities in particular and in their country of origin in general. Aside from reflective essays, participants also wrote individual and regional action plans which they have implemented upon their return home. Both Susan Russell and Garth Katner went to the Philippines to join the participants in their evaluation of the implementation of their post-training action plans.

Challenge

You, as users of this book, can promote peace indirectly by conducting training programs. But more importantly, you can promote peace directly on a daily basis by being actively involved in working with people of different ethnic backgrounds which hitherto is quite a challenge. There is no shortcut to peace, which is a lifelong process and work. All of us can build peace, block by block, if we take the first step to get out of our comfort zones. We challenge every one of you, readers in general, to go out, engage in dialogue with people who have ethnicities, languages, religions, gender, and economic status different from yours. When you take the first step to relate to people of diverse backgrounds, you are already erecting the building blocks that will bring about lasting peace. When you hear anti-poor, racist and sexist remarks, you must speak up and defend people who are poor, people of all colors, and people of all gender. Still, you have to do more than that. You have to not only be exposed to but also work with people of all backgrounds as well as work for justice, not only once, but always and as a way of life. Then and only then can we have a world where social justice and peace will prevail and endure. We might not be able to witness such a world in our lifetime. But we have to start here and now. Go forth and take this challenge!
CHAPTER 2

Globalization, Cultural Diversity and Conflict

Globalization is an ancient phenomenon wherein people move beyond the borders of their home territory in search of greater economic resources, political control and cultural stimulation. Early cultural centers of the ancient and medieval world include the Mediterranean area, where Europe and Africa forged a variety of both cooperative and competitive trading relations, and the Middle East, home to Persian, Arabian and later Turkish Empires. The great civilizations of China and India, too, were linked to those of the Roman Empire through trade routes such as the great Silk Road, and later European incursions into Africa, the Americas and Asia in the 1400s to early 1900s testify to the long history of global interconnectedness. Yet in the Americas and the Caribbean, what seemed to Europeans to be new and exotic territorial and civilizational “discoveries” were actually sophisticated networks of diverse empires and peoples who had been exchanging goods and ideas for centuries.

Despite this long history, in recent decades globalization processes have been intrinsically linked to contemporary developments. As the growing plethora of introductory textbooks on the subject illustrates, the term increasingly has come to refer to the widening, deepening, and speeding up of global interconnectedness in the last few decades since the development of the Internet. This conceptualization of globalization emphasizes the stretching of social, political and economic activities across frontiers in ways that events in one part of the world can have significance for people in another part of the planet. It also emphasizes the growing intensification or magnitude of interaction and flows of people, ideas, technology and goods across states and societies of the world at an ever-increasing pace.

A comparative view of the world situation today reflects a complex array of both positive and negative side effects of globalization. On the positive side, the expansion of global trade and investment has brought increased prosperity to many peoples in different countries. Globalization has created new opportunities for expanded communication and linkages between peoples within and between countries that were not possible until recently. Cyberspace communities, chat rooms, electronic listserves and cell phones link people transnationally and enable rapid dissemination of cross-cultural, economic and political information. Along with the increased movement of goods and migration of peoples from one country to another, global telecommunications industries and an international media of television and film have rapidly multiplied the opportunities for new transnational cultural and group identities to arise and form.

On the negative side of globalization, however, the world has increasingly become aware of the stark inequalities between rich and poor nations and between the wealthy and the poor within nations. These dismal facts are as true for developing countries as for a developed country like the United States. About 1/6 of the world’s population has insufficient food, and 31 million Americans live in households that are “food insecure.” These figures do not reflect insufficient global food production, but primarily reflect problems of food maldistribution and the inability of many people to afford to buy food. In fact, despite decades of technological improvements in food production strategies, a higher percentage of the world’s population was hungrier in 2000 than in 1950. More broadly, Sernau notes that:


The richest 5 percent of the world’s people receive more than 100 times the income of the poorest 5 percent. In fact, the richest 1 percent alone receives more income than the poorest 50 percent of the world’s people…There is some evidence that income inequality between countries is declining…this is not true uniformly around the world, however. Incomes in Sub-Saharan Africa have fallen absolutely, leaving much of Africa even further behind the rest of the world than in 1990. In 1820, Western Europe’s per capita income was only about 3 times that of Africa’s; by 1992, it was over 13 times that of Africa, and the gap continues to grow.5

While China and India have both shown rapid economic growth and overall income increases, the gap between the wealthy and the poor within each of these countries is also enormous. Indeed, the gap between the wealthy and the poor within a country often reflects the uneven impacts of domestic and global investment, which favor areas with a strong urban infrastructure over those of rural regions. Small city-states like Singapore and the former British colony of Hong Kong have done very well in the global economy, as have South Korea and Taiwan. In Southeast Asia, much of peninsular Malaysia and urban Thailand have fared relatively well, while their more remote rural regions continue to struggle.

One of the consequences of the abject inequality within and between nations is a situation of “structural violence”, which refers to the disastrous effects of socio-economic and political structures that privilege a few wealthy elites at the expense of the much poorer majority. Generally, examples of structural violence include hunger and malnutrition, low birth weights, high morbidity and mortality figures, greater exposure to environmental pollution, limited access to clean water and health care, gendered educational disparities, and a much more limited set of options in life.

Modern media also reflects glaring inequality in that much global media emanates from Western countries. CNN, the BBC, Hollywood, MTV and a host of other privileged production sites present and represent modern cultures across the globe. The range of meanings that diverse non-Western peoples assign to images projected through multiple Western media reveal the active and selective construction of meaning among audiences. Frequently, such audiences derive alternative messages and interpretations that vary from those originally embedded in a specific visual or auditory text. Such media technologies typically encode a dominant moral, cultural as well as political and economic ideology and lifestyle. Still, the accessibility of video cameras to a range of marginalized groups allows them to promulgate alternative social points of view and to challenge orthodox projects and policies of dominant groups.

The speeded up flow of information across continents that results from ongoing and rapid developments in telecommunications and transportation sectors also opens up new spaces for dialogue and intercultural communication that are unprecedented in human history. Many people believe that these expanded and enhanced forms of cross-cultural communication offer the promise of a more peaceful future for humanity with fewer wars, rebellions and other intrastate and international hostilities.

Even as expanded communication opens the door for improved intercultural understanding, however, it also often leads to the strong assertion of distinctive ethnic, religious or political identities in cases where people feel their way of life, culture or religious beliefs and practices are threatened. A liberal, globalized media beams images of culturally unfamiliar ways of life into very different family settings and can generate strong and negative local reactions in various countries. The assertion of distinctive identities in a tolerant atmosphere supportive of cultural and religious pluralism can take the form of a celebration of diversity, or even create avenues towards intercultural dialogue that may ward off serious intercultural or intergroup misunderstandings and aggressive postures. In less tolerant or less exposed political climates, however, the response to the expression of ethno- or religious identities all too often leads a dominant group to impose its values and way of life through coercive means on smaller or more marginalized groups. The outcome of such encounters are often violent and tragic, and range from relatively localized conflicts to massive genocide.6

Since the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the initial hope that a new world order of development, trade, and peaceful negotiation of differences would arise has dimmed. Instead, a new world disorder of intense regional and civil conflicts has become all too common—not a huge world war, in other words, but a series of smoldering smaller wars (Sernau 2006:153). For example, one global survey by Robert Gurr (1993) of protracted social conflicts identified more than 230 groups with distinctive cultural identities who experience discrimination, marginalization and who engage in political or military action to seek redress of their grievances. Two prominent categories of actors within this larger set of conflicts are ‘ethnonationalists’, or large regionally concentrated identity groups who experienced autonomy in their histories and who have separatist goals, and ‘indigenous peoples’ who are the conquered descendants of the original inhabitants of a region and who experience state oppression. Many of these groups experience political and economic disadvantages and are concentrated in peripheral areas. Finally, the study found that the more culturally distinct minorities are from the dominant culture and religion of ruling groups in a country, the more they experience economic and political inequalities.

In Southeast Asia, armed separatist movements on a relatively small scale are as common as they are in places such as Sri Lanka, Bosnia and Rwanda. The region’s ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identities are diverse, and nationbuilding projects of various Southeast Asian states have often marginalized or attempted to assimilate minority groups to the cultural values of the dominant groups. To a large degree, modern ethnic mobilization and resurgent ethno-nationalism are products of socio-economic and political change. The postcolonial vicissitudes of states interacting within global capitalism and the latter’s inherent tendencies to aggravate social, economic and political inequalities even as it expands the visions and desires of local peoples for a greater piece of the pie are potent forces for polarization. State policies for dealing with ethno-nationalism also vary from accommodation to coercive suppression, from resettlement of a majority group into a minority-controlled peripheral zone, from a tolerance for ethnic and religious pluralism to insistence on conformity to a “one-size fits all” model.

The Philippines, a sprawling archipelago of over 7,000 islands and 87.9 million people, has a high degree of linguistic and ethnic diversity. Like other Southeast Asian nations that achieved independence after World War II and after centuries of Western colonial rule, the Philippine state has struggled to define a national identity among its hinterland populations. In this multiethnic nation, conflicts have centered on definitions of cultural citizenship, including political representation, national language, religious inclusion and educational access.

The Philippines is not a wealthy country by any standard, and has staggering differences in wealth distribution within the population. The dominant sector of the economy is clearly integrated into globalized trade and transport networks. Parts of the southern islands, specifically in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), however, continue to comprise a periphery that is not well linked into a globalized economy and where national political control is limited. The political and economic disadvantages experienced by peoples in the ARMM reflect the fact that it has been the site of decades of rebellion and war between two Muslim armed movements and the largely Christian government of the Philippines. The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao poverty incidence is the highest in the country, with a ranking of 73.9 percent incidence of poor population in 2000 compared to 40 percent for the country as a whole.

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the five provinces that constitute the ARMM, Basilan’s 2000 poverty incidence was 63 percent, Tawi-Tawi’s was 75.3 percent, and Sulu’s was a shocking 92 percent.\textsuperscript{11}

Predominantly Muslim provinces in Mindanao lag far behind the rest of the country in most aspects of socioeconomic development. Poverty levels in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao were roughly twice as high in 2004 as the national average, with per capita income of ₱274 (P15,344) per year.\textsuperscript{12} The 2005 Philippine Human Development Report (PHDR) reveals that four out of the five bottom-ranked provinces in the entire country in terms of the human development index are Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao and Sulu in the ARMM. The human development performance for these provinces is comparable to those of the world’s poorest countries located in Africa. Of the bottom 10 provinces in the country, 7 are in Mindanao, including Lanao del Sur in the ARMM, Sarangani and Zamboanga del Norte. Most of these provinces are conflict-ridden, and the report argues that as human insecurity intensifies due to armed conflict, people turn away from activities that might support their human development potential.\textsuperscript{13} The report indicates that the enduring conflict in Muslim Mindanao is costing the country 5-10 billion pesos annually since 1975.

These costs of the conflict in Mindanao do not include the costs due to injuries and indignities suffered by Filipino Muslims as a result of anti-Muslim bias. A specially commissioned opinion survey by Pulse Asia for the United Nations indicated a significant and alarming degree of anti-Muslim bias among 33-39\% of Filipinos, most of whom are Christian.\textsuperscript{14} The 2004 Philippine Country Report on Human Rights Practices by the U.S. Department of State similarly includes reference to discrimination, as many Muslims continue to feel underrepresented in senior civilian and military positions and cite the lack of proportional Muslim representation in national government institutions. The report argues that “Historically, Muslims have been marginalized by the Christian majority. The national culture, with its emphasis on familial, tribal, and regional loyalties, creates informal barriers whereby access to jobs or resources is provided first to those of one's own family or group network. Muslims reported difficulty renting rooms in boarding houses or being hired for retail work if they used their real names or wore distinctive Muslim dress. As a result, some Muslims used Christian pseudonyms and did not wear distinctive dress when applying for housing or jobs.”\textsuperscript{15}

While the lack of a feeling of belonging to the larger nation, and the feeling of being second-class citizens in the mostly Christian Philippines are certainly factors underlying the roots of Muslim separatist movements in the southern Philippines, there is no shortage of other reasons for these sentiments. The next section presents a very brief overview of Muslim Filipinos in Mindanao, followed by a section that summarizes the recent political chronology of rebellion.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{11} World Bank 2004 ARMM Social Assessment Report.

\textsuperscript{16}There are numerous scholarly overviews of the Mindanao conflict. We rely heavily in this section on relatively recent articles, rather than attempt to give a thorough grounding of the chronology and causes of rebellion.

The Bangsamoro and the Tri-Peoples of Mindanao

In terms of international trade, the southern Philippines, especially the Sulu region, became an important economic polity at the end of the 18th century. The Sultanate of Sulu’s main trading entrepot was at Jolo, where the supply and distribution of industrial goods from Europe and China was managed. Sulu was the northernmost of a series of petty trading and raiding states based on Islamic political ideas in the Malay archipelago. Jolo was a Tausug area, and the Sultanate became the most developed political system in the Philippines prior to the coming of the Spanish colonizers in the mid-1500s. Islam had entered the region much earlier, however, through Arab traders, Chinese Moslems from South China and Islamic missionaries from Brunei and elsewhere. When Spain conquered Manila they destroyed an Islamic principality related to the Brunei sultanate in Borneo. Spanish colonization of most of the Philippines over the next one hundred years prevented the further extension of Islam into the archipelago, but in the southern Philippines the Sultanates of Sulu and Maguindanao fiercely and successfully resisted both colonization and the Christianizing mission of the Spanish for 300 years. It was during this time that the Sulu Sultanate grew into one of the most powerful and significant pre-colonial trading states in island Southeast Asia. Similarly, the Sultanate of Maguindanao centered in Cotabato also became a major coastal sea-faring entity with strong linkages and alliances to interior groups in Mindanao. Smaller sultanates also existed in southwestern Mindanao, and the more coastally-isolated Maranao peoples of Lake Lanao developed a federated estate multi-centric power system known as the pat a pengampong ko ranao.

The largest and most successful sultanates of the southern Philippines were based on the coast, but had intricate networks of tribute and trade alliances with inland tribal peoples in Mindanao and Borneo. They also maintained what today would be considered international trading alliances with Indonesian, Chinese, Malaysian, and eventually European states. The three largest ethnolinguistic groups of the southern Philippines are the Tausug, Maguindanao, and the Maranao peoples of southwest Sulu and central Mindanao. Smaller ethnolinguistic groups include the Iranon of Cotabato and the southern Mindanao coast, the Yakan of Basilan, the Sama of Tawi-Tawi and other Sulu islands, the Jama Mapun and the Bajau (or ‘Sea Gypsies’) of Sulu, among others. Altogether, the Bangsamoro, or Moro “nation”, are made up of 13 different ethnolinguistic groups. As a result of massive in-migration of Christian settlers to Mindanao in the 20th century, the once dominant Moro peoples now comprise around 18 - 20 percent of Mindanao’s population (5 percent in the country as a whole).

Prior to the Spanish arrival, Mindanao was home to Muslim groups and to other non-Islamicized ethnolinguistic groups that today are classified as “indigenous peoples”. Rudy Rodil, a historian at Mindanao State University-Iligan and an expert on the conflict, has used the term “the tri-peoples” to refer categorically to the diverse ethnolinguistic inhabitants of Mindanao, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Sulu. This term encapsulates the 1) Islamic and Islamicized groups mentioned above, 2) the various “indigenous peoples”, collectively referred to as Lumad, and 3) the Christianized residents, most of whom settled in or are descendants of immigrants to Mindanao after World War II.

21 “Moro” originally was a term applied by the Spanish to all Islamic peoples in the Philippines, and derives from their term for Muslim enemies of Spain from Mauritania and Morocco. In the late 1960s, separatist leaders appropriated the term for all Muslims in opposition to the Christian Filipino government.

The Lumad, a generic term for the non-Muslim and non-Christian indigenous peoples or cultural communities in Mindanao, include the Ata, Bagobo, Mamanua, Mandaya, Kamayo, Mangguwangan, Manobo, Mansaka, Matigsalog, Subanun, Tagakaolo, Tala-andig, T’boli, Tiruray and Ubo. Many of these groups are Christianized or partly Christianized today, and some are partly Islamicized. Moreover, there is some overlap, such as among the highland Christianized Maranao. These ethnic groups make up approximately five percent of the total Mindanao population, according to the 1990 census.

While most Christians are recent settlers or descendants of settlers in the 20th century, they also comprise an indigenous group in Mindanao. Almost 200,000 Visayan-speaking peoples of northern and eastern Mindanao were converted to Christianity during the Spanish colonial period. These include peoples of Butuan, Davao, Camiguin island, Cagayan de Oro, Misamis Oriental, Iligan, Ozamiz, Dapitan, Dipolog, and the Chavacano of Zamboanga City, among others. These people have now integrated into the larger Christian population of Mindanao, but dialect differences, especially among Chavacanos, remain apparent. The Chavacanos were originally natives of Ternate in the Moluccan islands of eastern Indonesia and were Christianized. The Spaniards brought them to Zamboanga and Manila in the mid-1800s (or earlier) to serve as soldiers, and Spanish language today remains a key element of Chavacano language. Christians today constitute over 70 percent of the population in Mindanao owing to large scale emigration after World War II.

In 1898 at the end of the Spanish-American war, the Philippines was ceded by Spain to the United States under the Treaty of Paris. Although they were never part of Spain’s colony in the Philippines, Mindanao and Sulu were included in the treaty. Muslim Filipinos in the south strongly protested this action on the grounds that they were independent states, and U.S. military forces then became heavily engaged in battles to defeat armed resistance. By 1913, in the Battle of Bud Bagsak, the United States eventually succeeded in bringing Mindanao and Sulu into the new American colony of the Philippines. What followed were a variety of policies designed to integrate Muslim Filipinos into the larger mainstream Christian Filipino society, especially through the provision of scholarships to the children of Moro nobility. Despite the success of many of these efforts, armed resistance by various Muslim Filipino groups continued to break out periodically throughout American colonial rule and continued after the Philippines became an independent nation.

During American colonial rule, the Moro and Lumad Filipinos were categorized and administered separately as the Moro and Wild Tribes, generally administered through the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes, as opposed to the “civilized” majority of Christian Filipinos. In 1957, the Philippine government formally declared that non-Christian Filipinos would be called the National Cultural Minorities. Later, the Constitutions of 1973 and 1987 re-labeled them respectively as “Cultural Communities” and then “Indigenous Cultural Communities”. The fact that all of these people are indigenous remains the enduring enigma of this kind of ethno-linguistic categorization, as Filipino Muslims and Lumad peoples retain elements of a pre-Islamic, Malay cultural stratum common to insular Southeast Asia and expressed in dress, political order, cultural beliefs and practices that many Christian Filipinos once shared but now have lost.

The Basic Causes of Separatism in the Southern Philippines

In the late 1960s, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) was formed by Nur Misuari and armed rebellion again broke out in Mindanao. The causes of this rebellion are many, but have much to do with desires to re-acquire the status of a separate, independent state, or Bangsa Moro, wherein Muslim Filipinos would have greater access to and control over social services so that they could actually benefit from economic development in Mindanao. They also wanted to be able to protect and regain their ancestral lands that were being taken over by Christian Filipino and other multi-national corporations and establish an Islamic way of life.

The inequities and social injustice that Moro Filipinos experienced and that finally culminated in outright rebellion had much to do with transmigration policies pursued both by the American and later national Philippine government. At the turn of the 20th century, Mindanao was still viewed by power-holders in Manila as “the land of promise”—a large and rich island whose physical and natural resources had yet to be fully developed. The U.S. colonial government, hoping both to integrate local populations of Mindanao and
Sulu into the larger society and to exploit these resources, initiated a homesteading policy designed to attract settlers from overcrowded regions of the central and northern Philippines to settle in what they saw as the under-populated southern Philippines. American and later Filipino policymakers felt that closer intermingling would spread the national culture values into this region and reduce the likelihood of continued armed resistance in the future. Much of the American interest in encouraging transmigration also had to do with the need to deal with increasing unrest among tenants and sharecroppers in central Luzon, where poverty, inequity, and a lack of American political ability to enforce a meaningful land reform was providing a fertile ground for communist insurgency. While the amount of emigration from the north to Mindanao remained relatively small throughout the American colonial period, it intensified in the decades after the end of World War II.

By the early 1970s, the immigration of Christian Filipinos to Mindanao had created a lopsided social landscape wherein Moro Filipinos and indigenous tribal Filipinos (Lumads) had become minorities in their own homeland. Violent encounters between both Moros and Christians, as well as between Christians and Lumads, had become common in Mindanao over rights to ancestral land, as well as the loss of political authority by local *datus* and their followers. Both Moros and Lumads felt that not only were their access to ancestral lands and other productive resources being lost, but that their cultural identities were being overwhelmed. It was during this period that the national government’s view of the ethno-linguistically diverse Muslim (Moro) Filipinos as “religious” minorities and the equally diverse non-Muslim, non-Christian (Lumad) Filipinos as “cultural minorities” sharpened.

Unfortunately, the initial governmental response in Manila to the rebellion of the Moro National Liberation Front was a military one, and fighting raged in Mindanao. The declaration of martial law in 1972 by former President Ferdinand Marcos also led to intensified military confrontations in the region. A number of efforts to quell the conflict were attempted, including the creation of a Southern Philippines Development Authority and interventions by the Organization of Islamic Conference and other international parties. These had little effect, however, until President Gaddafi of Libya intervened.

In 1976, the Tripoli Agreement was signed in Libya between the Philippine government and the MNLF. It provided for political autonomy for the thirteen provinces of Mindanao, Sulu and southern Palawan, which Moro Filipinos saw as their traditional homeland or sphere of influence. It also gave amnesty to the rebels. However, when then-President Marcos insisted on a plebiscite vote in the affected provinces to determine if local populations supported autonomy, the MNLF and its followers boycotted the vote. Only four provinces voted for autonomy, and so separate autonomous regions were established in Regions IX and XII. These autonomous governments were weak, and lacked political power and funding.

The failure to gain real or meaningful autonomy also led to divisions within the MNLF, where disagreements between leaders of different ethno-linguistic and political factions existed. In 1977, Hashim Salamat, with a group of primarily Maguindanao-Iranun followers, established the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Nur Misuari, who was Tausug-Samal, remained the leader of the government-recognized MNLF. A second, mostly Maranao faction, the MNLF-Reformist Group, similarly revolted against the leadership of Nur Misuari.

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22 It also is claimed that the Jebidah massacre of at least 23 young Moro soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in Corregidor in 1968 was the key spark to the separatist movement in Mindanao. See Vitug, Marites D. and Gloria, Glenda M. 2000. *Under the Crescent Moon: Rebellion in Mindanao*. Quezon City: Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs and the Institute for Popular Democracy.


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In 1986, when Corzaon Aquino became President of the Philippines, a new constitution was written that established provisions for a new Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (as well as a Cordillera Autonomous Region in northern Luzon, where communist insurgents were battling government forces). The MNLF did not participate in the design of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), and the subsequent plebiscite again received popular support for joining the ARMM from only four of the thirteen provinces and none of the cities.24 The conflict continued, and the prospects for peace remained remote.

In 1992, President Fidel Ramos renewed negotiations with Nur Misuari and the MNLF, aided by Libya as well as the Organization of Islamic Conference. In 1996, an agreement was reached among all parties that established a Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD) and a Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD). The SZOPAD would be comprised of the 14 provinces (one was added) and 9 cities recognized in the Tripoli Agreement and would be the focus of peace and development efforts. The SPCD was the legal body that consisted of a chairman, vice chairman, and three deputies, each of whom would represent the Christian, Moro, and “Cultural Communities” (Lumad). It was to be assisted by a Darul Iftah (religious advisory council) appointed by the chairman. The agreement also provided for a Consultative Assembly of 81 members, comprising the chair of the SPCD as head, the governor and vice governor of the ARMM, the 14 provincial governors and 9 city mayors of the SZOPAD, 44 members of the MNLF, and 11 representatives nominated by non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) and people’s organizations. The Consultative Assembly’s functions were to serve as a forum to hear problems and defuse conflict, to conduct public hearings and advise the SPCPD, and to recommend policies to the President.25

This 1996 Peace Agreement provided for the employment of MNLF rebels (the Bangsa Moro Army) with the Philippine National Police, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and related special forces. For those who would not be absorbed this way, provisions were made for socio-economic development, cultural and educational assistance. It also provided for a new ARMM executive council, legislative assembly and administrative system that would have legislative power over agreed-upon areas of autonomy—such as Shariah law, and representation in the national government, including the Cabinet and National Security Council. Special provisions were included for the religious schools (madari), such as the recognition of Arabic language instruction and Islamic values as part of their core curriculum. Nur Misuari later was appointed chairman of the SPCPD and subsequently was elected governor of the ARMM. A plebiscite again was scheduled by terms of the agreement for 1998. This plebiscite was not enacted until 2001. Only five provinces and one city voted in favor of joining the newly-defined ARMM. Nur Misuari was not re-elected governor, and he then proceeded to launch an armed attack on the national army. He later was arrested and turned over to the Philippine government by the Malaysian government, as he had tried to escape to the Malaysian province of Sabah on the island of Borneo to avoid arrest. He is currently in jail, awaiting a trial on charges of rebellion.26

The hope that this agreement engendered did not last. Christian leaders in Mindanao objected to autonomy and other features of the agreement. As a result, the final version of the executive order severely limited the ability of the SPCPD to recommend policy or actually control any aspect of government, and eliminated the 44 MNLF members in the Consultative Assembly. Peace remained elusive, as the MILF began to gather further strength amid suspicion that the national government was not really committed to peace or autonomy. The fact that very few real social or economic benefits ever accrued to average Moro (or Lumad) peoples and the reality of a host of failed promises led many Moro Filipinos to give up hopes for a brighter future through negotiation with the national government. While the United Nations Multi-Donor Assistance Programme helped establish many Peace and Development Communities that include Lumad and non-Muslim residents and which are led by former MNLF leaders, the conflict continued.

In 2000, the more militant Moro Islamic Liberation Forces’ attacks on non-Muslim communities in North Cotabato and Maguindanao led President Joseph Estrada to renew Philippine military assaults and war against them. Hundreds of thousands of displaced people and thousands of deaths resulted. It is not known how many people died. In 1996, the Armed Forces of the Philippines said that over a period of 26 years since

24 May, R.J., 2002, op cit, p.3.

1970, more than 100,000 persons had been killed in the conflict in Mindanao. Of these, 30 percent were government casualties, 50 percent were rebels, and 20 percent were civilians. It was estimated that 55,000 civilians and soldiers had been injured, while nobody knows how many rebels were injured. During that 26 year period, the Armed Forces spent 73 billion pesos on the war, or an average of 40 per cent of its annual budget. Dr. Rudy Rodil, a member of the government negotiating panel with the MNLF as well as with the MILF and author of the book, *Kalinaw Mindanaw: the Story of the GRP-MNLF Peace Process, 1975-1996,* has noted that the cost of negotiating peace with the MNLF between 1992 and 1996 was less than 60 million pesos. In 2001, after the Estrada administration’s renewed war against the MILF, the government said at least six billion pesos had been spent on the war in the year 2000—a billion pesos higher than what the government spends on building schools in the country. An additional 16 million pesos was spent on relief assistance to displaced persons and evacuees.

In 2002, Paul Dominguez, the Presidential Assistant for Regional Development, quoted preliminary findings from a World Bank Study that indicated that the economic cost alone, not including the social costs, of a never-ending conflict in Mindanao would be at least 2 billion U.S. dollars over the next ten years. That figure breaks down into 108 billion pesos for 10 years or 10.8 billion pesos a year. The figures were calculated by international economists who had other models such as Nicaragua to follow, and who likened the conflict in Mindanao to that of a never-ending war with periodic flare-ups. Southwestern Mindanao in particular, but also the ARMM as a whole, also was pointed out as having dropped to the bottom of the country in social services, including education, infrastructure, and income of the population.

To make matters worse, after the year 2000 war, the national budget of the Philippines rose from 725 billion pesos in 2001 to 780.79 billion pesos in 2002, and 804.2 billion pesos in 2003. Yet Mindanao’s share of this national budget declined from 13.9 per cent of the national budget in 2001 to 11.9 percent in 2002. In 2003, Mindanao’s share was only 10.55% of the national budget. Hence, while the economic cost of the war in Mindanao is very high, and the loss of life and social dislocation huge, the southern Philippine region as a whole paid an additional price in foregone benefits from the national government’s fiscal allocation.

In part, perhaps, as a result of these findings, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo embarked on a renewed effort to negotiate peace with the MILF. In 2004, a Malaysian-led peace monitoring team arrived in Mindanao and are expected to stay for an undetermined period. Formal peace negotiations between the Philippine government and the MILF, brokered by Malaysia and involving representatives of the Organization of Islamic Conference, have been ongoing. The goal is to discuss a comprehensive solution that involves many different areas of concern to the Moro Filipino population, including self-governance, socio-economic development, Islamic shari‘ah and education, a multi-cultural curriculum and recognition of ancestral lands in the ARMM (Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, and Marawi City). The leader of the MILF, Ebrahim Murad, has stated publicly that the 12,000 members of his group are united and committed to negotiating with the Philippine national government over a pre-agreed upon set of issues for resolving the conflict. As of this time, March 2006, discussions between both sides and a cease fire between the MILF and the Armed Forces of the Philippines are still ongoing.

Underlying the basis of the conflict in Mindanao are struggles among the Moro and indigenous non-Muslim peoples for greater socio-economic development, equal recognition and support for their cultural and religious identities, and social justice. Dr. Moctar Matuan, Executive Director, Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao, Mindanao State University, Marawi City, summarized in August, 2004, the history of peace efforts in Muslim Mindanao. He noted that in 1975 only the Dansalan Research Center was trying to address the negative images that Moro and Christian Filipinos in Mindanao had of each other.

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29 Lecture delivered at the Follow-on Activities for the ACCESS Philippines project in Cagayan de Oro, August, 2004.

through dialogue. At this point, violent conflict had already broken out in Mindanao. In the 1980s, a few other groups had joined, notably the Southern Philippine Center for Peace Studies at Mindanao State University in Marawi and the Peace Center at Notre Dame University. The issues they addressed focused on equality of rights, the need to maintain peace, and economic growth and development. In his view, President Fidel Ramos was the first president interested to pursue peace in Mindanao.

In discussing the range of issues that constitute the “Mindanao problem”, Dr. Matuan mentioned the following multiple causes of the conflict:

--poverty, inequality, and environmental destruction
--political corruption
--negative images held by Christians, Moro, and Lumad peoples of each other
--failure of the national government to integrate Moro peoples into a national Filipino identity
--the economic exploitation of Mindanao’s resources and the migration of Filipinos from the north that led to a loss of ancestral lands
--the Moro struggle for self-rule.

As he noted, all of these factors led to the reality today that many Moro and Lumad Filipinos are economically marginalized; politically marginalized; lack national recognition and respect for their unique cultural and religious identities; and feel a sense of insecurity, hopelessness, and resentment toward the national government. Rather than having the opportunity to express their grievances and receive assistance from the government, Moro and Lumad Filipinos experience massive poverty, social injustice, and are exploited by corrupt leaders and military commanders alike. The national Philippine government, from their viewpoint, is indifferent to their plight and so they do not experience feelings of belongingness or allegiance to the Philippine state.

The loss of ancestral land to in-migrant populations and the fairly rapid move from independent Islamic sultanates and local chieflyships to marginalized cultural and religious minorities remain at the heart of the Mindanao conflict. The total Islamized population of Mindanao was estimated at 39.29 percent in 1903; but only 20.17 percent in 1975. The total Lumad population was 22.11 percent in 1903; and only 6.86 percent in 1975.30

The exploitation of Mindanao’s rich environment was easily captured first by American interests, later by more modernized, business-inclined capitalist Christian Filipinos, and also by multi-national corporations. Logging concessions, pasture land conversion, land titling through complex legal channels that Moro and Lumad Filipinos scarcely comprehended, and now mining concessions have led to an enormous loss of their homeland and resources upon which to develop their communities. Multi-national companies opened up plantations and went into partnerships with Christian Filipinos to develop Mindanao’s resources, with little regard for the livelihood problems of the Moro and Lumad peoples and the growing resentment among many local inhabitants.

In this brief history, the unique tri-partite character of the conflict came into being. It is not simply a Christian and Muslim conflict, nor strictly an indigenous Mindanaoan resident versus in-migrating settler conflict. The politicization of the indigenous peoples into three separate categorizations (Moro, Christian, and Lumad) has followed from relatively recent events in the 20th century. Prior to that period, these groups interacted, allied, traded, married, sometimes preyed upon each other as slaves, but were not crystallized into three opposing (yet diverse) groups. It is the process of marginalization, not only in the sense of being overwhelmed by the sheer number of Christian settlers, but by the loss of homeland and the fear of further erosion of their cultural and religious identities, that underlie the conflict.

In a recent article, Archbishop Orlando B. Quevedo notes that the Philippine government’s analysis of the insurgency in Mindanao identifies four main roots of the conflict:31


1. Poverty, including low productivity, criminality, marginalization, and environmental degradation;

2. Ignorance, including poor schools and education;

3. Disease, including malnutrition and poor access to health services;

4. Injustice, including violation of human rights, land conflicts, and graft and corruption.

What is surprising about this review of the roots of the conflict is that there is no mention of a lack of national concern to enhance and preserve the cultural, ethnic and religious identities of the diverse Moro and non-Muslim, non-Christian Lumad Filipinos in Mindanao. Yet it is only through the establishment of awareness and respect for ethnic and religious diversity among all peoples in the Philippines that a climate of tolerance and social justice is likely to come about in the south. The ACCESS Philippines project is designed to contribute toward that goal, especially by bringing youth of different ethnic and religious backgrounds in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and surrounding areas together to work for peace and to forge a bridge to a new future.

Resolving the Conflict in Mindanao:

At the present time, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines are continuing an ongoing series of discussions designed to negotiate a potential peace settlement. The talks are being brokered by Malaysia and there is an international ceasefire monitoring team in Mindanao that arrived in 2004. Although the substance of the talks is secret, numerous pronouncements have been offered by both sides. At this point, it would be premature to summarize all of the points that are being foreshadowed in the news, but in general there is a certain degree of optimism that a settlement might be reached in the coming year.

Certain facts continue to offer hope for the outcome and aftermath of the peace discussions. First, and on the positive side, many international donor organizations and countries such as the United States, Australia, the European Union, Japan, Canada and other Muslim countries led by Saudi Arabia, Libya and Malaysia have pledged to provide aid once a peace agreement is signed. The World Bank and the United Nations Development Program, among others, also have set up rehabilitation plans for Mindanao in the event that a peace agreement is signed. Second, the leaderships of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine government have indicated a strong commitment to the peace process. Third, the substantive issues of the peace discussions pointedly include key issues that were never resolved after the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF but which must be dealt with if a lasting peace is to occur. Foremost among these issues is the one concerning territorial domain and ancestral lands of the Moro and Lumad peoples. A final very positive development in support of the long term prospects for peace is the presence of a much more active civil society sector in Mindanao that has arisen since 1996. The presence of new civil society groups helps provide oversight to prevent the repetition of earlier mistakes and to try and keep both the government and the MILF focused on attaining a sustainable peace settlement despite periodic violations of the cease fire agreement and other misunderstandings.

While these factors hopefully together will result in a final peace agreement to disarm and develop the ARMM region, there are some lingering concerns. First, the resolution of the conflict with the MILF means either that the Philippine government is going to deal separately with the MILF and the MNLF or that the two separatist groups are going to cooperate in working together to iron out the differences between the 1996 MNLF peace agreement with the government and any new agreement with the MILF. One of many puzzles to be resolved is that the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao was a dividend of the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF and recent elections for this regional government have been held. However, the MILF currently is staunchly opposed to any form of autonomy and is seeking some type of self-determination

32 Whereas Philippine government pronouncements are easily available in the news, a fuller view of MILF comments can be found at www.luwaran.com.
within a potentially shared political arrangement with the Philippine government that has yet to be decided upon. Second, the possibility exists that a separate faction within the MILF might become another breakaway rebel group as a result of disagreement with a new peace settlement. Were this to occur, it would be a potential disaster as renewed conflict would continue to stifle the delivery of foreign aid and any larger development plans funded by international donors. Finally, as Eder and McKenna (2004) point out, there is the risk that the mainstream movement for Muslim autonomy and self-governance is threatened or derailed by radical Islamic extremists. While recent military efforts to quell the radical Abu Sayyaf Group are said to have reduced the power and numbers of active members, Abu Sayyaf continues to engage in occasional terrorist acts.

In the booklet we produced at the end of the first year of the ACCESS Philippines project, we ended a similar section on the current status of the conflict by posing the question: at the end of the day, is peace elusive? Pessimists claim that peace is nowhere in sight. Optimists, however, argue that peace comes piecemeal, one person and one activity at a time. Certainly, recent years have shown that there is no military solution to the conflict in Mindanao. Instead, a variety of peace-building efforts is underway and has been gaining strength. The ACCESS Philippines project is one of these efforts, and is dedicated to creating a new generation of empowered youth leaders from all faiths and ethnic groups in the southern Philippines who desire to make a sustained peace a reality. Respect, appreciation, tolerance and national reconciliation depend on a broader understanding of the conflict and history of the peoples of Mindanao. While this booklet is being produced at the end of the 2nd year of the ACCESS Philippines project, a third year of the project is already underway. It is anticipated that as we contribute to ongoing local efforts to build a network of youth in Mindanao dedicated to sharing their experiences in peace-building, dialogue and conflict resolution that a brighter future will surely follow.

Globalization continues to teach us many lessons, not least of which are the ways in which various countries or sectors within different countries disagree about what is fair and how legitimate grievances of various minority groups and classes should be resolved. But increased global communication and flows of people, ideas and goods also have opened up the opportunities for enhanced communication and shone a strong flashlight on the causes of conflict in different parts of the world. It also illuminates the need for dialogue between countries and within different sectors of a nation-state. Governments, religious leaders, non-governmental organizations, educational leaders, private businesses, and ordinary citizens need forums to communicate their concerns. Indeed, dialogue remains one of the most common forms of informal peace-building and conflict resolution in the world today. “Dialogue” refers to the open and sincere exchange of ideas and thoughts or concerns between different parties. The goal of dialogue in peace-building or conflict resolution is to generate increased understanding and trust between opposing parties. In this sense, many lesser known, even unheralded forms of ordinary human interaction, such as academic exchange programs with professors or students (including the ACCESS Philippines program), community “town hall” meetings, radio call-in talk shows, inter-religious forums, and other communication interchange venues are examples of “dialogue”. While training a new generation in inter-ethnic and inter-faith dialogue and tolerance of diversity will not alleviate the need for social justice and greater economic and political capacity-building in Mindanao, it is our fervent hope that it will contribute to an eventual broadening of people’s access to the discussions.


CHAPTER 3

A Tool Kit for Barefoot Facilitators:
Animating Training Programs for Human Rights, Social Transformation and Just Peace

Introduction

What role can adult education play through interfaith dialogue in promoting a culture of social justice which in turn leads to sustainable peace? How can transformational training that promotes conflict resolution challenge traditional structures of conflict? What contributions does training make to social change? How does training facilitate interfaith dialogue and conflict resolution? How can the effectiveness of the training program be improved?

Using the “Philippine Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution” model, this work aims to demonstrate that adult education, which emphasizes social justice and human rights, helps in relaxing the tension among people of different social classes, ethnicities, religions, and gender, thereby contributing to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. This document highlights the contributions an NIU-based training program makes to conflict resolution and peace in southern Philippines. It also examines factors that limit people’s participation in the peace efforts. Furthermore, it aims to determine a strategy for strengthening the peace movement in southern Philippines.

The Chinese term for peace is composed of two words: social harmony and equality. If we have both concord and egalitarianism in society, then we can attain peace. That is easier said than done. We not only have to talk the talk, but more importantly walk the walk. Education is not neutral: in a situation where poverty, injustice, and conflicts exist, educators have the responsibility to take the side of just peace, rebuke discrimination and injustice as well as to advance the causes of civil liberties and equal rights.

Chinese calligraphy will be interspersed with the text throughout this document. They serve two functions. The first one is aesthetic. The second one is educational. These artworks also serve as another teaching and learning tool about certain values, such as goodwill, justice, cooperation, harmony, love of nature, respect for life, peace, learning, and the like.

Social Context and Education for Social Justice and Peace

In a social context where there is rampant violation of civil liberties and civil rights as well as where there are socio-economic inequalities, racism, sexism, discrimination, violence, and conflicts, important social issues such as power relations, class, gender, ethnicity, and religion must be addressed in youth and adult education to advance critical pedagogy for social transformation. Non-formal training must uphold the philosophy of justice and peace which advances the objectives of human rights, equality and non-discrimination.

Through non-formal education, participants will be engaged in the formation of individual and social transformation, community empowerment, and promote just power relations at home, work, in the society at large and in the world in general. Through critical pedagogy, co-learners will continue the struggle against racism, sexism, inequality, and all forms of discrimination and continue working for women’s empowerment, human rights, fairness, justice for all, and peace. In short, education for justice and peace advances the objectives of human rights, equality, and non-discrimination. Clearly, our approach is not merely psychological, but social. We do not only think about solving interpersonal problems but actually seek to and bring about changes in favor of social justice and human rights in order to attain just peace.

**Banking Education**

There are two major ways in conducting education and training sessions. In the traditional approach, the lecturer is the omniscient and omnipotent knowledge provider, while the learners are receptive vessels to which knowledge is transferred (Freire; Cunningham, 2002; Gajanayake, 2005). This is the banking approach to education. In this approach, education is supposedly neutral and knowledge is acquired through rote memorization. Students are alienated from the learning experience because the culture of silence does not allow them to link their life experiences with classroom learning. For this reason, social oppression, class inequality, gender bias, and religious bigotry are not excavated, addressed, challenged, or changed.

In the traditional model, the instructor teaches and the participants learn. But in the non-traditional approaches, both the participants and the instructors learn from each other and teach each other. In contrast to the banking education, critical education treats education as an act of freedom, not only because of its participatory methodology but also its emancipatory substance. It aims to empower learners to deal with and respond to social problems in order to bring about changes in favor of social justice and peace. In the liberating approach to education, barefoot facilitators and grassroots participants are critical, socially contextualized, active co-learners who aim to alter the existing conditions of conflict and injustice. Barefoot facilitators are popular educators and trainers who, depending on the historico-social contexts, use whatever resources and methodologies are available, from chalk talk to high-tech gadgets, and engage in open dialogic exchanges that help individuals and groups raise their consciousness and build structures from below that respond to the problems and needs of the poor, oppressed, deprived and exploited in civil society.

In a participatory educational experience, participants are encouraged to be actively involved in the learning process. As they have their own experiences, talents, and skills to share with everyone, they are involved in presenting their ideas in a variety of ways. Traditionally, participants can raise questions and write reports. However, they can also creatively produce non-traditional educational outputs, such as poetry, music, song, games, dance, paintings, pottery, crafts, other art works, outdoor sports, and even a theater production. We can learn new things by doing things together. We have done all these and they were successful. For manageability and reproducibility, artwork ideally should be 4” x 5” or 8” x 11” in size. All the artworks can be organized, scanned and put together in an e-Book, which will be distributed and shared with all the participants electronically.

If there is justice for people of diverse belief systems, the indigenous peoples, women, workers, peasants, people of different sexual orientations, and the natural world, then there can be peace. If there exists a condition where conflict and all types of violence prevail—in short, if there is no peace—then that is because there is injustice committed against some segments of humanity or its natural world.

In the Access to Community and Civic Enrichment for Students (ACCESS) Philippines Program, barefoot facilitators conduct interactive workshops to empower the grassroots participants. Co-learners in the ACCESS Philippines Program are engaged in efforts that promote inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution in Southern Philippines. As members of the Philippine society with a sense of social responsibility, participants deal with issues related to ethnicity, gender, abilities, and class in their efforts to advance the cause of social justice and peace (Finger, 1989; Holst, 2002; Scott, 1990; Welton, 1993). Thus, participants are engaged in social involvement that promotes cultural and environmental diversity as well as social change.

**Critical and Transformational Education**

Critical education is a continuing and lifelong process. Guided by the barefoot facilitators, the youth and their adult leaders engage in participatory research for social transformation, set their expectations, look at their own social and personal contexts, lay down their mission, learn lessons on conflict resolution, as well as develop, implement and evaluate their individual and regional action plans. This program facilitates the growth, expansion, and consolidation of a social movement within civil society that promotes justice and peace. Hence, learning is a social practice that responds to real social needs. During the non-formal training session, we are conscious that we are critical social actors who are engaged in critical reflection and use education and research to help construct a just and peaceful society. This peace movement itself is a social learning site where knowledge is used to alter conditions of injustice and un-peace in society.

As people with diverse gender, abilities, ethnic, and class backgrounds, we speak with different voices and have different lived experiences and narratives. Different but together, we are engaged in collection action for social change. As people belonging to one common human race and one Earth in which we live, we speak with one voice to uphold life to the fullest. Thus, we affirm our individual and local struggles and at the same time link our arms together in solidarity in our mobilization for social change that respects ethnic, religious, abilities, and gender diversity. We are driven by a moral and ethical commitment to expose and oppose injustices, such as economic exploitation, ethnocentrism, racism, and sexism, wherever they are committed. Training elements of the peace movement is concretely linked to social action that promotes egalitarianism.

Knowles (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999) provided five assumptions about how people learn. Knowles’ teachings are applied not only to andragogy (or adult learning) but also to pedagogy (children’s learning). One, we tend to be self-directed. Two, we have real-world experiences that can inform and enrich our learning experience. Three, the more closely related our learning is to our developmental tasks of our social roles, the more ready we are to learn. Four, we are problem-centered and not subject-centered, because we want to apply immediately what we learn. Lastly, we are internally motivated to learn. The degree to which these assumptions apply to each individual—young or mature—depends on each individual, based upon various factors that affect the individual.

In liberating education, participants are sovereign learners, productive social beings, comp self-directed learners, productive citizens, effective communicators, critical thinkers, and cooperative contributors in the classroom and in society. Changing the teacher’s dialogue with students is critical to changing the dynamics of the classroom. These powerful words cause students to listen and respond differently. Over time, the entire atmosphere in the classroom will change into a respectful, encouraging climate.

Using Freirean critical pedagogy which stresses the dialogic method, participants realize that learning is an act of freedom, where social capital is built, the interfaith community is enhanced, and the voices of the oppressed are heard. Breaking the culture of silence, participants of diverse backgrounds come together to pose questions in order to understand and work for the resolution of the root causes of structural problems with which they are confronted. With their consciousness raised, they try to work together for their mutual liberation, no matter how hard it is. This liberating education is one step in an ongoing process to deepen the participants’ understanding of the root causes of social conflict so that they can work towards the resolution of such conflicts and create the conditions under which peace based on justice can be established.

Methodology

This document is a “tool kit” that barefoot facilitators can use when they go out to the field to conduct education and training programs for social transformation. It presents the bare bones of workshops which can be modified to suit the specific individual, local, community, diversity, and other needs. Note that

these workshops are not exact representation of those which were actually conducted during Phil ACCESS training programs but are modified and synthesized versions which can be adapted to suit your needs. Users of the manual are encouraged to further adapt these workshops in order to meet the contextual needs of your learners.

As historical and social contexts change, so do the training needs. Make sure you modify the workshop activities to fit the social demands, gaps and needs to which you respond. The time frame for each workshop activity can run anywhere from fifteen minutes to half a day. The duration of each workshop depends upon your objective, focus, and emphasis. Remember that a barefoot facilitator is flexible, including in terms of the use of time to meet specific needs of different beneficiaries, programs, or communities. Nothing is set in stone.

Both content and process are important in animating workshops. The substantive elements of workshops must focus on different issues involving human rights, social justice and sustainable peace. The methods can vary. One method can be used to convey different messages. A method is not bound to a specific content. For instance, Concentric Circle is simply an approach that could be used to convey the message of dialogue, negotiation, enquiry, or conciliation. While both substance and form are both vital to the success of a workshop, interaction and fun alone are only a means and not the end in view. We could have all fun and interactive activities in the world, but if no substantive message is conveyed, then the workshop substantively is a failure. In like manner, a boring and condescending lecture by an authoritarian speaker talking about conflict resolution who scolds at the participants all the time is a dismal failure as well.

Workshop participants must be reminded to keep in mind the situation on the ground in their own communities specifically. Workshop participants can learn a lot about abstract concepts, interpersonal conflict, or the U.S. situation. But they must be grounded on the economic, political, social, and cultural contexts in which they live. Whatever the workshops are, the facilitators must make the participants keep in mind and stress how the learning experiences apply to their local situation. Resource persons and workshop participants can be active co-learners as the former conducts interactive activities, while the latter share how the lessons they learned can be applied to their local contexts. To make sure this is done, resource persons must ask questions during the Question and Answer (Q & A) session how what they have learned can be applied to the situation on the ground in their own social contexts specifically. Furthermore, when workshop participants reflect on the day's activities in writing their journal entries, they must be reminded to write about how what they have learned applies to their own situation. The interactive and participatory process is important; but more important is the substance. Participants may immensely enjoy and successfully absorb the fun processes of ice-breakers and team-building activities, but they must more importantly remember to do the more substantive aspects of collaborative social work and inter-ethnic or multicultural community transformation when they return home. Fun is important; but substance must not be sacrificed for fun. They need to be reminded about that. When everything is said and done, participants must be versed in strategic planning, organizational management, program planning, fund raising, coalition building, communications, and public relations. When participants go home, they must not just "talk" (such as re-echoing ice breakers and team-building activities) but "do" things. In short, remind them not just simply to "re-echo" ice breakers and team-building activities and other fun things they have learned, when they return home. Rather, when they go back to their social contexts, they must do social action and concretely work to build interfaith or inter-communal coalitions, collaborate, and adopt causes that advance social justice and human rights. Then, a more durable peace is possible.

I would like to thank all the resource persons from different institutions and organizations who have or with whom we have conducted variations of these workshops. Of course, my work in human rights, social justice, and peace research and education starting with human rights and peace organizations as well as church institutions in the Philippines and around the world, for which I am thankful. Individuals include, among others, Don Bramlett, Michelle Bringas, Jamie Craven, Lina Davide-Ong, Jaya Gajanayake, Rhodalyn Gallo-Crail, Mike Goggin, Janice Hamlett, Jean Hénaire, Jorge Jeria, Laurel Jeris, Ernie Joaquin, Garth Katner, Lisa King, Audrey Osler, Monique Prindezis, Jose Rayo Tuvilla, Julio Rique, Gene Roth, Padma Siap, Hugh Starkey, Tes Tuason, Alba Viotto, Ellen White, and Wei Zheng. Activities, institutions and organizations include, among others, Asian American Resource Center, Association mondiale pour l'école instrument de paix (Switzerland, Germany, Spain, and United Kingdom), Centre international de formation à l'enseignement

des droits de l'homme et de la paix (Geneva, Switzerland), Dialogue on Race, Interfaith Youth Core (Chicago), and Peace Learning Center (Indianapolis). I would like to thank the administrators, teachers, and students of DeKalb High School, Rochelle High School and Sycamore High School, who have opened up and shared their spaces with us, therefore giving us the opportunity to collaborate and learn from one another. All errors and omissions are mine.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{仁} &= \text{人} + \text{二} \\
\text{Ren} &= \text{Ren} + \text{Er} \\
\text{Humanity} &= \text{Human Being} + \text{Two}
\end{align*}
\]

**BRAINSTORMING THE GROUND RULES**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able consensually to:

1. Lay down the rules of behavior that bind everyone.

**Resources:** paper, felt pens

**Procedure:**

1. Participants sit on a circular formation in the session hall.
2. The facilitator writes the words “Ground Rules” on a large sheet of paper.
3. Participants volunteer ideas on how the sessions throughout the entire program will be conducted, including the behaviors of both facilitators and participants.
4. The facilitator jots down the key points on the flipchart, such as (if they have identified these): respect, tolerance, active participation, cooperation, fun, no name-calling, no teasing, no bullying, no grandstanding, no insults, no scolding in front of others, humiliating, right to pass, etc.
5. The facilitator summarizes the main ideas.
6. The flipchart is posted on the wall to remind everyone about the ground rules which the whole group has laid down.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{和} &= \text{和} + \text{平} \\
\text{He Ping} &= \text{He} + \text{Ping} \\
\text{Peace} &= \text{Harmony} + \text{Equality} \\
\text{(Social Justice)}
\end{align*}
\]

**SHARE-PAIR INTRODUCTIONS**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

have spoken to one other person with whom they were not acquainted before

hear introductions about other participants by their partners

**Resources:** Notepads, pens

**Procedure:**
1. The facilitator asks the participants to form pairs. Participants must select partners who they have not yet met, preferably of the opposite sex, from a different place of origin, and different religion, if possible.
2. Participants take turns in introducing themselves. Partners take down notes. Ask questions that interest you, such as likes, dislikes, hobbies, dreams, etc. Ask about the highest and lowest points in their lives. Note your differences and similarities. Be aware of cultural sensitivity issues: touching, eye contact, etc.
3. When done, go back to the bigger plenary group formed in a circle.
4. Pairs volunteer to go to the center of the circle and introduce one another. Repeat the process.
5. The facilitator thanks everyone for sharing their thoughts, by introducing themselves with one another.

![](Tranquility.jpg)

**LOOK FOR YOUR PARTNER**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the activity, the participants will be able to:
1. to work in pairs and know somebody else from another group

**Resources:** Paper, pens

**Procedure:**
1. Prepare “Hello!” name tags in two different colors at least one day before the activity.
2. There will be polar opposites to be labeled in the name tags, for example: day vs. night, light vs. dark, etc. The first set of partners or polar opposites must be labeled in one colored name tags, for instance, blue. The other polar opposites must be labeled in another colored name tags, for instance, red.
3. To avoid confusion, let one facilitator handle one set of colored name tags, for instance, blue, to be distributed to one set of participants, for instance, the “local team.” Another facilitator will handle the other set of colored name tags, for example, red, to be distributed to the other set of participants, for instance, the “visiting team.”
4. Once all participants have their name tags, ask them to put them on and look for their “polar opposites,” who will be their working partners.
5. Below are some possible “Polar Opposites.” You can add or reduce the number of pairs, depending upon your needs.
6. Do not worry about getting the exact match. Merry mix ups are fun and ok indeed!
7. You do not want to give out too many name tags and have some participants end up not having partners. So, bundle paired name tags together in tens. Once you use up your first set of 10 cards, then use your second set of name tags of tens, and so on.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>Omega</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Piece of Cake</td>
<td>The Whole Pie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboveground</td>
<td>Underground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>Eve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>Together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And</td>
<td>Or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheist</td>
<td>Believer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analog</td>
<td>Digital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient</td>
<td>Contemporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashkenazim</td>
<td>Sephardim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha</td>
<td>Omega</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>Mainstream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arctic</td>
<td>Antarctic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin</td>
<td>End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binary</td>
<td>Synergetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black &amp; White</td>
<td>Colored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brightness</td>
<td>Darkness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat</td>
<td>Mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td>Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chopsticks</td>
<td>Rice Bowl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>Creamer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commoner</td>
<td>Nobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Abacus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep</td>
<td>Shallow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Despair</td>
<td>Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>Easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>Wet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebony</td>
<td>Ivory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>3-Dimensional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraternal Twin</td>
<td>Identical Twin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>Goddess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haute Couture</td>
<td>Prêt à Porter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here</td>
<td>There</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>Cold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indie Rock</td>
<td>Pop Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner</td>
<td>Outer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Output</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island</td>
<td>Mainland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe</td>
<td>Jane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>José</td>
<td>Maria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SAFE HAVEN & FREEDOM WALL

Session Objective: At the end of each day, the participants will be able to:

1. freely express their ideas, feelings, and suggestions that promote peace, without fear of reprisal

Resources: Fresh sheet of newsprint posted on the wall of the session hall everyday, if necessary, and pens

Procedure:

1. Tell the participants that everyday a new sheet of newsprint or will be posted (or flipchart will be flipped) on the wall.

2. Participants can write anything on the “Democracy Wall & Safe Haven,” without fear of punishment, so long as they are constructive. They can remain anonymous, if they wish so.

1. Write clearly on a flipchart posted on the wall that “You are in a Safe Zone. If you feel unsafe, insecure, or threatened in anyway whatsoever, talk to Rica or Rey confidentially so that issues will be resolved. Your anonymity will be assured and there will be no retaliation.”

CHILL!

**Session Objective:** At the end of each day, the participants will be able to:

1. consensually agree that we all need to focus our attention and stop side conversations or other disturbances which are not conducive to our learning process

**Resources:** Writing board, appropriate writing instruments

**Procedure:**

1. Agree ahead of time, what word we will agree to use, instead of saying “keep quiet,” “may I have your attention, please,” “shut up,” or “shhhhh.”
2. List down all the words the participants suggest. These words can be anything from “hi,” “hello,” “whassup!”, “knock, knock,” “dude” and anything else under the sun. Just make sure it is not rude, discourteous, or insulting.
3. Select a word for the day by consensus. Failing that, conduct a democratic viva voce vote.

**DAILY FACILITATORS FOR ENERGISERS, ICE BREAKERS, & ACTION SONGS**

**Procedure:**

1. Prepare 3-4 activities which will be used throughout the day, especially first thing in the morning, after lunch and during the afternoon sessions in order to perk us up, when we feel tired or sleepy.
2. You can ask for help from others, but at the end of the day you are solely responsible for its implementation.
3. For long trips, singing action songs will be the more appropriate activity during the bus trips.
4. The list will be put online and on the wall of the main classroom.
5. Do your preparations ahead of time, not during your actual presentation so that we do not waste time (such as if you have to write the lyrics of a song on a flipchart).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SYNTHESIS, CRITICAL REFLECTION, & SOCIAL IMPACT WORKSHEET

Your Name
Themes
Date of Report
Day of Report
Substantive Summary:  Critical Reflection and Social Impact:

You will be expected not to simply re-echo when you return to your community/country what you have learned here. What meaningful social (not classroom) activity will you organize so that you can apply the knowledge and skills you have learned to your situation on the ground when you return to your community/country?

PLENARY SESSIONS & WORKSHOP MECHANICS

1. In plenary sessions (or “workshop as a whole”), the main facilitator for the whole group plays an important role.

2. Some seating arrangements are more democratic than others. The traditional teacher-in-front vis-à-vis the students-all-facing-the-teacher positions are the most authoritarian and promote a one-way learning process. A panel-discussion format is more libertarian than a one-lecturer-centered approach because more voices—presumably representing social, ethnic, political, cultural, religious, and ideological diversity—are heard. A circular formation in the plenary session is the most democratic, as everyone can potential take part in discussion in a most egalitarian way.

3. For all workshop sessions, ask members of each group to agree on who will act as:
   
a. Facilitator or chair, who makes sure that everyone has an equal chance to speak up, to answer the guide questions systematically, and to manage the time.

   b. Scribe or secretary, who writes down the notes of the group in plain, simple language, preferably in outline form, where applicable, reviews the notes with the group, does not edit out what s/he does not believe in, makes sure that they reflect the sentiment of the entire group.

   c. Rapporteur, who goes up front to represent the group and present their findings to the plenary group.

4. Five is the ideal size of a workshop group, as there is a great likelihood that each one will have an equal contribution to the discussions.

5. As a minimum, each report enumerates the key words. It could do it in an outline form. Creativity is encouraged. You can choose to use many colors in your writing, provide illustrations, compose and recite poems, write and sing songs, dance, or even present a skit as well.

6. Disclaimer: These workshops are culturally contextualized and cannot be replicated in toto per se. Make changes, as necessary, to adapt to the historical, country, social, ethnic, and religious needs of your participant and beneficiaries.

EXPECTATION CHECK & LEVELLING OFF:
Your Personal Mission & Objective Setting

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. lay down their expectations
2. know what expectations can be achieved during the whole program

Resources: paper, felt pens

Procedure:
1. The facilitators are composed of the local organizing team. They ask the participants to form groups of 5.
2. Participants fill out the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPECTATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Members:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. When done, all return to the plenary group formed in a big circle.
4. The facilitator asks for a group to volunteer presenting their findings. Repeat the process until all groups are finished with their presentations.
5. The local organizers then level off by explaining which expectations are doable and which expectations are not doable or not part of this program.
6. The facilitators thank everyone for sharing their ideas.

TRAITS & THINGS WE CAN DO TO MAKE THIS PROGRAM SUCCESSFUL

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

  identify traits and things we can do that promote a successful learning atmosphere and experience

Resources: paper, felt pens

Procedure:
1. The facilitator puts up a large sheet of newsprint paper with the words “Traits & Things We Can Do to Make this Program Successful” written in the middle
2. Participants brainstorm and take turns in providing answers.
3. Whoever speaks, writes the key words on the newsprint immediately thereafter.
4. To end the session, remind the participants to always keep these ideas in mind.

Vanda Sanderiana

HELPFUL, FACILITATIVE, PROMOTING, BENEFICIAL & USEFUL TRAITS & THINGS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

To-Do List Worksheet

1.__________________________________________________________
2.__________________________________________________________
3.__________________________________________________________
4.__________________________________________________________
5.__________________________________________________________

TRAITS & THINGS THAT CAN DISTRACT US FROM OUR LEARNING MISSION

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

  identify traits and things that hinder a successful learning atmosphere and experience

Resources: paper, felt pens

Procedure:
1. The facilitator puts up a large sheet of newsprint paper with the words “Traits & Things That Can Distract Us from Our Learning Mission” written in the middle.
2. Participants brainstorm take turn in providing answers.
3. Whoever speaks, writes the key words on the newsprint immediately thereafter.
4. To end the session, remind the participants to always keep these ideas in mind.

QinShan
Goodwill = Qin
Dear + Shan
Benevolence

NEGATIVE, DISTRACTING, AND DESTRUCTIVE
TRAITS & THINGS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

Not-To-Do List

1. ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________

4. ________________________________________________________________

5. ________________________________________________________________

LEARNING

People learn…

10% of what they read

20% of what they hear

30% of what they see

50% of what they both see and hear

70% of what they say as they talk

90% of what they say as they do something (Ekwall & Shanker, 1988) &

95% of what they teach someone else (William Glasser, 1990)
LEARNING STYLES:
CONCEPTUAL, AUDITORY, VISUAL & KINESTHETIC

How do you learn best?
By thinking, doing, feeling, reflecting, or a combination of some of these activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STYLES</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inductive</td>
<td>Concrete experience, seeing, practice, pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual, Spatial, real-life situation and issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practicality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deductive</td>
<td>Constructivism, Abstract conceptualization, Ideas, Knowledge, Words, Think Alone, Logical, Mathematical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>Seeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>Listening (e.g. to lectures, presentations, music...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling</td>
<td>Music, Emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>Strategizing, Visioning, Assessing, Organizing, Planning, Evaluating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized</td>
<td>Schedule, judging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Play it by ear, perceiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Reflective observation, Questions, Dialogic, Combining Doing and Thinking, Meditate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive</td>
<td>Body, Kinesthetic, Social/Interpersonal, Actually Doing, Acting, Tasting, Socializing, Interviewing, Verbal, Discussion, Linguistic, Tactile/Touching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left Brain</td>
<td>step-by-step reasoning, rational, logical, mathematical, speaking, pattern user, abstract, intellect, objective, analytic, sequential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right Brain</td>
<td>Mystical, musical, creative, visual-pictorial, pattern seeker, concrete, intuition, subjective, holistic, multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introvert</td>
<td>Need to be alone often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrovert</td>
<td>Need to be in a social context often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A)ADD</td>
<td>(Adult) Attention Deficit Disorder. Problem with concentration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHAT YOU SEE IS NOT WHAT YOU GET

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:
1. understand that, given one phenomenon, people can see it very differently

Resources: Images of optical illusions readily found in books and in the Internet

Procedure:
1. The facilitator shows some images of optical illusions, one at a time.
2. Each image can have at least two “readings” or interpretations. Some people can see one. Others can see both or all of the hidden messages. The facilitator will pick the brains of all the participants.

3. When everyone has a chance to speak up, the facilitator will then show all the overt and seemingly covert messages in the optical illusions.
4. Show a couple of optical illusions and repeat the process.
5. The facilitator ends by explaining that conflict arises because people see different things and have different interpretations for the same event that takes places. It is further complicated due to different cultures, religions, communities, and protracted historical conflicts.

LEARNING STYLES WORKSHEET: CONCEPTUAL, AUDITORY, VISUAL & KINESTHETIC

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

Discover what type of a learner s/he is

Resources: chart

Procedure:
1. Photocopy the chart below and distribute to all participants.
2. However, remove the top labels (conceptual, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic) so that they do not get primed or prompted.
3. Assure them that there are no right or wrong answers.
4. Ask them to start answering.
5. Ask participants to volunteer to share their answers.
6. After you have exhausted the time and no one else wants to speak up, ask them in which (vertical) column do they have the most answers.
7. Put back the labels on the top portion.
8. Explain that they are primarily an a, b, c, or d type of learner, based on the frequency of their answers.
9. Note, however, that people can be a mixed type of learner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KINESTHETIC</th>
<th>AUDITORY</th>
<th>VISUAL</th>
<th>CONCEPTUAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doer</td>
<td>Listener</td>
<td>Seer</td>
<td>Thinker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to do things to understand</td>
<td>Listen to lectures</td>
<td>Read books</td>
<td>Meditate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Listen to radio</td>
<td>Watch TV</td>
<td>Write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete experience</td>
<td>Listen to audio-books</td>
<td>Write down notes profusely</td>
<td>Compose poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>Listen to tape recordings</td>
<td>See pictures</td>
<td>Abstract ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actually being there</td>
<td>Hear sounds</td>
<td>Read letters</td>
<td>Logical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair automotive parts</td>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>Read emails</td>
<td>Mathematical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot read maps well</td>
<td>Listen to counselor</td>
<td>Need to see the actual place</td>
<td>Read maps well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize people, groups, &amp; events</td>
<td>Attend conferences</td>
<td>Read newspapers</td>
<td>Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair appliances</td>
<td>Listen to motivational speeches</td>
<td>Look at graphs</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to places or do things</td>
<td>Ask people to repeat what they have said</td>
<td>Look at charts</td>
<td>Make charts and graphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inductive</td>
<td>Keep on asking</td>
<td>Watch video</td>
<td>Deductive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SLOGANS OR POEMS FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

Come up with their own slogans or poems for peace

Resources: 8” x 11” sheets of white paper and colored pens

Procedure:
1. Give each participant one large piece of blank paper. Let them all have access to all kinds of colored pens.
2. Ask them to write the following on their blank sheets of paper:
   P
   E
   A
   C
   E
3. Other acronyms can be created: such as Mindanao, Cyprus, etc. The possibilities are unlimited.
4. Then, ask them to fill out each line by giving some adjectives, phrases, sentences or even by writing a poem. Tell them to feel free to be creative in their writings. Encourage them to put colorful drawings, if they wish to.
5. Tell the participants to feel comfortable, spread out in the room, and start doing their work. Give the participants time to think, compose their texts, and fill out their blank sheets of paper. Ask the participants to sign and date their works of art.
6. Once everyone is done, gather everyone in a plenary session again. Ask each one to volunteer and present their outputs. Optionally, they could sing, dance, rap, or read their own poems too, as long as they are related to peace!
7. Display these works on the wall. They can be preserved by laminating them or by putting them inside poly plastic protectors.

= +
= +

BIG CIRCLES

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

Be together with all the participants in a fun activity

Resources: Enough space for all participants to form a big circle

Procedure:
1. Ask everyone to form a big circle.
2. Be sensitive to cultural preferences regarding the physical contacts between sexes, etc. If necessary, tell them they can choose to move into different spots for cultural reasons regarding close contacts between the sexes.
3. When everyone is settled, ask everyone to hold the hands of persons on their right and left.
4. Everyone counts off: 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2…
5. Remind everyone to remember their number: 1 or 2.
6. Then, remind all participants to hold each other’s hands very tightly.
7. Then, ask all number 1s to “fall in.”

Then, ask all number 2s to “fall out.”

Then, warn everyone to slowly release each other’s hands, making sure everyone is safe and none falls off and get hurt.

**CONCENTRIC CIRCLES**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

Talk and be acquainted with practically all other participants who are members of their subgroup

**Resources:** Name tags, enough chairs for everyone

**Procedure:**

10. Organize chairs in two concentric circles, facing each other

11. Request participants to sit down in either the inner or outer circles, facing one another

12. The facilitator then gives a series of simple questions that guide partners facing each other in their conversations, such as hobby, favorite food, favorite drink, favorite book, favorite author, favorite color, preferred weather, favorite place, present interest/s, dream/ambition, yourself in 5 years/10 years, etc. Each pair will have a dialogue on only one issue.

13. Tell the participants to make sure they introduce themselves and note the names of their constantly moving partners.

14. People sitting in the outer circle move clockwise on cue from the facilitator.

15. After that, move the chairs to form two separate circles. This second part of the exercise ensures that everyone has a chance to talk with everyone else.

16. People in the outer circle form a circle. People in the inner circle form another group. Make sure you introduce yourselves. Talk as a group about a couple of the topics above.

17. End the session by forming one big group in a circle and thank everyone for taking part in this activity.

**MY POINT OF DEPARTURE**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. realize that each one has his/her own share of privileges and deprivations

**Resources:** Big space for moving around, preferably outdoors (participants will potentially move about 30 steps backwards and forward)
**Procedure:**

1. The facilitator asks all the participants to form one straight line, metaphorically the starting line of their life.
2. Now, everyone, “right face!” Face the facilitator/instructor.
3. There are no right or wrong answers. Your answers depend on your self-image and perception.
4. If you do NOT feel safe or comfortable at any one cue, do not move at that given cue.
5. *Note: the positive/negative components change, depending on religion, culture, society…*
6. Tell them that they will move one step forward (+) or backward (-), as directed, if the statement the facilitator makes depicts their situation.
7. Start the workshop, by going through the list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move One Step Forward or to the Left (+) If You Are/Have…</th>
<th>Move One Step Backward or to the Right (-) If You Are/Have…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual/straight</td>
<td>Homosexual/gay/lesbian/bisexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair/light skin</td>
<td>Dark skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You grew up with your biological parents</td>
<td>You did not grow up with your biological parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are married</td>
<td>Parents are not married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are living together</td>
<td>Parents are divorced/separated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents are living with you</td>
<td>At least 1 parent is working abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents are alive</td>
<td>At least 1 parent is dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 1 parent has college degree</td>
<td>No parent has a college degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All brothers/sisters are in school</td>
<td>At least 1 brother/sister stopped schooling due to financial problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your family earns enough income so that you do not get any support from the government</td>
<td>Your family does not earn enough income so that you have to get government support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your family owns your own home</td>
<td>Your family does not own a home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your family has at least one vehicle</td>
<td>Your family does not have a vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are the only child</td>
<td>You have at least 1 brother or sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have only 1 or 2 brothers/sisters</td>
<td>You have 4 or more brothers/sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are Christian</td>
<td>You are not Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are a Roman Catholic</td>
<td>You are a Protestant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your family pays for your schooling with no problem</td>
<td>Your family has to look for money with difficulty to let you go to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have no dependents/children</td>
<td>Have dependents/children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You attended a private elementary school</td>
<td>You went to a public elementary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You attended a private high school</td>
<td>You went to a public high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your family goes to see the doctor and dentist regularly, every time you need to</td>
<td>You do not always go to see the doctor and dentist regularly, even if you have to, because of financial problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagalog is your first language &amp; English is your second language</td>
<td>Tagalog is your second language, and English is your third language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You always have enough food to eat</td>
<td>You have gone hungry some time in your life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have felt discriminated against because you are a woman or gay/lesbian/bisexual</td>
<td>You have felt discriminated against because you are not Roman Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have family vacation when it’s vacation time</td>
<td>You have to work when it’s vacation time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have no physical disability</td>
<td>You have a physical disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your family owns at least 1 computer</td>
<td>Your family does not own a computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least another person in your family went to</td>
<td>You are the first person in your family to go to college</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>college</th>
<th>You have to support financially other members of your family when you finish college</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have no problem going to the doctor or dentist as soon as you need medical or dental attention</td>
<td>Have problem… due to lack of funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a TV</td>
<td>No TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have cable TV</td>
<td>No cable TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a DVD player</td>
<td>No DVD player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have brand-name sports shoes (Adidas, Nike, Puma, Reebok…)</td>
<td>No brand-name sports shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat at least 3 meals a day</td>
<td>Eat less than 3 meals a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy clothes more than once a year</td>
<td>Buy clothes once a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live in and own a single detached home</td>
<td>Rent the place where you live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own at least one car</td>
<td>Do not own a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to private school</td>
<td>Went to public school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both of your parents live together</td>
<td>Your parents are separated or divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somebody cooks for you</td>
<td>You cook your own (and other’s) meals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone does your laundry</td>
<td>You do your own (and/or family’s) laundry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After going through this list, ask participants to look around, noting where they ended up and where others ended up.

Form a big semi-circle for debriefing. Participants will inevitably ask questions, so be prepared to explain. Let each person who wants to speak up go in front of the semi-circle and face everyone. Among the expected questions are the following:

Why do Muslims have to step backward? Explain that in the Philippines, which is a predominantly Christian country, Muslims are a minority. Explain that in a predominantly Muslim country, such as Pakistan or Saudi Arabia, the situation will be reverse.

Other similar questions will be raised about other minorities, such as Protestant Christians (as opposed to Roman Catholic Christians), women, etc. Explain that minorities in general are at a disadvantage and that society as a whole has to work towards social equality of everyone.

Ask the following questions:

How did you feel about yourself, after the exercise?
What impressions did you have of others, after all the questions were asked?
How did you feel when you stepped forward and backward?
When were the times when you felt unsure whether to take a step?
Were there moments when you were happy or sad to see others doing the same or opposite steps that you took? Why?

Debriefing: talk about stereotypes in society.
Question: How to break stereotypes?

**IF YOU WERE A NON-HUMAN ANIMAL, WHAT WOULD YOU BE?**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:
1. realize that there are different kinds of leadership styles and qualities

2. identify their own strengths and weaknesses as leaders

Resources: paper, felt pens

Procedure:
1. In the plenary session, ask participants to read and think about the following question: “If you were a non-human animal, what would you be?” Tell the participants that they can choose whatever non-human animal they want to be.
2. Assure the participants that there is no right or wrong answer.
3. After they had enough time to think, ask the participants who chose the same animal to form one group. Tell them to stay in one corner of the room.
4. Discuss the positive and negative qualities of the animal of their choice.
5. Write the type of animal and the qualities on a large sheet of newsprint paper. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITIVE QUALITIES</th>
<th>NEGATIVE QUALITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. When everyone is done, ask all groups to go back and form the plenary group again.
7. Ask a group to volunteer to present their findings.
8. The group posts its output on the wall for everyone to see.
9. Give other groups a chance to ask questions.
10. Repeat the process.
11. To close the session, the facilitator explains that each animal represents us. Each is different, but all animals have something to offer. Each has a role to play. We should learn to work with others, accepting their strengths, and recognizing their weaknesses.

Luck or Happiness

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: CONSTRUCTING OUR FUTURE

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:
1. think of how to make this world a better place
2. informally develop their own strategic plans

Resources: Large space either indoors or outdoors

Procedure:
1. Form into a large circle.

2. Ask the following and other questions:
   a. “If I would make the world better for everyone, I would…”
   b. “Five years from now, I will be…”

3. Give everyone a chance to ask questions of each other in order to gain deeper insights.

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND GLOBALIZATION OF FOOD AND DRINKS: OR WHERE DID OUR FOOD ORIGINALLY COME FROM ANYWAY? A LESSON ON MULTICULTURALISM

Where Do They Actually Come From?
Do you know that catsup (ketchup) is originally Indonesian? It comes from the word kecap (read as kitsap), which is a condiment made by mixing several spices. Its base is Chinese soy sauce, though. The U.S. catsup has tomato as its base ingredient, which is from south of the border.

Do you know that the Polynesians in the Pacific invented shampoo and suntan lotion?

When we think of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, we immediately relate them to Ancient Greece. But do you know that their dialogues and writings would have been lost forever, had it not been thanks to the Muslim Arab scholars who vociferously translated and studied these Ancient Greek texts? Thanks to the Muslim Arabs, we can all read, think about and enjoy their philosophical treatises today.

When we think of chocolate, we often associate great chocolate coming from Switzerland and the most delicate chocolate candies coming from Belgium. But do you know that cacao is originally from Mexico, that it is grown in Asia, Africa and Latin America today, so that the best, purest, and the freshest chocolate are in fact not found in Europe but in the countries of the South?

When we think of coffee, we always think that it comes from Colombia or Brazil. We think that the best way to brew coffee is the Italian or French way of making expresso. But in fact, coffee comes from the Arabian Peninsula and Africa. The best, smooth coffee is called café arabica and the strong coffee is called café robusta. Arabs grind the roasted coffee beans very finely and put a couple of tablespoonful of ground coffee beans, boil it with water, and serve it—ground beans including—in cups.

When we think of tea, we believe that the best tea is either from England or Sri Lanka. But the fact is tea originally comes from China as the Chinese have been drinking tea at least since 3000 B.C. Indians and the British drink tea with milk and sugar, with Indians adding spices. However, the tea aficionado, like the Chinese, drink tea as it is, in order to enjoy its true, natural, soft, complex, aromatic taste. The best South Asian tea today is from Darjeeling, formerly part of Nepal.

Why is Globalization Not a New Phenomenon?
Before the word “globalization” became fashionable in the 1990s, the world was already pretty much globalized in the period when monarchs ruled kingdoms and traders were in search of new products to buy and sell. China, the Arab caliphates, Palestine, and Indonesia were some major sources of exports of goods or ideas.

The Chinese have invented the art of tea drinking, restaurants, the horse collar, the wheelbarrow, the moldboard plow, paper money, compass, spaghetti/noodles, ravioli, chopsticks, ice cream, silk, embroidery, abacus (the precursor of computer), paper, printing, decimal system, gunpowder, explosives, fireworks, rockets, cast iron, origami, bonsai, canon, basket, acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine, seismograph,
umbrella, matches, kite, wine and alcohol. The fabled Marco Polo and other European traders, for instance, traveled through the "Silk Route" and brought home products and knowledge of Chinese science, technology, arts, crafts, and cuisine. It is not inconceivable that Italian pizza, gelato (ice cream), spaghetti and other pasta have their roots in China.

### Chinese Food and Italian Equivalent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Food</th>
<th>Italian Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noodle</td>
<td>Spaghetti and other pasta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaobing</td>
<td>Pizza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potsticker</td>
<td>Ravioli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice-Cream</td>
<td>Gelato</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Northern Chinese have also had a long history in the making of dumplings, which can come in the form of steam dumplings with meat fillings (*jiaoji*) or fried pot stickers (*guotie*). Southern Cantonese Chinese are known globally for their *dimsum* which is morning snack food composed of different kinds of dumplings with fillings. From China, we have similar or exactly the same food in Japan, Korea, Tibet, Nepal, the Philippines and elsewhere. In fact, the Japanese gyoza and the Korean mando are exactly the same as the Chinese fried dumplings. The Nepali and Tibetan versions are basically Chinese dumplings that understandably use Indian spices.

### Chinese Dumplings and their Counterparts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Counterpart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China North</td>
<td><em>jiaoji</em> and <em>guotie</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China South</td>
<td><em>dimsum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Gyoza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Mando</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Momo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Siomai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tibet</td>
<td>Momo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Palestine is the region where Judaism, Christianity, and Islam came from, with followers in many areas of the world today. European colonizers went to Indonesia to buy the much coveted spices, such as nutmeg, mace, and cinnamon, to sell them at an exorbitant price in Europe, thereby enriching themselves many times over.

### A Typical Day

On a typical day, we consume food and drinks that literally come from everywhere in the world. At breakfast, we drink coffee, tea, or hot chocolate. Coffee originally comes from the Middle East and Africa but is grown in Colombia, Brazil, the Philippines, Indonesia, Guatemala, and elsewhere. Tea is originally from China but today is also exported from Indonesia, Nepal, India, or Sri Lanka.

At snack time, many people consume sweets such as pop soda, cakes, chocolate bars, and candies, many of which contain sugar. Cane sugar is originally from Polynesia, Papua New Guinea and other Asian and Pacific islands; but it was spread later to India, China, Persia, and Arab Sicily. Cane sugar is grown and exported, among others, from the Philippines, Cuba, and other Central and South American countries. Vanilla, which is an important flavoring for chocolates and cakes, originally comes Mexico but is today grown in Madagascar and African countries. We also consume peanuts, which originally come from South America.

At lunch and dinner time, we eat all kinds of meats, vegetables, and fruits as well as consume all kinds of juices, non-alcoholic, and alcoholic beverages. Do you know that most important spices in the West are originally from Asia? We spice up our dishes with pepper (originally from Kerala, India, but is unbelievably not an important spice there! Today, Malaysia produces 80% of the world’s peppercorn), garlic, onion (both from Central Asia), ginger (China) and other spices (mostly from Indonesia). Below is a matrix that depicts the origins of major spices.

### Origins of Spices (and Some Others)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Spices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Sesame, Tamarind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa and Middle East</td>
<td>Coffee, Yoghurt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Americas  |  Allspice, chocolate, chili pepper, paprika, peanut, pineapple, potato, pumpkin, sweet potato, tarragon, tomato, (turkey: not a spice; but from the Americas), vanilla
--- | ---
Central & West Asia  |  Almond, bay leaf, black mustard seed, cumin, dill seed, fenugreek, garden cress, garlic, lemon, marjoram, onion, poppy, rose, tarragon
China  |  Chinese cinnamon (cassia), ginger, soybean, star anise, tea
India  |  Black cardamom, black cumin, curry leaf, Indian bay leaf, long pepper, mango, orange, turmeric
Mediterranean  |  Bay leaf, mint, olive, oregano, parsley, rosemary, saffron, savory, thyme
North and Central Europe  |  Blue fenugreek, caraway, celery, chives, hop, horseradish, watercress
Southeast Asia & Pacific  |  Basil, bay leaf, black pepper, cane sugar, cloves, coconut, coriander seed & leaves, fish paste, galangal, Indonesian kaffir lime, lemongrass, lime, long pepper, mace, nutmeg, shrimp paste

**“Exotic” Food**

When we think of “exotic” food, we often conjure images of far away places in the tropics where the food is spicy or hot. Indian curry is an amalgamation of turmeric, hot chili, onion, ginger, garlic, cumin, curcumin, nutmeg, fenugreek, and other spices. Korean kimchi is Chinese cabbage pickled with powdered red hot chili pepper. Indonesian or Thai curry contain turmeric, coconut milk, lemongrass, galangal, fish sauce, and sugar. Burmese or “Singapore” noodles have Chinese noodles and soy sauce as well as Indian curry and African sesame.

But do you know that these so-called authentic “Indonesian,” “Thai,” “Vietnamese,” “Indian” and other dishes use “exotic” spices from other lands as well? All of these cuisines use a good dose of red hot chili pepper. But do you know that chili does not come from India, Indonesia, Thailand, or Vietnam? Chili comes from the New World: Mexico and its neighboring countries!

Guess what an “exotic” food is or drink for many East and Southeast Asians: milk! While South Asians drink a lot of milk throughout their lives, that is not the case for East and Southeast Asians, many of whom are lactose-intolerant; we get our protein and calcium from fish, not milk.

**Dissecting “Indian” and South Asian Curries and Tea**

India and South Asia are known for their curries. A “curry” is not a spice but a combination of several spices. Basically, most South Asian dishes by whatever name they are called are “curries” for peoples of other cultures. South Asians use abundantly a lot of same spices in different dishes. Some of the major spices they use include the following: cardamom, chili pepper, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin, garlic, ginger, nutmeg, onion, turmeric, and others. In some southern states, such as Kerala, coconut is also used. But do you know that many of the important ingredients of curries are NEITHER Indian NOR from South Asia? Below is a table that shows the origins of the spices used in making curries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIGINS</th>
<th>SPICES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Sesame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Ginger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Black cumin, Cardamom, Curcumin, Fenugreek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>Chili pepper, potato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean</td>
<td>Bay leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islands and Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Coconut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Cloves, Nutmeg, Mace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Cinnamon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. &amp; C. Asia</td>
<td>Coriander, Cumin, Garlic, Onion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Asia &amp; North Africa</td>
<td>Curd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same is true with Indian and South Asian “chai” or tea. It is called “chia” in Nepal. It is basically tea boiled with milk and water with a lot of spices. While the Chinese drink tea straight in order to enjoy the
unmasked excellence of the taste of tea leaves, South Asians prefer it otherwise. Chai contains, among others, cardamom, ginger, mace, nutmeg, vanilla, and others. Below is a chart that shows the origins of some of the spices contained in a typical chai. Incredibly, the only truly Indian in origin in an “Indian” tea is cardamom! Believe it. Persian and Arab coffee are likewise made with cardamom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origins of Spices Used in Making South Asian Tea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Southeast Asian Cuisine**

Rice, which is originally from China, is a staple food in all Southeast Asian countries. The famous, so-called “Thai” or jasmine rice is in fact Philippine rice (called *milagrosa*) planted in and exported from Thailand! There are four layers in Southeast Asian cooking. First, Southeast Asian cooking is a combination of local cooking and foreign influences. Truly indigenous condiments include fish paste and shrimp paste. Other local spices include lemongrass, coconut milk, coconut oil, galangal, lime, kaffir lime leaves, and sugar.

Second, in general, Chinese influence is very strong in all Southeast Asian cuisine. The Chinese noodle is transformed into *Pad Thai* (Thai noodle with fish sauce), *Mi Goreng* (Indonesian noodle), and *pansit* (Philippine noodle). Chinese spring roll becomes *lumpia* in the Philippines and Indonesia. Chinese fried rice becomes *nasi goreng*. Third, in some countries, Indian influence is strongly felt. Southeast Asian curries can be found in Brunei, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. Southeast Asian curries are basically made with Southeast Asian spices such as lemongrass, coconut milk, fish sauce, shrimp paste and other ingredients that are not used in Indian or South Asian curries. Burmese and Singaporean noodles are basically Chinese noodles with Indian curry and African sesame oil.

Fourth, on top of the indigenous ingredients and Chinese influence, usually, the former colonial powers influence the Southeast Asian colonies, including among others, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, and U.S.A. The term *adobo*, which is one of the most popular dishes in the Philippines, uses a term which is French in origin. Spain brought *adobo* to the Philippines through Mexico. But in the Philippines, *adobo* is made with Chinese vinegar and Philippine cane or coconut vinegar, unlike in Europe or Mexico. Croquette is a French food (fried mashed potato balls) that the Dutch brought to Indonesia, which the Indonesians consider as a local dish. Vietnamese sandwich is basically made of French baguette, French pickles, and French cold cuts and can be bought in the streets of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam as well as in Vietnam towns all over the world.

**Conclusion**

After going through the history and origin of food and spices, one tends to have a more open mind towards the food practices of people of different cultures. One cannot afford to be so nationalistic, arrogant, and close-minded anymore. With globalization, what we consider as “ours” and “local food” might in fact have taken a long journey both historically and geographically before it appears before our table as our meal.

**Goodness**

**ORIGINS OF FOOD & DRINKS**

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. realize that there has been intercultural interaction and influences since historical times
2. know that even the food and drinks they consume everyday were produced by diverse peoples in all parts of the world

**Resources:** Chart, marker pens

**Procedure:**
1. The facilitator reads the preceding article on “Food and Drinks” so that s/he can handle with ease this fun and thought-provoking exercise.
2. The facilitator then gives an introduction on the movement of food and drinks from all continents from time immemorial.
3. Then, the facilitator shows a chart with a list of food and drink items.

### BEGINNER’S LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD, DRINKS, &amp; OTHER ITEMS</th>
<th>ORIGIN?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black pepper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinnamon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chili</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coconut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice cream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketchup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumpkin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesame</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shampoo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suntan lotion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Potato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamarind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanilla</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoghurt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ADVANCED LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISHES (For instance, ask the question: What are the national dishes of, say, the Philippines?)</th>
<th>WHERE DID THESE DISHES ORIGINALLY COME FROM &amp; WHERE DID THE INGREDIENTS ORIGINALLY FROM?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adobo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burmese &amp; Singaporean noodles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cappuccino</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Curry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimchi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. The participants will then start to guess where they come from.
5. Remember that this is supposed to awaken people’s consciousness of our human interdependence and therefore must be entertaining.
6. When the correct answer is given, the facilitator either writes it down on the board or asks the person who gave the correct answer to write it down.
7. To enliven the session, the facilitator gives some interesting facts and figures.
8. Conclude by reminding the participants that despite our diversity, we share so many things together in terms of food and drinks.

THE PEACEMAKERS’ AGREEMENT-TO-MEDIATION FORM

There seems to be a conflict between Party X ___________________________________ and Party Y ___________________________________. (If there are more disputants, add more line/s as necessary).

I ___________________________________ am willing to be a mediator. As a mediator, I will be neutral. The mediation is not at all associated with the police, lawyers or courts. Our discussions will not be used for legal purposes. The mediator will not be called as witness and the proceedings will not be admissible in administrative or legal proceedings.

Party X (sign your name) ___________________________________ and Party Y (sign your name) ___________________________________ agree to mediate. Both understand that the mediation process will be free, voluntary, confidential, and informal. We will NOT pinpoint guilt or innocence. The mediation does NOT aim to punish bad behavior or reward good behavior. As a win-win strategy, both of you will reach mutual agreement that will appeal to both of you. All parties are required to be honest, listen, stay calm and have an open mind. The purpose is to solve the conflict, find a solution, agree and work on it. Do not bully, call names, condemn, interrupt, intimidate, lie, make excuses, put down, threaten, or use violence. Put your initials on the appropriate boxes below regarding your availability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>Th</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 noon – 1PM</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5PM – 6 PM</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7PM – 8 PM</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unless you state your opposition, we shall meet at ________________________________ and go to our “Peace Table.”

_______________________ _______________________ ______________________
Signature                       Date Signature                       Date Signature                     Date

Contact Information

Contact Information

Contact Information

**STYLES IN SOLVING CONFLICTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the different styles in conflict resolution?</th>
<th>PROs</th>
<th>CONs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which style do you prefer? Why?

**HUH? I’M SHOCKED!**

(Say the name of the other party to the conflict) “…………………………………………,”

What you said/did was so shocking/rude/disrespectful/etc. that I was caught off-guard and I don’t know how to react.

I am (or feel) “annoyed/ stunned/ disturbed/ offended/ not happy/ angry/ shocked/ sad/ startled, etc. ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………”

when you say “……………………………………………………………………………………………………………”

or when you (do/don’t do this) “………………………………………………………………………………………………………………”

That’s because “……………………………………………………………………………………………………………”

So, next time, could you please “……………………………………………………………………………………………………………”

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

**WHAT HAPPENED?**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:
1. explain in detail how a conflict situation developed
2. realize whether a suitable settlement of the conflict was achieved
3. identify whether an alternative solution is possible

Resources: Lot of space, either indoors or outdoors

Procedure:
1. Try to remember a terrible conflict you have observed that has happened, where you were an observer and not directly involved in it.
2. Fill out the blanks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I Say</th>
<th>You Say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who were involved?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the incident in general.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When did this happen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where did this happen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did they do?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What triggered this to happen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did they say?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did they listen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were there supervisors or authorities around?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If so, what did they do?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were there bystanders who took sides?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe how the parties in conflict felt.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe their styles in trying to settle their differences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did they want to achieve?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the response?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did they settle their difference?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did they settle their differences and both end up happy?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were there better ways to deal with and solve their differences?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other observations or comments (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LET'S FACE AND TRY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS</th>
<th>MY VIEW</th>
<th>YOUR VIEW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What happened? What is the problem in general?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrase</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give details. Break down the problem into its different parts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrase</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why is it an issue for you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrase</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel about it? Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrase</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do both parties want? How do we solve this problem together?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ART THERAPY:
POSITIVE VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:
1. express their feelings through simple art work about their vision of the future in a positive way
2. share it with others so that they can empathize with each other’s hopes and dreams, regardless of their diversity in age, sex, religion, or other differences

Resources: Regular sized 8” x 11” bond paper, felt pens, crayons, pastel, etc.

Procedure:
1. In the plenary session, the participants will be told to conceptualize how a future society of peace will look like
2. Distribute one sheet of 8” x 11” sheets of white paper. Have the participants sit comfortable anywhere as they wish. Make sure the art materials are readily available and within their reach.
3. Assure the participants that they do not have to be great artists for this exercise and that the purpose is for them to put into an art form their feelings about a negative incident in their past. Stick drawings are fine. Symbols are fine.
4. Tell the participants to put their names and dates on the lower right bottom part of their drawings.
5. After everyone has finished, gather everyone into the plenary session again. Ask for volunteers to come up, show their drawings, and share their experiences. It is not necessary that everyone comes up.
6. The facilitator then sums up some of the key themes that have come up.
7. Inform the participants that their illustrations will be kept on file and perhaps used for dissemination and educational purposes at a future date. Keep the drawings in a folder neatly as they can be used for framing and exhibition.

BAI SII CEREMONY

Session Objective: To introduce participants to the Theravada Buddhist practice in Mainland Southeast Asia of the Bai Sii Ceremony, normally performed by a Thai village Brahmin priest. Note that the practice was adapted from Hinduism. Other Theravada Buddhists in both mainland Southeast Asia (e.g., Laos) and South Asia (Sri Lanka), for instance, also wear these strings.

Resources:
1. enough pre-cut plain white strings long enough to wrap around the wrist for all participants
2. Thai or other Theravada Buddhist music
3. CD or MP3 player

Procedure:
1. Play softly the Theravada Buddhist music in the background
2. Explain in the simplest possible terms Thai Theravada Buddhism and the Bai Sii ceremony
3. Give everyone a string
4. Ask each person to pair up with another person
5. One person will tie the string on the wrist of another person, reciting the Meditation Chant, wishing everyone good and avoiding evil
6. Repeat the process with the other partner

MEDITATION CHANT FOR UNLIMITED KINDNESS & COMPASSION:
NAMMO KUAN SHIH YIN PUXA

Session Objectives:
1. To learn an aspect of the culture of the Chinese Mahayana Buddhists, who may happen to be one’s neighbor, colleague, classmate, or friend back home
2. To learn one simple chant in the Chinese language and share it with friends
3. To collectively meditate and chant for kindness and compassion among all beings
4. Note that Buddhism is a way of life and philosophy, NOT a religion and that Buddhism does not actively seek converts or proselytize

Resources:
1. Images of Avalokitesvara and Kuan Yin
2. “Nammo Kuan Shih Yin Puxa” chant in CD or MP3
3. CD or MP3 player
4. “Namo Kuan Shih Yin Puxa” lyrics clearly written in big letters

Procedure:
1. play music softly in the background
2. Explain Bodhisatva of Compassion (Avalokitesvara and Kuan Yin), a saint who is both masculine and feminine at the same time and therefore very powerful
3. Explain “Namo Kuan Shih Yin Puxa” as invoking the Bodhisatva of Kindness and Compassion
4. Teach the participants to read and sing “Namo Kuan Shih Yin Puxa” a few times
5. Then, meditate by singing along with the background music for several minutes

FOUNDATIONAL VALUES AND DIVERSITY OF CULTURES AND RELIGIONS

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. know and understand the main tenets or core values of each religion

Resources: paper, felt pens

Procedure:
1. Ask participants who belong to the same faith (e.g. Indigenous religion/s, Islam, Roman Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, Protestantism) or atheists to form a group and sit in a circle in one corner of the room.

2. Members of each group write down the essence of their culture and religion in checklist or outline form. Be creative, though. Add art work, illustrations, logos, slogans, poetry, and the like.

3. When done, return to the bigger plenary group.

4. Ask one group to volunteer presenting their findings in any creative way. For instance, they can incorporate a skit, music, or dance. Let members of other groups to ask questions. Repeat the process.

5. End the session by telling the participants to be proud of their cultural and religious heritage and celebrate differences.

CLARIFYING MISCONCEPTIONS

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

know and understand the main tenets or core values of each religion

Resources: paper, felt pens

Procedure:
1. Ask participants who belong to the same faith (e.g. Indigenous religion/s, Islam, Roman Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, Protestantism) or atheists to form a group and sit in a circle in one corner of the room.

2. Clarify and correct misconceptions about them, their cultures and their religions that they have heard over the years. Write them down in checklist or outline form. Be creative, though. Add art work, illustrations, logos, slogans, poetry, and the like.

3. When done, return to the bigger plenary group.

4. Ask one group to volunteer presenting their findings in any creative way. For instance, they can incorporate a skit, music, or dance. Let members of other groups to ask questions. Repeat the process.

5. End the session by telling the participants to be proud of their cultural and religious heritage and celebrate differences.

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**UNITY OF RELIGIONS**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. know and understand the commonalities or shared/common core values found in all religions
2. develop an understanding of and appreciation for unity in diversity

**Resources:** paper, felt pens

**Procedure:**

1. Form four groups. Each group more or less has the same number of practitioners of atheism, indigenous religion/s, Islam, and Christianity.

2. Participants respond to the following question: “Despite the uniqueness of each religion and therefore the differences among them, what are the common features of all these religions? Feel free to illustrate your ideas as well.”

3. When done, go back to the bigger plenary group.

4. Ask one group to volunteer presenting their findings. Give members of other groups a chance to ask questions. Repeat the process.

5. The facilitator closes the session by telling participants that they have realized that despite their differences, they have found a lot of common grounds among them. The facilitator tells the participants to appreciate unity in diversity.

---

Heaven or Skies

I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW…

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. Ask people of different communities, backgrounds, cultures, and religions what they have been wanting to ask and find out
2. Get it all out
3. End ignorance of facts
4. Understand each other better
5. Promote mutual understanding, tolerance, and acceptance

Resources: Chairs formed in a circle

Procedure:

1. Ask people of one background, community, culture, or religion to stay in one side of the room. For instance: “Could all Muslims please stay on this side of the room.”

2. Repeat the process.

3. The formation of groups must be based on self-identification. For instance, if someone is from a Christian background but says s/he is not practicing and does not want to be identified with that group, it is a matter of principle and his/her opinion must be respected. In this case, that person forms another group. It could even be a group of one.

4. If there are only two groups, then form two lines. Let the participants sit down and face the other group. If there are three groups, then form a triangle. If there are four groups, form a square or a rectangle. And so on and so forth.

5. Give enough time for people of one background to think of and list down all the hard questions they had always wanted to ask people of the other background/s but were afraid to ask. This is their opportunity. Remind them to phrase their questions courteously and be polite of each group.

STEREOTYPES:

The Past

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

6. realize the impact of stereotypes on both the one who is labeled and one who labels

Resources: Chairs formed in a circle

Procedure:

6. The facilitator informs the participants that they will be engaged in role playing. Each participant will be given a label. These labels include: arrogant, artistic, atheist, athletic, banker, billionaire, bright, center-of-attraction, cheap, childish, classy, clean, creative, cute, dirty, dishonest, elegant, emotional, executive, exotic, expensive clothes, forgetful, gay/lesbian, good-for-nothing, gossipy, helpless, honest, ignored, insecure, jealous, lazy, liar, loud, materialistic, millionaire, modest, muscular, musical, noisy, optimistic, overweight, paralyzed left leg, pessimistic, poor, popular, precious, quiet, rich, Roman Catholic, self-righteous, showy, shy, soft-spoken, special, strong, Sunni Muslim, talented, thin, tired, tropical, ugly, valedictorian, violent, weak, and factory worker.

7. Once everyone is given a label, placed where the recipient cannot see it.
8. Each participant will now stand up and move around the room as though in a social gathering where they are expected to engage in small talk with each and everyone.

9. Each participant will treat the others based on their labels.

10. After exhausting the opportunity to chitchat with one another in the allotted time, participants go back in the plenum, sitting in the formation of the big circle, for debriefing.

11. The facilitator tells the participants in the plenary session that the role play is over and ask the following questions:

   a. Was the label given you a good description of who you are?
   b. How did you feel being treated the way you were treated?
   c. Was it easy to treat others based on the labels they carry?
   d. Was the stereotype on others’ labels confirmed?
   e. Did you start to act the way you were labeled?
   f. Did participants with related labels cluster together?

**WRITINGS ON THE WALL: The Past**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

2. Identify both the positive and negative stereotypes each religious group has of the other groups

**Resources:** large newsprint sheets per group, different colored felt pens

**Procedure:**

1. Ask participants from the same religious groups to form a group. For instance, Muslims form one group, Roman Catholics form one group. Indigenous persons with an indigenous faith system form one group. If, for instance, there is only one indigenous person, make sure that at least one youth leader joins that person to form a group.

2. Each group picks (1) a facilitator, who makes sure that everyone has an equal chance of sharing their ideas, (2) a scribe, who takes down notes and makes sure that the notes reflect the sentiment of the whole group, and (3) a rapporteur, who will present the group report to the plenum.

3. Brainstorm and write down on a sheet of paper both the positive and negative stereotypes on two separate columns that other religious groups have about your group. For instance, the Roman Catholic group will jot down all the stereotypes that Muslims, Buddhists, and Jews have about them.

4. Put a check mark in one color on the stereotypes which are correct.

5. Put an “x” mark in another color on the stereotypes which are wrong.

6. Brainstorm on the ways by which these wrong stereotypes can be corrected.

7. Post the Graffiti on the Wall all around the session hall.

**MAGNIFYING GLASS: The Present**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. Pinpoint the correct generalizable images of one’s group
2. Correct the wrong images that the other groups have of one’s group

**Resources:** If sitting on the floor, please make sure it is clean. Otherwise, clean it and put a mat.

**Procedure:**
1. Ask all participants to form a big circle and sit on the floor or chair.
2. Ask one religious group to volunteer to go inside the circle. They are the fish in the bowl. Attention is directed towards them.
3. The first group will share their feelings about the stereotypes others have of people in their religion. Members take turns in sharing their positive and negative experiences and suggest ways to break negative stereotypes.
4. Participants in the big circle ask the “fish” questions as well as answer questions raised by the “fish.”
5. The facilitator thanks the first group of “fish.”
6. The facilitator asks for another group to volunteer to be the “fish” for the second round, third round… Repeat the process.
7. Finally, all participants go back to form one big circle.
8. The facilitator asks participants to summarize the activities as a whole.

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**METTA: LOVING-KINDNESS MEDITATION FOR PEACE**

**Session Objective:**
1. To learn one form of meditation in Buddhism
2. To meditate for universal love and peace for all beings

**Resources:**
1. Buddhist or other meditative music CD or MP3
2. CD or MP3 players
3. trance-like visualization on an Audio Player projected into the screen

**Procedure:**
1. Play Buddhist music softly on the background
2. Make sure to turn on the visualization on Real Player so that an ambience appropriate for meditation is created
3. ask everyone to sit on the floor in a lotus position and form a big circle
4. ask everyone to hold the hands of the persons sitting on their left and on their right OR to have a Buddhist mudra
5. ask everyone to close their eyes
6. ask everyone to repeat after you, when you recite each short segment of the Meditation for Peace
7. This form of meditation can be done walking (walking meditation), sitting (sitting meditation), standing (standing meditation), lying down (lying down meditation), etc.
8. When done, ask the participants to open their eyes and give each other a sign of peace (of your choice)
9. Ask participants to share their feelings, after this meditation.

May all beings capable of pain be free from danger, be safe, be protected, be free from mental suffering, be happy, be free from physical suffering, be healthy, be able to live in this world happily, and be peaceful.

May all non-human animals be free from danger, be safe, be protected, be free from mental suffering, be happy, be free from physical suffering, be healthy, be able to live in this world happily, and be peaceful.

May all human animals be free from danger, be safe, be protected, be free from mental suffering, be happy, be free from physical suffering, be healthy, be able to live in this world happily, and be peaceful.

May all plants be free from danger, be safe, be protected, be free from mental suffering, be happy, be free from physical suffering, be healthy, be able to live in this world happily, and be peaceful.

May all women, men, young, old, straight, and gay be free from danger, be safe, be protected, be free from mental suffering, be happy, be free from physical suffering, be healthy, be able to live in this world happily, and be peaceful.

May all my enemies be free from danger, be safe, be protected, be free from mental suffering, be happy, be free from physical suffering, be healthy, be able to live in this world happily, and be peaceful.

May all my friends be free from danger, be safe, be protected, be free from mental suffering, be happy, be free from physical suffering, be healthy, be able to live in this world happily, and be peaceful.

May you be free from danger, be safe, be protected, be free from mental suffering, be healthy, be able to live in this world happily, and be peaceful. If I have offended you knowingly or unknowingly, please forgive me. If you have offended me knowingly or unknowingly, I forgive you,

May I be free from danger, be safe, be protected, be free from mental suffering, be healthy, be able to live in this world happily, and be peaceful.

If you have offended me knowingly or unknowingly, I forgive you.

May we all be happy, be healthy, be peaceful, be safe, and be free from suffering.

Tranquility
### ACTIVITY SHEET ON THE RICH, MIDDLE CLASS, & THE POOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEW QUESTIONS</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANSWER</td>
<td>ANSWER</td>
<td>ANSWER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government support the....</td>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>Middle Class</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why? Because...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason 1</td>
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<td>Reason 5</td>
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<td>Reason 6</td>
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<td>Reason 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reason 8</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Feel free to do your creative presentation/s.

### TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF

**Session Objective:** At the end of each day, the participants will be able to:

freely express their ideas, feelings, and suggestions that promote peace, without fear of reprisal

**Resources:** Paper, colored pens

Procedure:

1. Tell the participants to choose a partner with whom s/he will work. Introduce yourselves.

2. To the first speaker: take a blank sheet of paper and write “Me” in the center. Draw 3 rays from the center in different directions. At the end of the lines, write areas in your life you would like to share with your partner, such as your feelings about an incident, how you fight intolerance, your proposal to promote peace, hobby, sports, family, travel, etc. Encircle these words and give your “Me” map to your partner.

3. To the first listener: choose one of the areas and ask your partner a question about it. (The partner can answer the question if s/he wants). After the answer is complete, you may ask more questions about what the speaker has said or move on to another area.

4. While the speaker is talking, map what they say. To do this, draw more rays out from the circles which contain the categories the speaker has chosen. Add more lines and write a word at the end of the rays and encircle it. If they are elaborating, add more rays off that category to continue expanding the concept map. See the example below:

```
   ME
    /  
   /    
RELIGION  ETHNICITY  HOBBIES
   /  
ORTHODOX  CYPRIOT  EURO ROCK, DANCE, SAIL, TRAVEL, READ
   /  
NOT PRACTISING  GREEK
```

5. Allow your partner to speak for 5 minutes. During this time, keep working on extending their responses on anything you sense they are excited about and want to share. See how much you can get to know about them in this time.

6. At the end of the 5 minutes, give the map to your partner and thank them for sharing with you. Reverse roles and switch process.

ILLUSTRATING A CONCEPT

Session Objective: At the end of each day, the participants will be able to:

1. realize and appreciate the fact that human beings cannot live alone as we are social beings
2. work together and arrive at a consensus on how to produce a common project

Resources: Paper, colored pens

Procedure:
1. Form into groups of 5
2. Read the following texts:
   a. “Open your minds to diversity.”
   b. “Everyone’s uniqueness brightens and colors the world.”
   c. “Differences in people make our world a better place.”
   d. “Different colors, different cultures, but one humanity.”
   e. “Promote multiculturalism.”
   f. “Appreciate each other’s uniqueness.”
   g. “Appreciate and accept diversity.”
   h. “Marvel at the uniqueness of cultures.”
   i. “Diversity brightens and colors the world.”
   j. “Interact with people of various backgrounds to widen your horizon.”
   k. “No matter what your background is, where you come from, how you look like, what language you speak, what religion you profess, we all share a common humanity.”
   l. “Celebrate our differences with each other.”
   m. “No person is an island entire in itself. Every person is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.”
3. Brainstorm on how to illustrate any one of the statements above.
4. Arrive at a consensus on how to portray the words in an image.
5. Create a colored illustration of this saying, using the materials you have. If you need other materials, trade some of what your group has with the other groups.
6. Have fun and enjoy.
7. When done, form a big circle. One group after another volunteer to go to the center to present their drawing and explain it.

Patience or Forbearance

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Session Objective: At the end of each day, the participants will be able to:
1. work together with others in groups to build a community

Resources: Lego blocks, pieces of toys, or other similar materials, writing paper, pens

Procedure:
1. Form into groups of 5. Make sure there is geographic, cultural, gender, and religious diversity in each group.
2. Give each group a set of Lego blocks or other similar materials.

3. Brainstorm on building a community: what must be included, why, how many units, where should they be placed, how should they be constructed.

4. Start building your community.

5. Write the following:
   a. 2 nouns to illustrate the structure
   b. 2 adjectives to describe the structure
   c. 2 verbs to describe the activity

6. When all groups are done, ask for groups to volunteer one after the other to show and explain to the plenary group the community your group has built.

7. The facilitator asks the following and other questions:
   a. How was your personal and group experience in general?
   b. Was it easy to make a decision?
   c. Was there dialogue or did only one person (or a couple of persons) impose their ideas on the rest of the group?
   d. Did you have one plan and worked on it? Or did you have to choose between 2 or more plans?
   e. Did you include everything you all wanted to include in your community? Why or why not?
   f. Did you all have eye contact with each other? What does your culture say about eye contact—is it necessary or good or not?
   g. Were there heated discussions?
   h. What were the memorable moments or discussions?
   i. Are you all satisfied with your own community?
   j. Do you have questions regarding the other communities?

**PICTURE ANALYSIS OF A BIRD**

**Session Objective:** At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. analyze and interpret the meaning of freedom or liberation

**Resources:** paper, felt pens

**Procedure:**

1. At the plenary session, draw a simple but colorful image of a bird which is inside a house, perched on a stand by the window. The bird is not chained at all. It is looking out. Outside, there are birds flying. It does not hurt to ask a volunteer who is good at drawing to come up and make the illustration.

2. Discuss the image. Fully explore all answers.

3. To conclude, explain that the bird indoors is a symbol for a minority or under-represented group, such as sexual, religious, or cultural minority. Tell the participants there is a difference between apparent freedom (bird indoors not in chains) and real liberation (taking the step to fly and be free). Freedom only exists when we practice it.
ROOT CAUSES OF VIOLENCE & CONFLICT

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. identify the causes of violence and conflict

Resources: Flipchart, felt pens

Procedure:
1. If there are about 30 participants, split them into two groups. Each group occupies one separate room. Form into a large circle for plenary discussion.

2. On a large piece of flipchart sheet, write the words “Root Causes of Violence & Conflict” on the center. Encircle the words.

3. Ask the participants to identify the causes of violence and conflict. Encourage all participants to speak up. Once a person has spoken, ask that person to go to the front to write down the key words and draw a line to show the relationship among the key words.

4. End the session by summarizing the main points.

DOTS

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. learn a lesson on “unity in diversity”

Resources: Enough supply of self-adhesive dots in different colors

Procedure:
1. Participants form a circle.

2. The facilitator requests all participants to shut their eyes for a while.

3. The facilitator puts a dot of different colors on the forehead of each participant.

4. When done, the facilitator asks the participants to open their eyes.

5. After that, the participants are asked to form their own group/s, as they see it fit. This will take a few minutes, depending on the dynamics of the group.

6. The facilitator asks the participants why they formed the groups the way they did. Participants of each group (if there is more than one group) explain.

7. At the end of the discussion, the facilitator explains that we are all human beings, belonging to the one and only human race, but with different colors. We all belong to one big group called humanity, an all-inclusive group with people of all ethnicities, colors, religions, and gender.

SHOUT OUT!

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. give a mid-conduct feedback of their learning experience

Resources: Lots of space

Procedure:

1. Ask all the participants to form a circle. They can stand up, or sit down, or sit on the floor.

2. The facilitator then tells everyone to think of a word that describes their impressions or feelings about the training program thus far.

3. The facilitator can decide arbitrarily to begin with one person and go clockwise.

4. Then, the facilitator says: “Shout out!”

5. Any word is possible, such as “superb,” “great,” “good,” “ok,” “nah.” But request them to be creative and use “big” words.

USEFUL TRAITS & THINGS ALREADY ENCOUNTERED IN THE LEARNING PROCESS WHICH MUST BE MAINTAINED

To-Do List Worksheet

1. __________________________________________________________

2. __________________________________________________________

3. __________________________________________________________

4. __________________________________________________________

5. __________________________________________________________

NEGATIVE TRAITS & THINGS ALREADY ENCOUNTERED IN THE LEARNING PROCESS OR WORKING RELATIONSHIP THAT MUST BE AVOIDED OR DISCARDED

Not-To-Do List Worksheet

1. __________________________________________________________

2. __________________________________________________________

3. __________________________________________________________

4. __________________________________________________________

5. __________________________________________________________
UNITY WALL:
The Future

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. come up with a common agenda for peace that binds everyone together

Resources: paper, felt pens

Procedure:
1. On a large sheet of newsprint, write the words “Unity Wall” on the top center area
2. Request participants to express their ideas on how to bring about peace. Discuss to reach consensus. Resolve any differences.
3. Ask participants to come up front to write down key words and/or make simple illustrations. Optionally, they can also do creative presentations.

Prosperity

DREAM WORLD

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

Share with everyone your idea of a future world where there is no injustice, no discrimination, no stereotypes, and no racism, but only equitable and lasting peace

Resources: Colored pens, 8” x 11” white sheets of paper

Procedure:
1. Reflect on what is your idea of a Dream World where there is just and durable peace.
2. Be creative in your response. You can write a narrative essay or a poem. But you can also make an illustration, a postcard, a painting, a peace flag, etc. You can show a photograph or play a song.
3. When everyone is done, ask for volunteers to share what they have reflected on and prepared.
4. If you don’t have enough time to call on everyone, you can put up a temporary exhibit of these outputs.
5. Collect them all. Reproduce them and compile them into a compendium, make an e-Book, and share it with all the participants.

PRO-ACTIVE COMMUNITY-BUILDING FORM FOR INTERCULTURAL SHARE-PAIRS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. ANTI-REACTIONARY MODEL</th>
<th>Me</th>
<th>You</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will not condescend or look down on other people’s differences, backgrounds, sex, abilities, social status, economic standing, appearance, clothes, cultures or religions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will not convert other people to my faith. I will respect their faith.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will not give people of other faiths or cultures no choice but to pray with me and pray in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

my own way without taking into account other their cultural and religious sensitivities. I think that is simply insensitive and rude.

I will not invite people to socialize with them, have fun, eat, drink, play sports, “hang out”, or watch a movie with them, with the hidden agenda of converting them to my religion. There is no place for this hidden agenda in interfaith work. I will respect the religion of people of other faiths.

I will not be blind to discrimination of any kind and not do anything about it. If I witness it, I will do something about it, such as _____________________________

II. TRADITIONAL OR MINIMALIST MODEL
Read books or listen to audio books
Invite speakers
Give lectures
Attend lectures
Watch a film or documentary

III. COALITION MODEL
Work side by side with people of different cultures and faiths to promote positive social change through community service efforts. By working together, share our cultures and beliefs as well as learn about the values and beliefs of other peoples.
For example, to provide shelter for the homeless
to feed the hungry
to build low-income houses
to clean the environment
or to produce a play

IV. COMMUNITY MODEL
Two or more different or cultural or faith groups join together to build community. I will form intentional relationships with people of different faith/s in order to learn more about each other’s cultures and faith journeys and thereby building a truly multicultural or interfaith community, such as worship together through truly interfaith invocation
eat together
play together
Form friendship and trust that enable us to more deeply understand each other’s differences, cultures, and faiths.

V. RADICAL MODEL
Empathize, support, work with, and work for the needs and demands of an outcast group, downtrodden social classes or minoritized groups for social transformation through various direct and indirect services, as well as legal, paralegal, metalegal, and other means; exposure to and integration with the downtrodden classes and outcast groups

__________________________
Name in Print, Sign and Date Above This Line

__________________________
Name in Print, Sign and Date Above This Line

ACTION PLAN

Project Title____________________________________

Short Description________________________________

Beneficiaries____________________________________

Vision__________________________________________

Mission_________________________________________
Goals & Objectives

Date of Implementation

Place of Event

Overall Coordinator

GREAT JOB!

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. thank everyone for the wonderful time, ideas, experiences, and memories everyone shared with each other

Resources: Bond paper, pens, masking tape

Procedure:

1. On a sheet of paper, draw a big palm of a hand (as a symbol of patting). Make photocopies. Then, write the name of each person on the top portion of each sheet (or in the middle of the palm) to personalize it.

2. Tape each sheet of paper with the name of the participant on the back of the participant.

3. Everyone will go around the room and write positive remarks on the sheet of paper on each participant’s back.

4. When finished, form a big circle and share your overall thoughts and feelings.
SOLEMN PLEDGES

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

1. Confirm with a partner, selected on the basis of proximity to one’s residence, by signing a Commitment Form, which upon completion of the course, both of them will remind each other to continue their work that promotes mutual understanding, unity in diversity, conflict resolution, harmony, justice, and peace.

Resources: Pledge Buddy Form

Procedure:
1. This is a terminal activity in which the facilitator asks participants to find a commitment buddy of their choice, based upon their place of residence.

2. Partners take turns in discussing what each one will do for oneself to promote mutual understanding, peace, and other such values. The participants will jot down their thoughts on the commitment form.

3. Partners take turns in discussing what each one will do for their community to promote such values. The participants will jot down their thoughts on the commitment form.

4. Each participant signs the commitment form and writes down the name of their commitment buddy as well as their contact information.

Good Luck

SOLEMN PLEDGE PARTNERS FORM

1. Upon return to my home, school, work, or community, I am committed to do at least the following two things (e.g., read a book, watch a movie, take a course, write a letter to the editor, etc. that promotes or deals with peace or discuss with people who make unjust, discriminatory, sexist, or racist remarks):

2. My buddy is committed to do the following for her/himself:

3. Upon return to my home, school, and community, I am committed to do at least the following two things for my community:

4. My commitment buddy is committed to do the following for her/himself:

My Name: ______________________________________________________________

My Pledge Buddy: ________________________________________________________

Phone: _______________________                Email: _____________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Determination

HOW CAN I MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE?
A Concrete Personal Plan of Action

Session Objective: At the end of the session, the participants will be able to:
1. develop a simple but concrete plan of action to promote tolerance, mutual understanding, cooperation, conflict resolution, and peace as well as to elimination conflict, all forms of discrimination, and intolerance

Resources: A sheet of paper, pens

Procedure:
1. Activity: Commitment Partner: Think-Share Pair, get each other’s emails and contact each other each month to share what you have done to fulfill your commitments.
2. Issues: After going through all the theories, issues/problems, and regions of the world and seeing how the US deals with the rest of the world, what issues do you personally believe need action that you can execute?
3. Plenary Presentation
4. Submit
6. Have big ideas but take small steps
7. Only commit to do things which are feasible. You do NOT have to fill all items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS OF ACTION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE</th>
<th>PERSON A</th>
<th>PERSON B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personally, as an Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Church, Mosque, Synagogue, Temple, or any other places of worship</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>County/Province</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

IF I WERE TO RECEIVE AN AWARD…

1. If you were to win an award for your attendance and participation in this training/workshop and to receive a Certificate for it, what would it be called?

2. Why?

3. Identify a co-participant who should receive an award. What is her/his name?

4. Why?

5. What is the name of your adult leader?

6. What is the title of the award your adult leader deserves to receive?

7. Why?

*Return this form promptly to the lead facilitator, please. Thank you!

For More Information:


Holst, J. D. (2002). *Social movements, civil society, and radical adult education.* Westport: Bergin & Garvey


And many others…

Posters of ACCESS Philippines Program 2005
Interaction with American Peers in Illinois and Indiana, U.S.A.

Interaction with Americans in Chicago, Albany Park, DeKalb & Rochelle, Illinois

Interaction with Americans in Aurora, Villa Park, DeKalb, Chicago & Rochelle, Illinois

Interaction with Americans in Indiana; Home Stay with Host Families; & Community Work
In April 2005, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies and the International Training Office at Northern Illinois University (NIU) hosted a training program for 26 Muslim and non-Muslim youth and 8 adult leaders from Mindanao, Philippines. This project was funded by the Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Exchange Division, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State.

Entitled "Bridging the Gap: Engaging a New Generation in Southern Philippines through Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution," the goal of this project was to encourage meaningful dialogue among Muslim and non-Muslim youth from the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and surrounding provinces to increase mutual understanding in these communities. The specific goal of the institute was to transmit knowledge about how to foster inter-ethnic cooperation and teach conflict resolution strategies. The participants were immersed in various academic, social and cultural activities that focused on conflict resolution, peer mediation, peace-building, community activism, and leadership development. The lectures and workshops conducted during the training were arranged according to these major themes.

Within the scope of the program’s goal, student and adult leaders developed and designed their individual and regional action plans of peace-building in Mindanao. Committed to their roles as architects of peace, participants are expected to carry out these action plans in order to expand the network of young peacemakers initiated through the ACCESS Philippines Project in order to instill an appreciation for diversity, inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogue among youth in Mindanao, and build a community of “communities” in their home areas and schools.

**Organizing Peace and Diversity Clubs**
Several organizations have been created by ACCESS-Philippines participants that encourage involvement amongst their peers to carry out the actions plans. These organizations, established within the participant’s respective schools, have been venues for ACCESS participants to present their programs of action, develop skills, and share ideas and lessons learned from ACCESS Philippines with peers. Strong emphasis is placed on encouraging and mobilizing youth to work for peace based on themes on inter-ethnic cooperation, inter-religious understanding tolerance, unity in diversity, leadership, community activism and volunteerism.

**Peace-Building Club “The Youth Approach”**
The proponents of this project envision the formation of a united group of young peacemakers and nation-builders. Through the leadership of another ACCESS participant from Marawi State University, the club will organize a core team who will conduct the proposed two-day seminar workshop on conflict resolution and transformation. Committing to the youth’s approach to peace-building, the workshop will include engaging activities such as games, icebreakers, role-plays, simulation and small group dialogues. The target audience for the seminar workshop will be high school students of MSU-University Training Center High School.
Kawal ng Kapayapaan “Soldiers of Peace” Club
This youth-oriented organization was organized with the mission to invite freshmen students from Marawi State University to become “Soldiers of Peace. The activities of the organization are anchored in the vision of transforming Marawi City into a zone of peace. The lead organizer of this club, an ACCESS-Philippines Alumnus, coordinates basic training workshops and leads open forum discussions that cover topics such as leadership, ethical values and cultural practices, and strategies for conflict management. Kawal ng Kapayapaan collaborates with the MSU-Scholars Society to provide freshmen with an active learning environment for defining and examining conflicts and relating personal experiences to non-violent ways of managing conflicts and safeguarding peace.

Youth for United World Organization (Sultan Kudarat Islamic Academy)
In the Sultan Kudarat Islamic Academy, there is a prominent organization known as the Youth for United World Organization. Membership is limited to select Muslim and Christian students from Southern Christian College and the Focolare Movement. One ACCESS-Philippines participant, as a founding member of the organization, aims to increase the diversity of this group by inviting students from different schools and different ethnic and religious backgrounds to become members of the organization.

To re-invigorate the recruitment process, this youth participant will write articles for his school newspaper, produce plays about the current situation in Mindanao and plan inter-religious dialogues among Muslims, Christians and the Lumads of Mindanao to encourage understanding and unity. He aims to advocate for the celebration of diversity and the sharing of a common vision for peaceful coexistence. He plans to invite members of an indigenous youth organization, the Tuklas Katutubo Movement, to work with them to achieve the goals of the Youth for United World Organization.

Creation of Diversity Club (Basilan National High School)
The creation of this diversity club envisions a society wherein each individual lives in peace and harmony in the midst of diversity. The project aims to: 1) to create a club for religiously diverse students; 2) coordinate forums for exchanging views on religions and concepts of peace; 3) to build an interfaith community that would foster mutual relationships. The activities of the club are grounded on the strong belief that each individual deserves to be respected and heard.
Conducting Inter-religious & Inter-ethnic Dialogues, Conflict Resolution Training & Peace Education Seminars

To facilitate the critical involvement of young people in the peace process, the second batch of ACCESS-Philippines participants organize workshops, trainings, and seminars with the goal of bringing youth together. These workshops and seminars vary in focus, but are grounded in the key principles of inter-religious understanding, inter-ethnic cooperation and conflict resolution. The youth participants assume full responsibility in the implementation of their action plans and other initiatives. This includes coordinating efforts to pool available resources, enlisting support from previous ACCESS Philippines participants who have conducted similar projects and have addressed issues of funding.

Learning Across Religious & Cultural Diversity: An Inter-ethnic & Interfaith Dialogue

This project espouses the vision-mission of strengthening diversity in the community by fostering harmonious relationships among youths from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds and empowering them to become agents for positive change. Students representing the World Islamic Call Society, the Lanao Youth for Peace and Development, the MSU College of Health Sciences and the College of Natural Sciences and Humanities will be invited to engage in this dialogue. Participants will be challenged to appreciate their differences, discover their similarities, and relate their life experiences with their aspirations for peace and respect for religious and cultural diversity.
Inter-ethnic and Inter-faith Peace-Building Workshops

There are several variants of these inter-ethnic and inter-faith dialogues and peace-building programs organized by the youth participants of Marawi State University. The rationale for these workshops is to create a peace-oriented community wherein youth play a proactive role in conflict resolution, reconciliation and in the campaign for peace. These workshops teach identified common themes to different target groups and are conducted in partnership with various institutions including non-profit organizations, local governments and other associations.

A similar workshop primarily intended for the youth ages 14-18 years from both public and private schools in Marawi City deserves closer attention. Entitled “Creating a Brighter Tomorrow,” the organizer of this project took it a step further and expanded the demographic profile of prospective participants to include out-of-school youths with the rationale that these vulnerable youths also have a rightful stake in the peace-building process in Mindanao.

Symposium on “Minding the Gap”

The vision of this project is to appreciate the beauty of diversity in ethnicity and faith through the use of dialogue as the key to resolving conflicts. The symposium will be held in Marawi City, a place dominantly populated by Maranao Muslims. The objectives of “Minding the Gap” include to impart knowledge gained from the ACCESS-Philippines; to teach the beauty and principles of diversity and to increase self-awareness to understand that peace starts from within. The role of dialogue will be crucial in teaching Maranao youths about the importance of “minding the gap” in light of the situation in Mindanao.

Peace Leadership Training I & II

This is a two-phased training for potential trainers for peace leadership. The primary objective is to develop a pool of active youth from Ateneo de Zamboanga University High School who understand the importance of leadership in peace-related efforts. During the training exercises, ACCESS-Philippines participants will engage potential student leaders in various leadership activities modeled after the training program that they participated in at the Peace Learning Center in Indianapolis, Indiana. There will also be sessions on creative conflict management strategies utilizing the “Touching HeArts through Arts’ approach.

Cadena de Paz “Chains of Peace”

This workshop focuses on developing a personal awareness of peace. It will be conducted at the Ateneo de Zamboanga University (AdZU). Targeted participants are second year students from the AdZU College of Education. Depending on available resources, the coordinator of this workshop plans to enhance the diversity of participants by inviting other participants from Zion Evangelical School and Ebenezer High School. The workshop also intends to touch on topics relating to environmental peace to contextualize the value of community service in building humane, peaceful and harmonious society.
A Pen for Peace “Sulat-Kalinaw”
A youth participant working in the framework of achieving peace through non-violence strives to emulate the Filipino national hero and writer, Dr. Jose P. Rizal, by choosing the pen as her instrument to bring about peace in Mindanao. Quoting the words “PEACE is an ACTION not an ambition,” this participant will publish her essays and quotes on peace in her school newspaper and other publications. She also plans to post inspiring stories and excerpts from peace-related articles that teach positive tolerance, diversity and ethnic and religious understanding on a website designed and developed by the Marawi group of participants. The overriding objective is to spread information in order to lessen, if not eradicate, prejudices and to educate Christians, Muslims and the Lumads of their roles in building peace in Mindanao.

ACCESS Philippines Photo Exhibit
In the months following the participants’ return to their respective schools, several photo exhibits were launched. These exhibits featured photographs that highlight their learning experiences, travel adventures, contributions and accomplishments.

One of the guest lecturers for ACCESS Philippines, Dr. Garth Katner from the Interfaith Youth Core of Chicago, Illinois, was able to attend the formal launching of one the exhibitions held at Ateneo de Zamboanga University (AdZU). Former participants of the ACCESS program organized and set up the photo exhibitions.

The main purpose of these photo exhibits was to convey to school administrators, teachers and fellow students the participants’ quest for peace and to encourage their support in the raising awareness and promoting a culture of peace in Mindanao.

Peace Tournament
A Peace Tournament has been organized to provide Marawi youth with space where they can engage in competitive activities while learning the values of sportsmanship, inclusivity and diversity. The focus of the activity is to highlight the role of sports as a vehicle for peace. Youth from different high schools in Marawi City, who already play popular sports such as basketball and volleyball, will have the opportunity to intermingle with youth from different cultures and religions during the tournament. The project will be carried out in collaboration with the Ibn Siena Integrated School Foundation and the generosity of Markazol Shabab Al-Muslim Fil Filibin, a non-governmental organization in Marawi City.
help ensure the availability of relevant literature, such as graduate theses and dissertations, on peace and development studies to interested individuals at the undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate levels. The task force members are called to embrace community service by serving the disenfranchised & the disenchanted, who are, in a word, the “people at the bottom.”

Some of the activities to be carried out by the Task Force for PEACE are panel discussions on Peace 100; the Peace Caravan; Project HELEN: Empowering Young Women Thru the YAYEE School for Peace; the Inter-religious Relations (IIRR): Inter – Religious Dialogue for Freshmen; Summer Institute for Peace and Dialogue; Symposia on Religious Pluralism and the annual celebration of the Mindanao Week of Peace.

**Developing Peace Learning Resource Materials (PLRM)**

Building on a pedagogical framework for incorporating peace education programs into the curriculum, an adult leader from Ateneo de Zamboanga University (AdZU) plans to develop and produce peace learning resource materials such as documentaries, a peace manual and other learning modules. Noting the need to situate learning within the local context, the peace resource learning materials will feature topics such as diversity, causes of conflict, conflict resolution and conflict management strategies, inter-faith understanding, inter-cultural dialogues, biographies of renowned peacemakers and articles about various peace and advocacy groups in the local area. Creative methodologies will be employed to develop documentaries that show the different facets of life in Zamboanga Peninsula. The documentaries will also include stories that reveal the challenges of the displaced people of Basilan, experiences of the victims of insurgency, and views of young people across different faiths and socio-cultural backgrounds.

The project will be jointly implemented with the staff from different departments from AdZU, faculty members from the Ateneo Research Center (ARC) and the Ateneo Peace Institute. Eight youth participants from the two batches of the ACCESS Philippines Program will serve as co-partners in this project. Their experiences and contributions will surely add value to the development of materials and overall the success of the project.
Regional Action Plans

Peace Learning Convergence (PLC):
Towards Achieving Sustainable Inter-Faith Youth Organizations in the Zamboanga Peninsula
(Zamboanga Peninsula)

This organization is envisioned to be one of the leading inter-faith youth organizations that will conduct peace advocacy in the region. It will be the “converging point” for selected student trainers slated to fulfill the objective of creating linkages among various diversity/interfaith organizations in the Zamboanga peninsula. PLC also aims to create a “community of communities” by and for youth peace-builders/advocates from different schools in the region, including the Basilan area.

Phases in Peace Learning Convergence

Phase I: Creation of Diversity/Inter-Faith Club
With proper coordination between the ACCESS-Philippines alumni and the administration of the school, a (an) diversity/inter-faith organization should have been formed by the last week of June to first week of July. An organizational structure should be laid out, defining the duties of the officers within a constitution. Initial projects, like ACCESS, advocacy should be carried out.

Phase II: Pre-Convergence
This phase involves conducting “trainer training” in different schools. This three (3) – day trainers’ workshop will include modules modeled after those in the ACCESS-Philippines program, Peace Learning Center (PLC), Ateneo Peace Institute (API) and Peace Advocates Zamboanga (PAZ). ACCESS-Philippines alumni will act as facilitators. From the participants of these workshops, a pool of trainers will be chosen to participate in the peace learning convergence to be conducted during the Week of Peace in Mindanao. This event will be held the last week of November and first week of December.

Phase III: The Convergence: A Place at the Table
The Peace Learning Convergence is a three (3) – day seminar – workshop which would provide the participants from the Pre-Convergence phase the opportunity to meet other active youth peace – builders from different schools, and share ideas and perspectives on various social issues affecting Western Mindanao and the Philippines as a whole. During the convergence, an organization will be created to serve as an umbrella organization of interfaith organizations from different participating schools. This organization will be called the Zamboanga Peninsula Inter – Faith Youth Organization (ZamPen – IFYO).

Phase IV: Creation of the “Zamboanga Peninsula InterFaith Youth Organization”
Serving as the umbrella organization, the ZamPen - IFYO will provide a venue for different inter – faith organizations in the Zamboanga Peninsula to interact and dialogue as well as serve as a voice for youth on issues of peace and other social issues.

Creation of Diversity/Inter-Faith Organization and Conduct of Peace Trainings
The Zamboanga -Basilan ACCESS-Philippines alumni will act as facilitators/speakers for trainers’ trainings and as the main coordinators of the peace and conflict resolution training in their respective schools.

- Ateneo – ACCESS
  (Target beneficiaries: Council of Leaders, Campus Ministry Organizations (PSALMS, MSA, ALECS, ACIL, CLC and etc)
- Basilan Diversity (Revived Diversity group composed of Muslim and Christians from Basilan National High School
- PAZ – City High (Zamboanga City High School-Newly created club in ZCHSM)

The Convergence: A Place at the Table
“A Place at the Table” symbolizes the efforts of all inter-faith youth organizations within participating schools in Zamboanga Peninsula to express their views on peace issues affecting the youth of the region, with the idea that these perspectives are respected. “A Place at the Table” also represents the desire for a shared vision, for collaboration for the purpose of bringing about positive change in the forms of dialogues and advocacy work.
Central Mindanao Regional Action Plan
Empowering the Youth of Central Mindanao for Peace

Mindanao ............ The Land of Promise....... The Home to Mindanaoans ...... The Seat of Diverse Cultures and Faiths is challenged by the signs of the times to live in harmony, peace, justice, and love.

“KALINAW MINDANAO” is what we envisioned. This quest for peace is made possible by educating and empowering our youth, encouraging and advocating intercultural dialogue, and advocating for peace and social justice in our homes, schools, churches, civic organizations and other institutions.

The vision-mission of this peace project resonates with the need for advocacy, grassroots organizing, and training. The Central Mindanao group plans to conduct advocacy through sharing their ACCESS-Philippines 2005 experience with their communities through their schools and the media. The ACCESS alumni also plan to establish several youth organizations in different areas of Central Mindanao. To further their advocacy and organizing efforts, the group will conduct a week-long intensive training program focused on inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution for the youth leaders of Central Mindanao.

Project Objectives:
- To share The ACCESS-Philippines 2005 Experience with the youth of Central Mindanao;
- To identify potential youth leaders in the municipalities and cities of Central Mindanao;
- To equip youth leaders with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed to create a culture of peace and dialogue in Central Mindanao;
- To establish partnerships and encourage the feeling of community among youth leaders in Central Mindanao and other sectors of the society who work for peace throughout Mindanao.

Activities:
Phase 1: Advocacy (The ACCESS-Philippines Experience)
- Home/school/church/civic organizations
- Mindanao Cross, school paper
- CTV 12, ABS-CBN
- NDBC “Radio for Peace” and “Ang Simbahang Naglalakbay”
- Peace Bulletin (Peace Info/ Updates, Peace quotes)

Phase 2: Organizing
- Peace Youth Club (Gensan, Mlang)
- InterFaith Youth Core (Cotabato City and Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao)
- Philippine Marist Student Solidarity Peace Bureau (PMSSPB) (NDKC, Kidapawan City)
- Integrating Peace Education at Mlang TEEN Center (Mlang)

Phase 3: Training
A week-long Intensive Training Program on Inter-ethnic Dialogue and Conflict Resolution for the Youth leaders of Central Mindanao.
Marawi Regional Action Plan

The purpose of this project is to contribute to the peace and advocacy efforts in Marawi City by empowering youth to take actions in their schools and surrounding communities. The activities of the project planned by the Marawi group of ACCESS participants include: a Kalilintad Youth Camp; Follow-up Activity for Kalilintad Participants; ACCESS Marawi and Kalilintad Youth Core Marketing; Ramadan Activities; Mindanao Week of Peace (Marawi Celebration); Community Outreach Programs in Lanao Municipalities; Leadership Training Seminar for Marawi Sangguniang Kabataan Officials; Leadership Training Seminar for Marawi Sangguniang Kabataan Officials; Out-of-School Youth Empowerment Seminar-Workshop; Environmental Seminar for Lake Lanao Youth; Tree-Planting and a Cleanliness Drive; and Peace Workshops for MSU-Marawi CWTS Students.

**Project Activity & Objectives**

**Kalilintad Youth Camp**  
**July 22-24, 2005**

- To be a catalyst for positive social transformation in the community and develop individuals to be potential peacemakers leading to youth empowerment;
- To promote inter-ethnic dialogue as an alternative paradigm in promoting mutual understanding among various faiths;
- To instill in youth the value of their pivotal role in peace building and respect for cultural diversity.

- Collaborate with the MSU Inspired Young Optimists Guild and the British Council to conduct a trainers’ training
- Conduct workshops on diversity, leadership, inter-ethnic dialogue, conflict transformation, personality development, volunteerism, team-building, etc.

**Follow-Up Activity**  
(Kalilintad Participants)  
**Second week of August**

- To provide an assessment of the impact of the youth camp on the participants, based on their shared experiences after the endeavor; and introduce a new movement to pursue the objective of bringing about peace in the community.

- Visit participating schools
- Initiated a documentary film project
- Introduce the Kalilintad Youth Core
- Conduct needs-assessment

**ACCESS Marawi & Kalilintad Youth Core Marketing**  
**August-September**

- To be able to establish a solid foundation of effective partnership, networking and collaboration with established organizations, so as to acquire ample support for the peace movement.

- Build linkages with the city government
- Raise funds
- Establish a network with other organizations

**Ramadan Activities**  
**Last week of September**

- To promote a sense of volunteerism and advocate peace in diversity and religious dialogue.

- Practice Zakat and Iftar
- Conduct religious awareness sessions on Islam

**Mindanao Week of Peace (Marawi Celebration)**  
**Last week of November**

- Execute maximum and active participation in a wider scope of a movement for peace
- Communicate a culture of peace.

- Establish linkages with MWOP
- Organize poster-making and essay-writing contests
Environmental Seminar for Lake Lanao Youth

Last week of June

- To enhance environmental awareness among the youth
- To educate youth about various environmental concerns
- Allow them to explore effective actions and solutions to related problems
- Present lectures about the present condition of Lake Lanao and what the youth can do for its preservation

Leadership Training Seminar Marawi
Sangguniang Kabataan

Last week of January

- To inculcate the essence of effective leadership and provide a simple yet comprehensive leadership training
- To empower youth leaders and encourage a more active youth leadership.

Peace Workshops for MSU-Marawi CWTs Students

Starting on the first Sunday of August

- To share valuable experiences regarding peace process training with students in order to empower and inform them about current peace issues
- Conduct workshops about diversity, leadership, conflict resolution, volunteerism, and dialogue for 1st Year students of different colleges in MSU

Out-of-School Youth Empowerment Seminar-Workshop

Second week of February

- Outreach to the less-empowered youth sector of our society;
- Educate the out-of-school youth on empowerment for peace advocacy.

Seek support from MSU-IYOG and the World Islamic Call Society

Conduct basic tutorials for illiterate children of Ramain, Saguian, Tugaya, Tuka, and Wato

Establish a connection with the SK -Marawi Chapter officials and to introduce to them various strategies for effective leadership

Community Outreach Programs Lanao Municipalities

December 2005

- To extend an increased scale of partnerships and linkages for peace movement
- To outreach to the less-fortunate communities to empower them to build their communities
- Seek support from MSU-IYOG and the World Islamic Call Society
- Conduct basic tutorials for illiterate children of Ramain, Saguian, Tugaya, Tuka, and Wato

Experience extraordinary enjoyable activities, games, exercises and lectures and move you on your way of becoming the ambassador for peace in Mindanao and in the Philippines!!!

Take your chance of meeting youths from international conventions and work with them with teaching stories, talks and lectures!!!

All of these in a worthy 3-days!!! All of these for less!!!
Strengthening Peace, Unity and Development in the Province of Tawi- Tawi and Neighboring ARMM

Tawi-Tawi Regional Action Plan

Tawi- Tawi is considered one of the poorest provinces in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) areas and in the Philippines. This province consists of 307 islands, islets and reefs located in the southwest region of the Philippine archipelago. As political entity Tawi - Tawi is part of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). It is composed of ten island municipalities: Bongao, Languyan, Mapun (formerly Cagayan de Sulu) Panglima Sugala (Formerly Balimbing), Sapa-Sapa, Simunul, South Ubian, Tandubas and the Turtle islands. Each municipality is a mini-archipelago, giving Tawi-tawi province a distinct island character and a unique culture.

The native population of Tawi-Twai is sixty percent Bangsa Sama whose origins can be traced to Indonesia. The Bangsa Sama are scattered all over these ten island municipalities. The remaining forty percent represent different tribes, religions and cultures; Tausug, Chinese, Maranao,Visaya, Chavacano, Bicolano and other Christian settlers who have been in Tawi- Tawi since the arrival of the Thomasites during the American regime in the Philippines.

Project Description

This project aims to promote mutual understanding, unity, peace and development among the people of Tawi - Tawi as Tawi – Tawians, regardless of culture, religion, tribes, race, creed and gender. It seeks to promote unity in diversity as the path to sustainable peace and development in Tawi - Tawi, and other neighboring ARMM areas. More specifically, this project aims to transform unreasonable hatred into brotherly love among Tawi-Tawians from different religious and ethno-cultural backgrounds.

Project Objectives

- To nurture a culture of peace among individuals, within families and in the larger community
- To sustain a culture of peace through tolerance and deep understanding
- To transform a culture of violence, hatred, apathy and indifference through inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution to the grassroots level

Plans and Activities

- Develop a Peace Youth Camp for selected Public and Private high school students in the Bongao and Simunul Municipality
- Create a dialogue with people from different religious backgrounds, cultures, tribes, and genders with the participation of local leaders, selected government employees, professionals, the military and Philippine National Police.
- Conduct training seminars on conflict resolution with community leaders, youth leaders and women.

The Project is consistent with the goals, vision and mission of ACCESS-Philippines; of constructing PEACE within ourselves, family, community; to initiate change for the betterment and prosperity of our land; to use project and our experiences as instruments for realizing our noble purpose, dreams and responsibility of serving others, community, and above all, serving God.
At the tip of Zamboanga Peninsula, there is an island. It possesses the simple beauty of nature. So peaceful, so silent. This is our island, our homeland – Basilan.

Basilan is peopled by different tribes – Yakan, Tausug, Samal, Chavacano, Visaya, and other minor tribes. Islam is more dominant than Christianity. Although diverse, the people of Basilan lived in a quite normal and peaceful way of living.

Then a group came, possessing firearms. They are the ones who gave Basilan a deep wound which will take a long, long time to heal. They took away the peace, harmony, and justice, exchanging violence and terrorism.

But, as the saying goes, “All things must come to an end.” The wars and conflicts between the rebel and the government seemed to be finished. However, the wound is so fresh, and, takes a very long, long time to heal. And the Basileños are just waiting.

As students, it is our role to educate ourselves, so that we can help improve and develop our land. And the Basileños are just waiting.

-Al Yassir Abubakar
Basilan National High School

I have lived the fifteen years of my life in Cotabato City. For me, my everyday life seems normal, but for others it never was. During my younger years, I remember playing and running in the streets. As the years went by, things started to change. We can no longer do the things we used to do for security reasons.

I go to school early to avoid traffic caused by the Marine checkpoint outside our school. Kidnappings have been on the rise, especially Chinese looking victims, so we have to be on alert though my family is neither pure Chinese nor rich. I thought that all these things were normal until some incidents changed my mind.

These incidents made me slowly realize that the peace and order situation in Cotabato City is not normal. It made me feel unsafe. I cannot understand why these things had to happen. Is it because of religion, differences in ideals or plain survival? I don't think it has anything to do with religion. Christians and Muslims have lived together in peace in Cotabato for years. In fact, they have intermarried. My great grandmother is a Muslim, and all my relatives down to my father speak Muslim dialect. My best friend is Muslim.

Perhaps it is due to differences in ideals or the need to survive because of poverty. There are really many things to change in Cotabato City and if I have the chance, I will be the one to start a big change.

-Thaddeus Martin Z. Uy
Cotabato City Institute

Through the eyes of a child the words rebellion, war, revolution, and conflicts made me to wonder why these things happen. It is very disturbing to hear stories from adults about the unrest in Mindanao. As I've grown, my concern grew even deeper. I've began to realize that to solve these problems, I must first find its roots, the cause which I think most people have overlooked. Yes, there is social unrest but it is only a symptom of the real sickness of the society I live.

The province which I live in may be peaceful, but most of the neighboring provinces experience social and political violence. As a Muslim and citizen of Mindanao, I am concerned for my homeland and wish to see it gain peace and order. There is a need for people who can give us ideas that we can use to solve the problems of our society who have the same concern for the welfare of the people.

I have my own distinct passion for peace. And this passion is too strong to be contained in this province alone. I want to reach out not only in this province but throughout the country and eventually worldwide.

-Raisha Nazreen T. Alih
MSU – TCTO Science HS
“Boomtown,” is the term used when we talk about General Santos City.

It was three years ago when two of the largest malls here in GenSan were burned down. Several bombings occurred in the city. Many innocent lives were lost. It was a disaster. Before, General Santos City was said to be peaceful and progressive. But when terrorists started to attack the city, the status changed. People became hesitant to do things they used to do, thinking another bombing will occur again.

These days, the city has recovered. The people are starting to create a new life while trying to forget the disastrous things happened before. Children now are well educated and Muslims and Christian relationships are starting to develop.

Now, everybody starts to understand each one’s culture and religion and they are beginning to be accepting. Still, I’m hoping and praying that as the years go by, the known Boomtown City will always be peaceful for the better future for the coming generations.

-Keith Marie D. Epe
General Santos SPED Integrated HS

Before I give an assessment of my locality, I’d like to share a personal story. I was very young, Iraq invaded Kuwait and the Gulf War erupted. I remember that the war was intense and horrifying. It traumatized me.

My family had to flee from Kuwait via Iraq to Turkey. I became ill and my family had to stop at an Iraqi camp for aid. Luckily the Iraqis were not very hostile and they helped us. Eventually we got to Turkey and flew to the Philippines. Up until this day I can’t believe how I survived. Ever since that experience I have always promoted peace among my community.

The peace and order situation in Marawi City is very miserable because the people of Marawi City, called Maranaos, have a lot of pride. This excessive pride almost always ends up in family feuds and rivalries.

Despite these pressing problems, I remain optimistic. I have been actively involved in many peace-related activities in my school and community.

I am part of small group students who act as peace negotiators in my school. My life experience has shaped the person who I am, a worker for peace.

-Aaref A. Ronda
IBN Sienna Integrated School

The peace and order situation in our locality is appalling and unstable because of the existence of family feuds. The killing of innocent and helpless people is becoming rampant. Even fights among students and other young individuals are not unusual. Sounds of a gun, quarrels, and physical and verbal fighting are commonplace in our locality. These happen because of people’s arrogance and pride. There is a strained relationship between Muslims and Christians. There is discrimination, prejudices, and misunderstandings.

However, the local officials and community leaders are exerting efforts to pacify misunderstandings and conflicts through dialogues, talks, consultation with other leaders in the community. Students also have been involved by promoting ads about peace that encourage others to help in the cessation of terrible acts such as killings and forms of injustice. I believe that nurturing healthy relations with the non-Muslims is a form of upholding peace and order.

-Dayang Akirah L. Sansarona
Mindanao State University, Marawi

Let there be Peace. Who would not want peace? As a student, I have been promoting peace in my own ways. I believe my duty first and foremost is to study hard so I would know about myself and the world. I’ve been already involved in some peace-related activities in my school and even in our community. I consider this as an achievement itself.

Being young is not a hindrance at all. Age does not matter. It is the willingness and attitude that count. Youth must not make themselves a burden to the society they live. We have to do our part for Mindanao. This is our challenge and if things get rough, it pays to remember that if there is a will there will always be a way.

-Aiza M. Salakadang
Mindanao State University, Marawi
My community is in Uyaan Lanao del Sur. It is about an hour ride from Marawi City. This place has been noted for its picturesque views and it has been a peaceful place in the past several decades.

Today, with drugs, carnapping, robbery and feudal conflicts, my locality has become very dangerous. People are not allowed to travel after eight in the evening. Thieves, marauders and robbers are roaming around the place during nighttime. Because of the rate of crimes and conflicts, many are uneducated and are languishing in poverty and misery.

As a student, I am very much concerned with the deteriorating peace and order in our locality. In view of this, I became a member of the organizations whose functions and objectives are related to peace making and peace building.

-Fatima Zarah D. Umpa  
Mindanao State University, Marawi

Many people think that teenagers do not care about peace. They are wrong. For a long time, we have been searching for peace.

Being able to work for peace is a privilege. I went to a youth camp that included Christians and Muslims students discussing ideas on how to maintain the peace and order situation in their respective places.

I know I can contribute to peace in our land. First, I will think what will be the outcome of every action that I take. Second, peace should begin with me. Third, I must learn to respect the decisions and opinions of others. Fourth, I will love my enemy. And the last one is to continue my work for Mindanao through leading a prayer-filled life and having Jesus Christ in my heart. I strongly believe that if I really want peace, I must begin with myself.

-Sesa Mae P. Bilbao  
Mlang National High School

Changing the society into a better one can be a very big task. As a student, I can extend a helping hand by sharing my insights and joining different congregations or youth groups with the objective of bringing youth together in dialogue. As a member of our school newspaper, I can contribute by publishing different articles that encourage the youth congress to speak out for what they need and their rights. I will nurture my relations with my own community and with the holy guidance of our Lord Jesus Christ, I can say that the youth can bring hope to our land.

-Donna C. Babuyo  
Mindanao State University, Marawi

In our community, I have been active to in just about almost every organization, in school, community, and church. In fact, I have been an officer to almost every organization I have joined.

One specific example is the Peer Facilitators Club (PFC). I have been the President of our school’s PFC. We conduct an annual Peace Talk Seminar where we discuss conflicts happening in our school or in our community. We have been exploring three different types of conflicts, namely, School Conflict, Local Conflict, and Common Conflict. In our discussions, we discuss not only about the nature of conflict but also devise ways for managing them constructively and positively.

I believe that PEACE is an Action, not an Ambition. That is why I have proactively involved myself in many of these activities to help promote peace and order in my own locality.

-Donna C. Babuyo  
Mindanao State University, Marawi

The current situation of Peace and Order in the ARMM areas, particularly in the Province of Tawi-Tawi, can be traced back to the struggle for self-government and recognition of rights anchored in justice and fairness to the Filipino Muslim. This issue has never been resolved.

Because of the poverty and ignorance that still prevails in Mindanao area, many Muslims whose parents and relatives died at the height of conflict feel neglected and exploited. Some of these people join either the insurgency group or other lawless elements, with the intention to spread terror in the provinces and cities in Mindanao. However, this problem could be eliminated if these people could understand the concept of peaceful living and are given the opportunity to participate in the political and socio-economic activities in their respective provinces.

For the Mindanaoans, peace is still elusive. Peace is only possible if people respect one another and are sincere in their commitment for peace.

-Donna C. Babuyo  
Mindanao State University, Marawi

-Diane T. Taburada  
Mindanao State University, Marawi

-Bofill Tuahan  
DTI – ARMM
Terrorism is a global problem. Whether you read newspaper or watch news reports, Mindanao is on the front line. This bad news puts Mindanao and Mindanaoans in bad light because other peoples who may want to visit or see the place will be discouraged. But how are we going to change this tarnished image or stigma attached to us – “Mindanaoans?”

As a social scientist and an educator, my objective in pursuing my professional or educational plan is to provide solutions on the contemporary problem in the MINSUPALA (Mindanao-Sulu-Palawan) region, but specifically in the Southern Philippines (Mindanao). By enhancing my knowledge in inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution that focuses on political dimension, I will be able to find solutions. One of the possible reasons why there is conflict in Mindanao is this cultural gap.

This challenge has inspired me to continue my mission as mediator between these groups. In one way or another, hunger for knowledge about ethno-history has helped me better understand and appreciate their culture and literature. This way I can make a difference in bridging this cultural gap in Mindanao.

-Amando Boncales
Mindanao State University, Marawi

I live in Kidapawan City, the capital town of Cotabato province, Philippines.

The primary asset of Cotabato is its people. The diverse and rich culture of Cotabato is a fertile ground to sow the seeds of a culture of peace and dialogue. But the biases in the so called Christian and Muslim Conflict, and idiosyncrasies of these religious cultures have become basis for division, when it should have been made a source a strength instead.

There is a clamor for an alternative approach to address the problems that beset Mindanao. Cotabato is in a transition stage in building build human bridges, instead of divisions, by promoting cultural harmony and unity in diversity. The experience we may get from ACCESS-Philippines shall be vital to share in realizing the vision and mission of creating a better place to live. Our challenge is the hope that our counterparts will actively respond to the call to deepen and to diversify the approach to address the obstructions that distract our ways in achieving PEACE.

-Jose Jelor Pescadera
Notre Dame of Kidapawan College

My work in peace allows me to reach strategic populace-community leaders who are mostly parents, youth groups, soldiers, teachers, and staff of groups through organized activities such as the Children and Youth Summer Peace Camps, Children and Youth Assemblies. These activities are held once a year, with the children’s activities separated from the youth, but all meet during the assembly. Aside from this, I conduct the culture of peace seminar-workshops for organized youth.

The challenges I face are enormous and awesome. It is most important though to make good use of the opportunity, time and attention that one is given during these seminar-workshops. I feel that I could be well working towards the reconciliation of the selves and of families when I give the culture of peace.

When I am faced with soldiers, the challenge is usually to invite them to get in touch with their “personhood.” I was once given the task to handle a group that recently went on an “operation.” At the end of the seminar/workshop, amidst the messages of thanks from each of the participants, the Commanding Officer came to me and said, “Ma’am, thank you very much for providing us the opportunity to see ourselves and our world in a different perspective. I thought most of my soldiers here would not be able to talk about themselves, but they did. It is difficult (situation), especially because Filipino soldiers are made to “heal” themselves, by themselves, after an encounter.”

Through all,, and because of, these experiences, I am truly hopeful that people will realize that “ peace is a gift from The Almighty, a grace granted in God’s own time-it is also a task, a responsibility, and the fruit of the people’s collective and sustained efforts.”

-Maria Theresa de Leon
Peace Advocates Zamboanga
The challenge of building a peaceful, just, and orderly Cotabato City is very clear. A call to peace and solidarity based on compassion, conscientization, dialogue, active non-violence, friendship and mutual trust, respect for human life, ecological sustainability, spirituality and religiousity, truth and service are central to a culture of peace.

What then is our agenda for change in Cotabato City? I am inspired by Pope John Paul’s views for world development when he proposed the following:

- Protect human life.
- Promote the family.
- Eliminate poverty.
- Respect human rights.
- Disarmament.
- Medicine for all.
- Conserve the environment.
- Apply the law.

Individually and collectively, we need to find ways, in Cotabato City, to work for peace and development. We must never lose the hope of creating a civilization of love and life.

If one interprets the word “crisis” correctly as meaning “an opportunity,” then the light may be found burning brightly in every crisis mentioned above. Hope is there! It is particularly found in the young people I have encountered over the years who desire a better future and seek help for ways of contributing to a better world. Many young people are, in my estimation, as dedicated, as passionate and as committed to bring about change as their older counterparts. Let us keep the lights burning brightly by believing in our youth and by providing opportunities to help them carry us all forward into a more hope-filled future.

-Mary Arlene Lago
Notre Dame University

How has the ACCESS-Philippines Project changed you?

The ACCESS-Philippines program taught me that the word “respect” means many different things. The program introduced me to the word “peace” in different tongues and mores. The ACCESS-Philippines program made me realize the wrong notions that I had, and make me more careful in my judgment and my dealings with other people. I became magnanimous and righteous in my own ways. The program gave me strength to be persistent in quenching my thirst to attain peace in my own ways. The program helped me develop my self-confidence and my confidence to other people. Lastly, it taught me that I am not alone. There are people out there like me, who care for peace and we share the same experiences in one way or another.

-Kathrina S. Abastar

ACCESS is one of the best things that ever happened to me. It made me understand and moreover, appreciate the gifts and even complications of life.

-Ali Rafsanjani A. Pikit

ACCESS-Philippines really changed me. My perceptions changed. My spirit of being hopeful for peace and unity in Mindanao, and the Philippines as a whole, has been enhanced. Phil Access is one of the reasons why I haven’t stopped myself from believing in change and betterment. One of the reasons why I keep striving and trying to work for peace, is that I enjoy serving my fellow man and making sacrifices for the good of the whole. Sacrifices that I truly believe have done a lot to make a difference.

-Marjorie Leanna Kong

The training I have undergone proved me that life is not mere existence; rather [it is] a big bowl of lessons that mold people to be worthy inhabitants of the world and to be the best creations of GOD spreading HIS wisdom and goodness.

-Suhaini Nasher D. Pagadilan

ACCESS-Philippines has indeed brought up positive changes in me that, since being a part of it, I have been seeing and understanding the world differently--different in such a way that I am more aware of the few important things people often take for granted. More importantly, it has brought inner peace in me and saying it humbly, because of ACCESS Philippines, I became a better citizen of my locality, my country and of the whole world as a whole.

-Rashid Pandi
The Way I Am for PEACE
by Ali Rafsanjani A. Pikit

During the summer of 2000 in Cotabato City, Philippines, I turned twelve years old. I remember not paying attention to the helicopters hovering in the sky, public schools becoming evacuation centers, and the radio and television broadcasting frightening news. Later on, I learned that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the military were engaged in an armed clash and we were in close proximity of where it took place.

Five years after, I find myself thankful that the clash did not happen in the exact location where we live. I often think of the frightful possibilities had I been one of the evacuees in those schools. I could not have enjoyed the gift of life, I could have not been educated and I could not have been given the chance to work for my future.

The effects of war are undeniably ruthless, and it is very evident that the most aggravated victims of these unwanted occurrences are innocent children. Just imagine if young minds are allowed to develop fully in a secure, safe and livable environment. They will grow up as creative and prolific individuals.

**Why do I have these thoughts in mind?**

Now I care. Unlike five years ago, I definitively care. Peace is important. It is, in fact, essential. My political science instructor would often give emphasis on the attainment of peace as the very first step to progress and development. It is true. People would always aim to live a healthy, safe and sufficient life, but how can we prosper if we are continuously threatened by the danger of conflicts?

Going to America has been one of my ultimate dreams and the program called ACCESS Philippines became an immediate ticket for the realization of this dream. This was my initial motivation, the reason why I struggled for a slot in the program. Having went through an interesting and meaningful learning experience, a reason far more momentous than the trip to America has led me to embrace a new role.

The ACCESS program has instilled in me a passion to actively engage myself in efforts directed for a noble cause---to work for peace in my own little ways. The issue of peace and development has long been a political matter in history, but the program made me visualize how a mere student can take part in peace-making. Truly, my first visit to the States became more noteworthy in a sense that I now have returned home with a lifetime commitment to work for peace in Mindanao.

**Why work for peace?**

Working for peace is a happy task. Although it is very challenging, the personal rewards are great if you are able to touch others’ lives with your splendid purpose. Together with other alumni in the program, a youth camp was conducted where we were now the facilitators of skillful high school students. Sharing with them our experiences and the knowledge we gained from the program was indeed a huge achievement. The mere thought that I continue to learn with every step I take will always...

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It Isn’t Just About Uncle Sam!
by Rashid Pandi

A lot of people think that I’m very much lucky for grabbing the very rare opportunity of traveling to the United States of America, for free. While there is truth in their claim, still they failed to realize that I’m even luckier not because I’ve gone to the US but because of the things I’ve learned in the Land of Freedom.

When I applied for the ACCESS Program, I thought more about the US trip than the lessons that I would be getting from the Institute. But when we were in America and attended few of the program’s sessions, my view of the whole experience changed. Day by day, as I listened to the seminars, participated in the lectures, went to field trips and took active part in many activities and drills, I developed a strong sense of commitment—the commitment to offer myself as an instrument for positive change in my own locality. From then on, I’ve come to realize that indeed “it isn’t just about Uncle Sam”.

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“How’s America?” “How does it look like?”…These are but few of the several questions that were constantly asked when I returned to my country after the trip to the United States of America. Some questions were even totally outrageous such as that one time when I asked whether I have seen any Hollywood star, and the other time when they curiously probed “Did you meet President George Bush there?” It sounded silly but true, I was really bombarded with such types of questions.

The most interesting part was that the same questions were repeated over and over again. I was subjected with the same line of questioning around every corner—in the streets, the schools and in my house among my friends, family, relative and those people that I meet everyday. My goodness, you can just imagine how tiring and boring it was for me, answering the same questions all the time to different people. At one point, I thought about bringing a tape recorder with me and replay the same answers over and over again.

I did not frown upon their eagerness to ask me about the United States because their curiosity also allowed me to reminisce on my unforgettable US days. Such reactions were inevitable. The mere thought of USA alone is something that everyone in this part of the globe is interested in. The thing is, I wanted to hear questions or inquiries that scratch beneath the surface—questions such as lessons I learned, how the experience changed me, and the impact of the program on my life. Above all, I wanted to be asked of what I will do next. Sad to say, only a few bothered to ask me about these things—a ratio of one out of ten.

Of Conflict and Peace
by Christian Olasiman

Conflict is natural; it could be destructive or constructive. It’s not whether you are face with conflicts in your life that matters, it is on how you respond to that conflict that makes a difference. Resolutions to conflicts through people’s participation in meaningful dialogues and negotiations are more effective approaches of keeping peace.
My Dream
By Hamza Eshmael

I leave in a small city called Marawi. It is located in the center part of Mindanao, Southern Mindanao. The people of this city take pride in the bonds of kinship and close family ties. Unfortunately, there is a constant want of stability in this land that it comes to peace and order, Marawi is ranked right at the bottom of the list.

The Maranao are an interesting group of people. One of the characteristics which occupy the centerpiece of a Maranao persona is what we call as the “maratabat”. Maratabat embodies the Maranao culture complex that can be translated as self-pride within the Maranao’s clannish tradition. “Rido” or family feud where two or more families are in conflict usually results to killing each family or clan members. Conflict is not uncommon consequence of “marabat” and “rido”.

However, the Maranao does not have a monopoly of these characteristics. In the whole archipelago, clans of different families, Muslims or Christians, always come comes to the defense of their respective family members and relatives. This is particularly evident in Philippine politics. Some of these conflicts reached bloody encounters that lasted for decades while some remained remembered inscribed in their hearts and minds.

I grew up in the heart of Marawi City. Relatively noisy and populated, the city arouses my mind viewing it in a larger picture. Problems on a recognizable magnitude do exist in the city such as drug addiction, drug trafficking, bribery, car napping, isolated cases of kidnapping for ransom, election cheating – these and more bring about conflicts. These usual problems come about along with poverty as it is elsewhere.

Even at a very tender age, I wanted to do something about the existing problems. However, I had my own setbacks that lingered on my mind. I feel I can not do anything because I am very young. Who will listen to a 17 year old talking about changes? What I did instead was I made my way through the school system via the activation of the different clubs that enrich skills in different fields. I want to go further and beyond the territory of the school campus and studentry to reach out to the community. Thank God, the ACCESS Program came on time.

Being in the United States is more of an experience than a visit. As the sounds and sights wrap me in wonder, I learned that peace means to coexist with other people, amidst differences. After all, diversity is about being inclusive, not exclusive. Dealing with other people helps me in building mutual understanding with others and in acknowledging and appreciating differences, build friendships, and promote social justice and equality.

The ACCESS Philippines program is a beacon, a signal of hope to bring about change and to break the walls that hinder national solidarity. It has continued to inspire young people like me to do more and be restless in the struggle for peace in Mindanao. The concepts that we have learned in the US and our rich experiences has helped us in inculcating awareness and promoting the values of tolerance and diversity. Our month-long training in the United States has served as a model that guided us in designing activities and meaningful plans of action to fulfill our mission as ACCESS participants.

Education is an imperative element in peacemaking because it has the power to mobilize others to take action and today’s youth constitutes the most dynamic and dominant sector in our society. Only through educating the young minds on the importance of unity in diversity and empowering them to take action can we begin to down the foundation of a lasting peace that is vital to healing our land. While there is no easy way of attaining peace, I believe strongly in my heart that working together as a community will help us to move forward in realizing our dreams to make Mindanao a “ground of hope” for sustainable peace.
After the month long intensive training of the ACCESS Philippines through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, things became more vivid and better perceived. I realized that I was right worrying for peace to set in the community. I understood that each-and-every one of us have a very important role to play in the twin business of peace building and development in the community. Together, we can make dramatic changes and make the differences in my city. To be young is not a hindrance to participate in community affairs; in fact it is power. Starting from every self, we can radiate to the other youth members in the community and make up the mass for peace. “A mile starts with a single step” is a good forward-looking start. Dr. Garth Katner, one of the important lecturers in the training also said, “Think Big, but take small steps.” And the best prescription is never stop dreaming and never end the effort. Now, as things look better, we have perceptions on why things happen the way they do. True enough, identifying the problem, is halfway solving the problem.

Do Something!
By: Johaina M. Madum

The conflict situation in Mindanao is quite complex. It started long ago even before we are born, in the time of our great ancestors. It has become a part of our history- a part that seems to see no end. We must consider that long-running conflict in Mindanao is not only about the Muslim/Christian communal or Islamic separatists varieties. Many peace movements try to manage the conflict in Mindanao over the years. The government and non-government organizations try to do their part, both Muslims and Christians attempted to build avenues to manage the aggression but they’re not successful, still peace has not come to Mindanao and formal peace talk remains suspended. But peace can be realized. Peace can be a reality through advocating for a non-violent solution, through effective communication with the other. Talking, listening and understanding, these are three important elements in an effective communication. One should be willing to talk honestly with another. Let us be frank and sincere with each other and should not also be afraid but rather be courageous of entering a dialogue with someone. Don’t wait the other to start it. We should listen to other side’s claim.

Sensitivity also is important, you should know how to address the others concern and know how to accept, respect and appreciate the differences regarding culture, beliefs, interests, opinions, perspectives and expectations. Remember that both sides do not need to be the same or think the same.

In order to listen to your partner you need to understand where does he come from, what does he want, (remember that in an agreement one should need to know not only what they want but also the other’s wants) and know how to identify what’s your expectations with him and at the same time he’s expectations with you. You should also be aware of the whole situation and know how to analyze it and understand it. Peace is found in education, in understanding.

I still believe that every problem has its own solution whether through the use of violence or by means of peaceful methods. Whatever it is, the important thing is the parties should look forward to peace as the ultimate goal.

As for the Mindanao conflict, something has to be done about it. I rather hope for a solution through non-violent means. Whatever it is, let us all join in on our struggle for peace and let us end our pessimistic belief that World Peace is just a mirage…. As Kofi Annan have said “If something has not been done before, it does not mean that it can’t be done; it only means you could be the first to do it.
I Can Make A Difference!
by Rommel G. Tan-Abing

I grew up in a place where people discriminate against one another, people create barriers and divide themselves regarding their race and religion. I grew up in Mindanao. Mindanao felt sufferings and despair from instantaneous man-made catastrophe. There were bombings carried out by lost command of the rebel groups. Their actions continue to have a devastating impact on the nation. The situation they created has prompted investors to decline business proposals and offerings. Due to kidnappings, extortions and other lawless activities during the 1990’s, the militant groups have continued to keep the entire society alarmed. They have caused tremors that leave people terror-stricken.

There is an overwhelming bleakness that engulfs the land and it is the absence of peace. So I grew up knowing that these miserable things are just part of my life and I could not do something about it. It is so sad to realize that a child’s definition of normal is based on how they perceive their elders, whom one looks up to as models.

Working for peace never came into my mind before. Perhaps it was because I was I confused then. But with instinctive mind, I decided to follow what my heart is seeking for. The ACCESS Philippines is my stepping-stone to a brighter tomorrow. Because we believe that we can make a difference no matter how chaotic things may be. The program strengthens the hopes of the people to have a culture of peace. We believe that the youth has a voice and a choice. ACCESS legacy has been truly amazing. The people in Mindanao now hear the youth’s voice. We are seeking and promoting peace. It is a program that has guided me to the right direction of my journey. I was blindfolded before and my heart was chained. But now my eyes are open and the experience has unchained my grounded heart. I was able to see and feel the real world. Above all, I learned to lend a helping hand by being a responsible youth leader.

I will be an architect of peace forever, no matter what. I am a product of ACCESS --a youth who has a strong principle and that is the belief that we can make things possible through peace and great passion.

Peace is possible unless we take it for granted. The power is all in our hands and we must think big but take small steps. ACCESS Philippines changed my perspective in life. But it will never be a complete success without my companions, friends and mentors, whom I had shared thoughts, laughter and tears with. I wrote this piece as my heartfelt gratitude to all the people who made it possible.

The Plain Truth of the Borders of my Journey
by Raissa Ponce

What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul...Such a touching biblical passage, right? The passage reminds us that even if we have all the great chances of this world, even at our young age.

I was given the chance to travel to the United States of America through ACCESS-PHILIPPINES Program. I felt very fortunate that I was one of the chosen youth who was given the chance to be part of the program. The journey of twenty-six youth participants and eight adult leaders was headed towards bridging the gap of misunderstanding through conflict resolution and inter-ethnic dialogue.

Going to United States was an amazing experience. I admit that I was amazed by the beauty of their place, the great tourist spots we visited during our stay. But what amazed me more were the people in the place. My experience changed the negative impressions that I have towards the American people. I realized that we can not ever tell the real person in them unless we get to know them, deal with them personally, and visit their place.

When we were given the chance to stay for two weeks in an American family, I have observed and experienced the American way of life. I have never imagined myself to stay in an American home nor eat American foods. Above all, I never thought about being a daughter and a sister in an American family. But for two weeks I experienced all three, in the home of my American foster family.
always dreamt on building a new face for Mindanao; a change that would make peace reign in Mindanao and the entire Philippine nation. With those thoughts in mind, I ponder on my real purpose in life and who I really am as a person.

We were also given the chance to meet American students in different schools. It was one of my favorite experiences for we were able to interact with students of our age. We were able to get to know of our differences and similarities from one another, how their lives as American students differ from our school life in Philippines.

But the heart of the matter is this; the purpose of all activities that we have gone through during our one-month stay in the United States was to provide us the knowledge that we need in order for us to meet what are expected from us and to share to our fellow Filipino youth of what we have gained from those experiences.

After our one month experience in United States, we were expected to begin with our action plans that we have presented when we were in Northern Illinois. It was hard to encourage students to join in the first implementation of our very first plan which was the essay writing contest. The essay

There is one thing I know for sure-- as long as we are directly focused in our vision that were inculcated in us from the time that we have decided to be involved in ACCESS-Philippines Program, we will go on for with great certainty that our journey for peace will be successful.

Peace is our only instrument to unity and progress. Where peace reigns, everything is possible. As St. Francis of Assisi once prayed: “Lord, make me an instrument of peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love, where there is sadness- joy, where there is doubt- certainty, where there is war- PEACE.” If we have this within us, everything will be possible for the first step will always begin in us.

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I have lived my life in the public eye for the past sixteen years. The people who have been with me have seen how I have grown up from a little girl to a young lady. These are the people who have helped me through my struggles to accomplish the things that I have achieved; to acquire the things I am blessed with.

Ateneo de Zamboanga University has molded me holistically to be the person I am today. I am a person who puts service in my heart and who finds happiness in the act of serving my fellow man. I think everyday in school is a significant experience because everyday I am taught more things in any aspect of life. This school is a great part of my life. It has made me realize that there is something in me which is worth to be developed and worthy to be shared. Ateneo has made me believe that doing service is not about sacrifices because it is in doing that I am able to see the big picture of life, the reality.

After every experience, I always reflect on the things that I have done and find answers to some of my questions in life. This is my reflection on an event that has taught me so much. New learnings were imparted to me about life from independence, to leadership, to acceptance of oneself and other cultures. Learning more about myself and the other people of different cultures, races, and religions was what I treasure most.

Everybody believes that by going to America they will get a glimpse of the American dream or taking a vacation to America is a big reward you can give yourself. At the beginning, these were the reasons why I planned to apply for the ACCESS Philippines Batch 2. This program involved a month long seminar workshop in Northern Illinois University. It was intended to create future peace leaders, specifically in Mindanao. The program was aimed to bridge the gap

The Privilege of Knowing Myself
by Marjorie Leanna Kong

I have lived my life in the public eye for the past sixteen years. The people who have been with me have seen how I have grown up from a little girl to a young lady. These are the people who have helped me through my struggles to accomplish the things that I have achieved; to acquire the things I am blessed with.

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created by the differences in religion, culture, and color. The main course was to teach us about conflict resolution and inter-ethnic dialogue. I always dreamt of building a new face for Mindanao. A change that would make peace reign in Mindanao and the entire Philippine nation.

Being a part of the ACCESS Batch 2 has helped me improve a lot as a person. Yes, going to the States was like a dream for me, but I know there would be more to expect from our seminar workshops we attended. My experiences in America made me understand life more because of the new things that were shared to me. I was able to let go all of the extra baggage I was carrying for years-- prejudices, discriminations and the like. As I deepened my understanding of the meaning of peace, I seek to understand on a much deeper level the reasons of the conflicts that we face constantly.

Looking at my life at this very moment, I think the change starts with me. I know that being the catalyst for change in a society troubled by conflicts would make a difference. Going back to my experiences, I was able to bring about and show to the world that my compassion in doing service and making a change grows deeper and deeper in me. With these opportunities, I define myself as a strong person who is so hopeful that some time in the future there would be conversion within us. Lastly, just like our mission and vision to which I really believe in my heart and in principle, I challenge everyone to be men and women for others to build up a peaceful home for all of us. Ad

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**Peace With One Another**

by Sherlynn Du

I look deeper and the wall of fear, the fear that keeps the light of hope from shining on many of us, begins to crumble. The light scatters the remaining shadows of fear to reveal a vision: a vision of a time without war or hate or inhumanity; a world where people are at peace with themselves and their neighbors; a place filled with happiness, kindness, and love. I thought it was an impossible dream. But as I continued to reflect on this program, I realized that now could be the right time for the impossible to happen.

I am convinced that in every human being there is a longing for peace and contentment. Peace is something that everyone seems to want, but no one knows how to achieve successfully. The key to attaining worldwide peace is this simple formula: Peace = Understanding + Respect.

If only we could celebrate peace as our various ancestors celebrated war; if only we could glorify peace; and if only our sages and scholars together could infuse peace into their communities with the same energy and inspiration, then perhaps peace would be possible. Why does peace remain such an elusive goal?

Peace. I say it many times a day. The word itself has a way of removing fear and anxiety. It brings hope. Peace, to me, is feeling that everyone should obey the Golden Rule, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Peace is a safe place where memories of anguish and hatred do not exist. No paranoia, no enemies, no jealousy, no frowns. And if one cries tears, they are not salty, but sweet. Happy tears are sweet, I have tasted them.

Peace is praying for your enemies, known and unknown, and truly wanting to have forgiveness in a world that is so mixed up. You can lay in your bed and go to sleep quickly, because your conscious is clear, and the world is right. Jesus said, “Peace is unto you.” I want peace so badly that I console myself with the lyrics of the song, “Come on people, now, smile on your brother, everybody get together, try to love one another right now.”
Going Home: An Experience
By: Kathrina S. Abastar

The hot air welcomed us in the airport of Ninoy Aquino International Airport. It was May 8, 2005 around 12 a.m., at last we were in our fatherland and it was mother’s day. At that point I still cannot believe myself that I am now an alumnae of the Access to Community and Civic Enrichment for Student (ACCESS) Program. I was reminiscing the moment when we were still on our way going to America. It was also the day that heralded the start for us to play into our new role, our role as ambassadors of peace. We need to start the ball rolling when we go back to our own hometown.

As soon as I arrived in Zamboanga, I spent days of adjusting to the weather. It was spring in America and summer in the Philippines. One month seems short but many things can happen in a month. I found myself talking about peace and equality.

A Sweet Home Away From Home
By Dorothy Joann Lei O.Labrador

One of the most unforgettable things we did in the United States during ACCESS Philippines Program was the immersion we underwent with our designated foster families. It was a two-week stay with American families in DeKalb, Illinois where we had the opportunity to interact with Americans and have a taste of their lifestyle. Through the stay, I personally learned and understood the American way of living up close. It was also an opportunity for us Filipinos to represent our country and introduce our culture to them.

We were paired with a co-participant, an arrangement that was provided us with experiential learning experience as Muslim participants were paired with Christian participants and vice versa. I learned more of the Muslim culture through my stay with my pair, Raisha Alih, a Muslim youth participant from Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. Together, we ventured through the exciting stay we had with our foster family.

We enjoyed many pleasant evenings with our new family and shared many conversations about our respective countries, religions, localities, backgrounds, cultures and traditions, schools and families. We learned so much about each other. We even showed them pictures of our families from the Philippines and told them stories of our unforgettable experiences. Keeping true to the Filipino tradition of bringing “pasalubong,” or presents, we gave them souvenir items from Tawi-tawi and Zamboanga City.

Everyday, we learned from them and they learned from us. Everyday, the Fairfields got closer to my heart, especially our mother Laura. I missed my family in the Philippines so much but they tried their best to give me a cozy home in such a strange land. I grew to love them and even their dog. Sunny and I would play everyday in the house, though Raisha, being a Muslim, is not allowed to play with dogs. They all got close to my heart though it was a brief stay of having them as my family in the United States. One of the hardest things in the program was departing from the foster family I treated as my very own. Until now, my eyes get misty whenever I remember the time when we had to leave the house and return to the hotel we used to stay.

During our graduation, I could not prevent my tears from rolling down my cheeks. Deep in my heart, I still treasure the memories we shared. Though it was considerably brief, I love the family who sheltered me and did the best they could to provide an environment that made me feel comfortable in a new place. They were and still are God’s blessings. If I will be given the opportunity to go back to DeKalb, I will return to the family that offered me love when I was away from home.
It is 2:47 in the morning. I had been trying so hard to find the inspiration for me to write my essay but efforts were in vain. As if in answer to my prayers, the dark cloud suddenly lifted and uncovered a radiant moon nearing its full. How the moon inspires so many poets, lovers and artists is not surprising. However, even before I could finish my first paragraph, the clouds covetously covered the moon as if in mockery of my state making me wonder whether the glowing moon that I saw earlier wasn’t just a hallucination or a figment of my imagination.

My classmates were so eager to know the whole experience. I shared my experience and what I have learned. I told them stories of meeting Latin Americans, who share similar language with us. The ACCESS participants from both batch 1 and 2 were given an opportunity to sit down together and talk about action plan. The ACCESS batch 1 helped us in making our action for the plan. We were able to set up a photo exhibit of the ACCESS-Philippines. During the follow-on activity, the Zamboanga group worked together for our workshop, “The 6 Clusters of Peace”.

Being a peace ambassador is just one of my many activities. There are other activities to attend to and requirements to submit. Even I am in school I am thinking of my action plans. And so when I had the chance to meet with my Young Christian Life Community (YCLC) members, we planned an overnight. We invited students from other faiths to our organization. I took the opportunity to share to them about peace. I made them reflect about what we can do together. I taught them activities in Peace Learning Center. They had fun and I hope they also learned something.

The ACCESS Program was a life changing experience. It boosted my confidence and widens my horizon. It is starting to make me a global person who has an open mind and open heart. The program helped me in my journey in knowing myself and relating to people. I have never dreamed at one point in my life, that I would be a part of a peace organization. Looking back on the activities of ACCESS makes me cry. I did not expect that those happy memories would put tears on my eyes. ACCESS really is something that made a difference in everyone it touched. One thing I cannot forget about ACCESS is that people of diverse culture can come together and can work together for peace.

ACCESS-Philippines and Me
by Zehabuddin Guro

It is 2:47 in the morning. I had been trying so hard to find the inspiration for me to write my essay but efforts were in vain. As if in answer to my prayers, the dark cloud suddenly lifted and uncovered a radiant moon nearing its full. How the moon inspires so many poets, lovers and artists is not surprising. However, even before I could finish my first paragraph, the clouds covetously covered the moon as if in mockery of my state making me wonder whether the glowing moon that I saw earlier wasn’t just a hallucination or a figment of my imagination.

Desperately I looked at the sky, hoping that the clouds would pity my soul. I could not go to sleep, as doing so would mean I could miss my morning fast in observance of the Holy month of Ramadan for the Muslims. I tried looking for another muse, and it dawned on me as the night slowly gave in to daytime that I should look for my inspiration within. I realized that I was seeking a distant and vague inspiration when a moment ago the basketball team I was coaching won their first game against all odds. It was their esprit de corps that got them through despite it all and I remembered the group of young boys and girls full of spirit and anticipation who went with me to a foreign land that is United States of America.

For some, the mere thought of going out of the country is already a big thing; all the more if it is the United States of America. But for us adult companions it carries a deeper meaning. Our trip is not just an educational one, it is far more important than that. We were there for peace.

The lessons we learned from the training are very valuable and useful. But I believe that the most important lesson gained is the realization that no matter where one is, no matter how small one is -- he or she can still work on peace in his or her own little way. There is no insignificant contribution to the attainment of peace, big or small any part for peace is noteworthy.

As a native of Mindanao, I know what it feels like to be always stereotyped, from being a war-freak to a terrorist. What non-Mindanaoans do not realize is that the people of Mindanao are more interested in the attainment of peace than anybody else. We had been at war for centuries and yearning for peace is the most valuable gift that we can give to our future generations.
I had always wanted to make a difference for my people. Our struggle for peace and development has generated for us diverse groups, organizations, advocacies, plans and strategies. I had tried several avenues in my effort to do something. Many times the feeling of accomplishment is also matched with the numbing feeling of hardly making a dent at all. I was young then and I had wanted to change the world. As the cliché goes, now that I am more mature I have learned to accept that there are things that will remain to be unchanged at least for the time being.

Somehow, my ACCESS-Philippines gave me the courage to shift paradigms and to be brave enough to venture into the unknown, with only hope and prayers for the best. Against the backdrop of international pressures and fissures, it is truly difficult to be rising above one’s struggle for survival and dare to think about the needs of our neighbor next door. Peace in Mindanao has become more elusive than ever what with the political tsunami and the economic earthquakes our country are faced with now. The issue about Mindanao now has become a mere excuse, a take-off for a government agenda.

My ACCESS-Philippines sojourn taught me the lesson that sometimes one has to give up a most important part of him if only to set off something that might eventually be a significant part of history. The future will judge whether what is now considered to be an unpopular incident will not turn out to have been a better happening after all. It is a recognition of the reason that the Almighty God above may have. It is beyond the ken of man to know the rationale why things happen as they do. Sometimes, it is only revealed when the players of that segment of history have long faded and could never know whether their actions are judged as they hoped them to be.

ACCESS-Philippines is a turning point in my life not so much for its being a new experience but for the many persons that have touched my life – the young boys and girls of the Phil Access who are so full of promise who are not yet slowed down by reality, my adult companions who all are trying to make their own part of the story that is Mindanao, our NIU counterparts who are sincerely eager to learn and hear the stories we have to tell from this part of the world and my foster parents who did splendidly to raise an independent man in two weeks. These are the things that mattered most. I know that in the long run, I will always go back to this part of my life and say a prayer of thanks.

Right now, I am looking forward in spite of all that is happening in my immediate community, outside and abroad. Despite all the omens, the incidents and the suffering I am still confident that even all these will have to pass. I realized that it is not how great one did, but whether one did something at all for peace. Sometimes things are not what they seem, that there is hope after all.

I can never forget one incident during ACCESS-Philippines. I was looking at a homeless person and my heart went out to him. The cold was unbearable for me then and I could just imagine how biting it could be for him. I thought of the homeless in my country the Philippines and thought that they are in better condition than the homeless of America for at least they would not die of too much cold. But, what he said to me snapped me out of my shallow understanding of the world: “I am homeless, that I am, but I still have the courage and the reason to smile.”

I too, have the courage now and the reason not only to smile but hope for a better world.

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Post Peace Building Experience

By Aldean Alonto

The quest for a just and lasting peace in Mindanao has been elusive to us Muslim-Filipinos. Being a native of Mindanao and having lived there for several years, I have witnessed the frustration of many Muslims who are trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty and mocked by intolerance--cultural, religious or otherwise. The constant political and military maneuvering of various groups, government and rebels alike have resulted in what seems to be an endless displacement of families from their homes. This desolate reality that I have seen and have lived with has inspired me to be a proactive citizen and to try to contribute in peace building in my homeland. It is mainly these reasons that prompted me to apply for the Phil-ACCESS and also to gain knowledge and further my understanding on the various approaches to peace building.
My four-week stay at the Northern Illinois University exposed me to different kinds of concepts from interfaith dialogue to reconciliation vis-à-vis co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims. I was almost convinced that my experience there will never be surpassed by any other event to come but I was wrong. The launching of Kalilintad (Peace) Youth Camp in Marawi City conducted by Phil. ACCESS Batch II last July 2005 has provided me with a very unique experience. The event reinforced the principle that peace is not an ambition but an action. The positive impact it had on the participants was that it made them aware of their pivotal role in peace building. It is really through peace education that we can instill the culture of peace in the hearts of people and contribute to positive social transformation. “Real and substantive solutions do not lie at the negotiation table nor with signed treaties but in our hearts and minds, in our readiness to accept one another,” as equal partners in establishing a community based on mutual understanding and respect for cultural diversity.

Through this experience, I have learned the virtue of respect, humility, and understanding. The power of cooperation and tolerance are essential elements in the establishment of a pluralistic society. Moreover, to foster understanding and peace, one does not live in isolation, one has to have a ‘multitudinal’ perspective in dealing with concerns while asserting one’s identity.

The Convergence: IFYC - ZAMPEN
By Eliazar Dimalapang

The experience of the second batch of Phil – ACCESS participants from Southwestern Mindanao has been enriching and unforgettable. During the month long stay in America learning important peace concepts, finding new directions and creative strategies to help increase the peace in Mindanao, one important reality struck us: How can we Phil – ACCESS alumni, (re)integrate all our experiences in a manner which can serve as an impetus for more reconciliation, healing, lasting and sustainable peace in Mindanao? One big word emerged: CONVERGENCE.

The Phil – ACCESS Batch II believed that there is a need to create a community of communities in the region who will carry out the goal of establishing more efforts for peace building. To start, there should be a desire to build inter – faith youth organizations similar to the experience of Chicago Inter Faith Youth Core with activities patterned after Peace Learning Center in our respective schools and institutions. These organizations have proven to be effective to everyone and are worth emulating and sharing to others. From these experiences, we develop and harness the skills of potential peace advocates and emerge stronger because of the relationships we have developed with other youths.

Now, with each school having an inter faith group, a grand gathering will happen during the Month of Peace in November where all youth champions of peace coming from different places but sharing one common goal will meet and converge. During this convergence, the leaders would share their experiences, dialogue with each other and in the end, discuss issues on sustainability, how to keep the passion for peace alive among them. This convergence hopes to formalize a structure, an organization among the peace leaders. This structure will be called IFYC – ZAMPEN, Inter – Faith Youth Core of Zamboanga Peninsula, an organization which hopes to serve as a network of young peace builders in the region and create an inspiration to other young people to join in the movement of peace building in Mindanao.
Greetings of Peace!
It is indeed a great opportunity and a memorable experience for us Filipino to have come to America through the Philippine - ACCESS Program.

It is also an honor to be addressed “Mindanao Peace - builders: Ambassadors of Hope and of Goodwill.”

However, with this BIG name, lies POWER and RESPONSIBILITY: the power with or shared power and the ability to respond to the signs of the times creatively and responsibility.

As we engage to this endeavor, we wonder on many things. We ask ourselves: Why Mindanao? Why America? Why are Eastern Seeds in the Western Soil? Why Violence?

Why Peace? Why me/you/us? WHY?
We wonder a lot because we dream. And our dream transcends AMERICA and the AMERICAN DREAM. Our dream is to live happily and harmoniously, side by side, in a peaceful world. Our dream is…

I have dream that one day
The world will be as one
People helping one another
Working hand in hand
If we only have love
And there’ll be no war
People living together
Underneath the sun

Most of us would agree that our quest for peace usually begins with SELF. And self - reflection (and/or social action) is aided by questions like WHY? Why is why,

WHY? We ask---

Why? Because we must provide every generation not only with SUFFICIENT REASON for existence, but INTELLIGENT REASON and PURPOSIVE WILL to bring about “just” change and responsible impact to the world. And for this, we need each other no matter how distant or near we both are to each other.

Why? Because LIFE is nothing, nothing at all without MEANING; LIFE is nothing, nothing at all (my friends) unless it is shared, examined, and lived accordingly.

Why? Because there is a calling, an invitation for each of us to JUSTICE, LOVE and HUMILITY: Each of us is called to act justly, to love tenderly and unconditionally, and to walk humbly before our God.

Why? Because there must be a meeting to take place between, and amongst us, A PLACE AT THE TABLE where “Everyone is HOME.”

My friends, HOME is where HEART is…when you put your heart in what you think, say or do…when you put your commitment, your care, your trust, your compassion to people and to all other beings you encounter. HOME is when you regard this world as “our world.” HOME is when we are responsible for every cause that matters you and me.
Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao— the three major islands of the Philippines. It has 7,107 islands, many dialects, different statuses in life, with different religions, tribes and cultures. The Philippines is diverse especially in terms of cultures and languages. To help us become united as one people, we have our Filipino Language as our national language.

We, the Mindanaons the settlers of the southern part of the Philippines, want to have a freedom, especially, freedom from fear. I do believe that this fear is felt because of the conflict; conflict between the Filipinos and the Philippine Government. The Philippine Government pronounces that this conflict is between the Muslims and the Christians.

Yes, we have conflicts; we have a conflict between the Filipinos (Christians, Muslims and Lumads) and the Philippine Government. But Muslims, Christians and Lumads, the tripartite people have been working together in order for us to express our opinions to the government. Why do the priests, imams, nuns and other religious groups hold each hands together in every rally?

According to my experience, the experience of some of my relatives both in Northern part and Southern part of Maguindanao, the place where I live, the experience of some Mindanaons, both Christians and Muslims as well as the Lumads, tell that we Mindanaons live in fear of eviction from their homes, in fear of oppressions and the denial of the basic human rights by the tyrannical government, in fear of the ravages of war and sectarian strife, in fear of unemployment and crime.

The techniques and ways of fear are many and more sophisticated than ever before. It could even be said that the majority of Mindanaons today suffer from exploitation, oppression, and injustice of one form or another.
People should have mutual understanding of the rights and expectations of one another. In particular, they should have clear expectations from a society or a state that governed by the natural values of truth, goodness, forgiveness, tolerance and justice. For example, people need to experience that human life, body, honor, and freedom are sacred and inviolable. No one shall be exposed to injury or death except under the authority of proper moral and legal system and procedure. No one shall be exposed to torture of body, mind or threat of degradation on injury either to himself or to anyone related to him nor shall he be made to confess to the commission of a crime, or forced to act or consent to an act which is injurious.

A Speech Delivered During the Visit to the Philippine Consulate Embassy in Chicago, Illinois
By Sherlyn Du

Peace builders are everyday people, you and i who cherish the dream of creating a peaceful world. Based on the belief that each individual possesses unlimited potential worthy of profound respect peace builders are men and women committed to fostering in an effort to create a more humane and harmonious planet. ACCESS Philippines will serve as a forum for peace builders to share ideas and establish friendships, providing fertile ground for inspiration and collaboration--- a place where a new vision of creative coexistence for the globe can emerge.

A culture of peace, as defined by the United Nations, is living with a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior, and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations. To abolish war and violent conflicts we need to transcend and overcome differences with understanding, tolerance and solidarity among all people and cultures. learning from our diversity, through dialogue and exchange of information, is an enriching process.

Yet, the concept of dialogue remains elusive and our ability to conduct it can be a challenge. Most of us believe that we must fix things or change people in order to make them reachable dialogue does not call for such behavior. Rather, it asks us to listen for an already existing wholeness, and to create a new kind of association in which we listen deeply to all the views that people may express. It asks that we create quality of listening and attention that can include - but is larger than- any single view. Thus, we, catalyst for peace, view peace as a positively active and creative process which requires courage, commitment, endurance, vigilance and integrity.

Peace is a struggle toward unity and it is characterized by an absence of violence in all its forms, including discrimination based on gender, age, race, religion, social and economic status, ethnicity and sexual orientation. We will not build a peaceful world by following a negative path, it is not enough to say we must not wage war. It is necessary to peace and sacrifice for it. We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion on war but on the affirmation of peace. We must see that peace represents a sweeter music, a cosmic melody that is far superior to the discords of war. Somehow, we must transform the dynamics of the world power struggle from the negative nuclear arms race which no one can win! , to a positive contest to harness humanity's creative genius for the purpose of making peace and prosperity a reality for all the nations of the world.

In short, we must shift the arms race into a peace race. Maybe we should develop a Crayola bomb as our next secret weapon. A happiness weapon. A beauty bomb and every time a crisis develop, we would launch one. it would explode high in the air- explode softly- and send thousands, millions of little parachutes into the air floating down to earth-boxes of Crayolas. And we wouldn't go cheap either-not little boxes of eight, boxes of forty-eight ,with the sharpener built right in with silver and gold, and copper, magenta and peach and lime, amber and umber and all the rest. And people would smile and get a little funny look on their faces and cover the world with imagination. if we all should have the will and determination to mount such a peace offensive, we will unlock hithero tightly sealed doors and transform our imminent cosmic elegy into a psalm of creative fulfillment. Imagine all the people living life in peace, you may say I'm a dreamer but I'm not the only one. i hope someday you'll join us and the world will live as one.

Thank you and Mabuhay tayoong lahat!!!!!
A Speech Delivered During the Visit to Rochelle High School
By Jose Ruel Garcia

“Everyday a new challenge provokes, a new purpose takes ahead, and an opportunity takes place” I began with this quote because I knew that this is a challenge for me to speak before you and a purpose to share the experiences that we have and the opportunity to express how happy we are that we are here at the United States of America still standing, alive and inspired!

Let me share to you some of our experiences for last few weeks that we have been in here. The weird feelings, and the happy and sad moments that we had. The big things that struck us the we never had before.

Upon our arrival at O’hare Airport, Chicago, it seemed to be that everybody is seeking a space for their jetlagged body to settle down. The aura that our face emits is some what can be compared to the cooled wind that blows our tired body as we go out! We find the place very unusual as if we are thinking back home the reverse way! The sun the shines till 7:30 is still a big surprise! We have conclude that the sun it self has no purpose, it bright rays never make everything warm; instead it was dominated by the wind the blows the twigs of the surviving trees.

The next days were quick and cold! Our quest for change had start already! We had able to watch an American fight and try some American food that has never been touched even the tips of our tongue. The eagerness of how to adjust lawfully was still there and the aura of enjoyment is just like the plants and flowers who fight for existence!

After such days of lecture our first official Chicago tour has arrived! The coldness of the wind never makes us surrender. The courage to pursue outburst!

The second week is a cliché of the last one! Lectures, workshops and dialogue! But at least a new experience really marks our hearts with an A+. Our interstate travel to Indiana is really fun! The State Capitol, The Amish Community and Indianapolis are those few who will make us say “This is It! The workshop with the Peace Learning Staff was a great thing to treasure! A chest box would not be much for the fun and the emotions that we shared!

As we go home back to Illinois the spirit of excitement and fear evokes us! This is the day that our foster family will fetch us and live with them for a couple of weeks! As we go exploring American Culture a thing really strikes us that American families are as well like Filipinos! Hospitable. Welcoming. Warm and easy to be with!

As of now were doing great! A free day with them is worth to be treasured! The enjoyment, the events, the places and the laughter would be a great memory to care and keep! The first experience of a snowfall would be regard as the most memorable one that would really stick on our mind like glue!

Reason of all reasons, one word would describe this experiences “BEST”

B- for the boisterous learning that we had! The smiles, the laughter, and the tears is the one that whispers us to “GO ON”

E- for the enigmatic passion of everybody to strive, to strike, to dream, to believe and to survive!

S- for the Sceneries. The trees, the flowers, the art forms, the architectural art, and the peoples culture who shows unity in diversity!

T- for the tremendous ideas! The inspiring words, the lessons, the insights and thoughts that breaks the barrier of ice!
Good afternoon to each and everyone and Mabuhay!

It was just one cold night when I, Raisha and Thaddeus went to McDonald's to relieve our hunger after our rigid rehearsals and volunteer work at the Hope Haven. Raisha muttered that she really likes the African-American little boy at the Hope Haven who was wearing slippers shaped like a bear. I agreed with her. Suddenly, Thaddeus responded by saying that Raisha may find his slippers cute but what would our reactions be if we knew that those slippers would be the only possession that the boy will have for the rest of his life.

Those words struck me and made me remember our visit to Hope Haven. Seeing pale faces of people in the corridors and across the common spaces, I could feel some hidden struggles in the corner of their eyes. Moreover, I was more touched when I actually saw children playing with few broken toys which are obviously donations from concerned people.

Most of these people are African-Americans and surely I feel very certain that they too, have experienced discrimination because of their situation. Somehow, I remember the same conditions back in the Philippines where I grew up. But those inhabitants of Hope Haven are lucky thought because they are not deprived of three meals a day. They do not live nomadic lives and they are supported by some concerned agencies within the community. I am a family-oriented person. That is why I feel really bad when I see those people in Hope Haven. It makes me emotional and it really breaks my heart.

ACCESS-Philippines Program Year 2 is one of my best experiences and the most enriching endeavor I have ever encountered and pursued in my life. At first, I thought it would be something more of pure competition—just say the best thing you know about peace and impress people with it. I really assumed that it would be that way. But I was totally wrong.
I was able to realize and comprehend my purpose as I witness current yet crucial situation of the world: poverty, violence, injustice, inequality, war, exploitation, and all the other social ills that dump people into sufferings. These realities were discussed in many of our seminars and workshops. Somehow, I gradually commit myself to look into the brighter perspective of dealing with these realities and dealing with people from diverse communities. I slowly and surely change my attitude, my behavior, and my encounters with other people. In fact, whenever our sessions get deeper, I cry a lot because I realized that I can do more to help and widen my world for others. I learn to understand people, the way they are similar to me and the way they differ from me. I learn to adjust to different behaviors and I learn to unconditionally help those who need help and value workmanship and a sense of responsibility.

Today concludes everything that took place. After this, we will be saying adieu to all of you but before we do that we would like to thank you for having us here, for welcoming us with open arms, protecting us, and loving us. I personally want to thank the proponents of this noble program, Dr. Sue, Dr. Lina, Dr. Madale, Kuya Rey, Ate April, Ate Ida, Ate Nalika and all those who are involved in this program, thank you for being with us throughout the days. I thank my co-participants in this training, thank you for the friendship and the inspiration. Thank you Mom, thank you Dad, thank you for letting me in your home and making me feel I’m home. Thank you for letting be a part of this noble mission to promote peace and harmony. We will continue our mission as we return back to the Philippines. We will do the best we can to spearhead the growth of peace.

PEACE. What is peace by the way. Peace is what exists among us, between us and inside us. Peace is an act, a value, an idea, a belief. Peace is a thing that is waiting to be recognized. Peace is the sparkle in the eyes, the harmony of the music, the beating of the heart. Peace is the struggle of our soul. Peace is faith, faith is holy and holiness brings us closer to God.

We are the children of peace. We are the architects of peace. We are the youth who heeds to the calling of promoting unity in amidst diversity and to make a difference. We will bring about change and we will succeed. Our success will be for us, for Mindanao, for the Philippines, for the whole world, for our Creator. May the Lord bless us as we go along the path we chose—the path of unity, the path of peace.

Dream big, aim high. We take this as our commitment to serve our fellowmen. We are the beginning. We will create a culture of peace. We are the voice. We are the dream. We are the architects of peace. We are the ACCESS Year II participants.

Do not worry for we will still see each other again, someday, somewhere, somehow. I will assure you that the first word you will hear from us is: Mission Accomplished! Thank you very much for letting us touch your lives and for touching our lives as well.

Maraming Salamat Po!

A Speech Delivered During the ACCESS-Philippines Project Graduation Ceremony
By Maria Theresa de Leon

Good afternoon everyone.

For someone who has been working for the grassroots and belonging to the grassroots, this program has been a gift.

I will miss so many things in this program—the sharings, the fun-filled trips, abundant food, the comfort of accommodations, the weather, the time spent for reflection and realization. I will miss the “Hello Ate Tess”, “Thank You Ate Tess”, “I Miss you Ate Tess”, accompanied with the biggest hugs and hand squeezes.

I will forever remember a modest sharing of frustrations and pleas of understanding as well as sharings of hope. I will miss Nash’s overwhelming feelings, Amando’s inspiration, Arlene’s and Jelor’s stories of their children and spouses, Robinson’s critical analysis, Dim’s hard work despite all the odds, Aref’s generous heart, Leanna’s leadership skills coming to fore, Raissa’s hugs, the laughter, the icebreakers, the loud joyful voices in the session hall, and the smiles of everyone. These are but the few of the things that I shall remember forever.
My homestay was an experience that I shall forever treasure in my heart. It is truly this time that I realize the value of ME. My companion Kate welcomed me into her home and her life and shared with me all her wonderful friends and families. She picked me up at the O’Hare Airport when I came back from LA. Pastor Brad Reardon and his wife went out of their way and helped me go to the airport also. Thank you very much.

For a grassroots peace worker, it is an unusual experience. I have never felt so special in my life as I feel like now. Many times, I wish my family, the people I worked with, the children and the youth would have the same experience. My consolation is that when I go back to the Philippines, I will be inspired and be able to work with more energy and enthusiasm. I am ready to train the children and the youth who are waiting. The Interfaith Youth Core will be the first experience I will be able to share as I leave for Cagayan de Oro City on the 11th of May upon the World Mission invitation. After which, I would be more ready to train the military who are also waiting. These are the few of the work that I will do back home.

Before I go, may I request everyone who has been involved in this program, those who have touched our lives to remember us sometimes, even sometimes with a smile. We have a difficult journey back home. There will be so many challenges. But knowing that you will be rooting for us, the journey for peace will truly be worth-taking.

Thank you very much.

A Song for Mindanao
Written by Thaddeus Martin Uy

Land divided by ethnicity yet in spirit united
Over the years, wreaked by war and weakened by poverty
300 years in a monastery, 40 years in Hollywood and 5 years in a sushi bar where future debt she can not see

Now she rots in a world destroyed by her own children
Her own sons and daughters, her own flesh and blood
Pressure, problem, burden, are passed on to the next generation
The nation is for us to rebuild, to heal and to replenish

We reach out a helping hand
To Mindanao where unity and peace is about to be found
Brothers and sisters must respect and understand
Each other for unity, to make a stronger bond.

As for now, respect and understanding is all we can give
Though complete knowledge we do not possess
Still we have our hands to heal and our hearts to forgive
Unity and Peace, forever and ever will live.
An Inter-Ethnic and Interfaith Graduation Prayer
Delivered by Ali Rafsanjani Pikit, Donna Babuyo and Christian Olasiman

Years go by and continuously the world experiences undesirable occurrences, which damage the people and other creatures throughout the globe. God, this is a prayer of a dream.

We dream of peace— that citizens of different nations unite, that believers of different religions respect one’s way of life, that people of different races understand one another, and that members of different ethnic groups learn how to trust each other.

In a place called Mindanao, our hopes and aspirations come alive, shining bright, out in the darkness that blinds some of its inhabitants from truth, justice and godliness. With hatred in their hearts and prejudices in their minds, tragedies that threaten and even ruthlessly take the lives of many people can arise anytime.

We are now on a foreign soil for a very essential purpose, a purpose that will encompass not only ourselves but also our communities in our homeland, and hopefully the rest of the world, too. But the answer to the problem is not here in America. In Mindanao there also lays the key solution. We are hoping that we could, just even find a very little way towards realizing peace in the land that constructed our identity. We are hoping that even with our tiny hands, we would be capable of lending help to overcome this challenge with our passion and eagerness to generate change in the land that will also shape our future. We are hoping that our efforts would not be futile and that we could be agents to educate of our fellow Mindanaoans about peace building.

We know we are dreaming big but with small steps we will be taking, we also know that we can contribute to the creation of what is to be called “culture of peace”. Our pursuit may be a long journey and so, God, we need Your very guidance on our way there. We believe You are the most powerful and with You, really, nothing is impossible.

Please open the minds of the people who cannot understand and appreciate other people’s differences. Please give the oppressed ones the courage to fight for their rights. Please forgive the persons who defectively affected others’ lives with their actions. Please bless the people whose concern and struggle for peace is never-ending. Please bless Mindanao for it is the Land of Promise and there, our tomorrow lies. Please bless the Philippines, our beloved country, to rise above the great challenges it is undergoing. Please shower the world with justice, fairness and equality.

Please help us make our dream come true.

Amen.
Pledge of Commitment

I, _____________________________________, participant of the ACCESS Philippines Project, Year II, pledge to promote tolerance and non-violence in my thoughts, words and actions;

to promote mutual understanding and respect between and among diverse cultures and faiths;

to conserve and protect the environment;

and to work together to effect positive change and impact in my community, region, nation and world.

So help me God.