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Plenary 2: Promoting a Culture of Peace

Farms with Arms: USAID and the Moro National Liberation Front

This paper explores the reasons behind the successful implementation of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) livelihood program that was implemented in areas under the influence of the separatist organization--the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). This project was added to the USAID-funded "Growth with Equity in Mindanao" (GEM) Program after the MNLF signed a peace agreement with the Philippine government. Tapping the trove of data collected while observing GEM, this paper highlights how GEM deftly navigated through different national and local actors in these former war zones, to reach out to as many as 14,000 former MNLF guerrillas and help them build their own businesses.