

*Policy Studies 8*

# The Moro Conflict: Landlessness and Misdirected State Policies

*Eric Gutierrez and Saturnino Borrás, Jr.*



**East-West Center**

The East-West Center is an internationally recognized education and research organization established by the U.S. Congress in 1960 to strengthen understanding and relations between the United States and the countries of the Asia Pacific. Through its programs of cooperative study, training, seminars, and research, the Center works to promote a stable, peaceful and prosperous Asia Pacific community in which the United States is a leading and valued partner. Funding for the Center comes for the U.S. government, private foundations, individuals, corporations and a number of Asia Pacific governments.

**East-West Center Washington**

Established on September 1, 2001, the primary function of the East-West Center Washington is to further the East-West Center mission and the institutional objective of building a peaceful and prosperous Asia Pacific community through substantive programming activities focused on the theme of conflict reduction in the Asia Pacific region and promoting American understanding of and engagement in Asia Pacific affairs.

**The Moro Conflict:  
Landlessness and Misdirected State Policies**



*Policy Studies 8*

---

**The Moro Conflict:  
Landlessness and  
Misdirected State Policies**

---

*Eric Gutierrez and Saturnino Borrás, Jr.*

Copyright © 2004 by the East-West Center Washington

*The Moro Conflict: Landlessness and Misdirected State Policies*  
by Eric Gutierrez and Saturnino Borrás, Jr.

ISBN 1-932728-15-5 (online version)

ISSN 1547-1330 (online version)

Online version available at:

<http://www.eastwestcenterwashington.org/Publications/publications.htm>

East-West Center Washington  
1819 L Street NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036

Tel: (202) 293-3995

Fax: (202) 293-1402

Email: [Publications@EastWestCenterWashington.org](mailto:Publications@EastWestCenterWashington.org)

Website: <http://www.eastwestcenterwashington.org>

The *Policy Studies* series contributes to the Center's role as a forum for discussion of key contemporary domestic and international political, economic, and strategic issues affecting Asia. The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily of the Center.

This publication is a product of the East-West Center Washington's project on Internal Conflicts. For details see pages 57-65.

The project and this publication are supported by a generous contribution from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

# Contents

---

<b>List of Tables</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Acronyms</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Settlement, Migration, and Dislocation</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Mass Poverty and Social Exclusion</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Entrepreneurs in Violence</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Contemporary Land Policies</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Lessons</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>51</b>

<b>Project Information: The Dynamics and Management of Internal Conflicts in Asia</b>	<b>57</b>
• <b>Project Purpose and Outline</b>	<b>59</b>
• <b>Project Participants List</b>	<b>63</b>
• <b>Background of the Moro conflict</b>	<b>67</b>
• <b>Map of Mindanao, Philippines</b>	<b>69</b>

# List of Tables

---

<b>Table 1.</b>	<b>Population Trends in the Muslim Areas: 1918–70</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Table 2.</b>	<b>Muslim and Non-Muslim Population of the Two Lanao Provinces</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Table 3.</b>	<b>Comparison of HDI Rank and Real Per Capita Income in the SZOPAD Areas: 1997</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Table 4.</b>	<b>Worst-Performing Provinces Based on HDI Rank and Other Indices: 1997</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Table 5.</b>	<b>Literacy Rates in the ARMM and Its Provinces</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Table 6.</b>	<b>DAR's Land Redistribution by Region and Province: 2001</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Table 7.</b>	<b>DAR's Land Acquisition and Distribution (LAD) in Mindanao (hectares): 1972/88–2001</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Table 8.</b>	<b>DENR's Annual Land Distribution in Mindanao (including ARMM) (hectares): 1987–2000</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Table 9.</b>	<b>ARMM-DAR Cumulative Land Distribution (hectares)</b>	<b>35</b>

<b>Table 10. Regional Perspective of DAR Scope Reductions in Mindanao</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Table 11. Summary of Ancestral Domain Claims in Mindanao: 1998</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Table 12. Indigenous Communities in Mindanao Affected by Mining and Mega Projects: 1998</b>	<b>42</b>

# List of Acronyms

---

A&D	alienable and disposable lands
ARMM	Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
CA	compulsory acquisition
CADC	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claims
CALC	Certificate of Ancestral Lands Claims
CARP	Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program
CBFM	Community-Based Forest Management
DAPECOL	Davao Penal Colony
DAR	Department of Agrarian Reform
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
GFI	Government Financial Institution
GOL	government-owned land
GRP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
HDI	Human Development Index
IPRA	Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act
KKK	Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran
LAD	land acquisition and distribution
LASEDECO	Land Settlement Development Administration
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front

<b>MNLF</b>	Moro National Liberation Front
<b>NARRA</b>	National Resettlement and Rehabilitation Administration
<b>NCIP</b>	National Commission for Indigenous Peoples
<b>NDC</b>	National Development Corporation
<b>NEDA</b>	National Economic Development Authority
<b>NLSA</b>	National Land Settlement Administration
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>OLT</b>	Operation Land Transfer
<b>PAL</b>	private agricultural land
<b>PARC</b>	Presidential Agrarian Reform Council
<b>SDO</b>	Stock Distribution Option
<b>SZOPAD</b>	Special Zone of Peace and Development
<b>TADECO</b>	Tagum Agricultural Development Corporation
<b>VLT</b>	voluntary land transfer
<b>VOS</b>	voluntary offer-to-sell

# Executive Summary

---

The conflict in the southern Philippines is becoming increasingly complex, and untangling the knots for a greater understanding of the problem is no easy task. Yet underlying the many manifestations of a complex conflict is a straightforward political-economic explanation. This study represents a step toward a more systematic inquiry into the problem by developing a political-economic explanation of the conflict. It starts from two observations: first, the geographic areas in the southern Philippines where there is a significant if not a majority presence of Muslims are marked by a high incidence of poverty and social exclusion; second, there has been an alarming surge of "entrepreneurs in violence" in these areas determined to enforce their own nonstate systems of property relations. The study contends that these two observations result, to a significant degree, from the highly skewed distribution of ownership and control over land resources in the southern Philippines that should be traced back in the country's colonial history. Thus we argue that the continuing war, the persistence of poverty and landlessness, and the emergence of entrepreneurs in violence are mere symptoms of something that has not yet been sufficiently addressed by a succession of Philippine governments or even by mainstream Moro revolutionary organizations: the highly skewed distribution of land-ownership and control in the southern Philippines.

This study posits that the widespread landlessness, the continuing weakness of state institutions in implementing agrarian reform and enforc-

ing ancestral domain claims, as well as the absence of autonomous civil society, are fundamental issues whose resolution may well hold the key to establishing long-term peace in the southern Philippines. Redistributive land reform must be a major component of any comprehensive solution to the crisis. Such reform holds the promise of addressing issues of poverty and eliminates a major reason for the proliferation of entrepreneurs in violence. Several key propositions are put forward here. First, the eradication of poverty in the southern Philippines can offer poor Muslim households a workable alternative to joining the armed rebellion and the ranks of entrepreneurs in violence. Second, this process of poverty eradication must go beyond the current policy prescriptions of the central state and confront the issues of poverty and social exclusion from historical, social justice, and redistributive land reform perspectives. Third, in the context of agrarian societies like the southern Philippines, broad-based social development can only be achieved if there is a redistribution of productive assets, especially land. Land is central to the rural poor household's capacity to construct and maintain a sustainable livelihood. Fourth, policy discussions about the issue of ancestral domain of Muslim Filipinos must be intertwined with the issue of redistributive land reform and the ancestral domain claims of other indigenous communities (Lumads). And fifth, redistributive land reform and respect for indigenous claims over ancestral domains, as repeatedly emphasized by scholars, are a necessary but not sufficient requirement for broad-based social development. Equally important is a comprehensive package of support services to enable the rural poor to sustain their livelihoods.

The policy propositions put forward here are broad outlines of possible options; the actual content of state policies may vary as long as the general principles underscored in this study are maintained. Whether these policy options are politically practical in the immediate context should be informed by further research on certain contentious issues identified in this study—how, for example, can autonomous social movements emerge in the context of the contemporary southern Philippines? The political-economic explanation advanced in this study does not necessarily contradict other interpretations of the conflict in the southern Philippines. Whether coming from the strictly "economic reform" perspective, the political-constitutional reform (federalist) framework, or, most radically, secession and the creation of a new Moro state, the fundamental issues raised here are likely to remain relevant.

Peace building from below is necessary if only to ensure that agreements settled at the negotiating table can be properly implemented. There is no easy solution. Policies that focus attention only on strengthening state authority may be important but not sufficient; policies that focus attention only on building civil society are also crucial but incomplete. An interactive state/society policy framework may be more useful. The challenge is to attain a redistribution of wealth and power that favors the poor, largely through land redistribution and agrarian reform, alongside peace building to be generated from below as well as from above.



# The Moro Conflict: Landlessness and Misdirected State Policies

---

After more than three decades of conflict, no fundamental solution is in sight for the separatist and poverty problems in the Muslim-populated regions of Mindanao. The road to peace in Mindanao has been a long, complex, and intractable process. There were two formal peace agreements (1976 and 1996), the support and mediation of international actors (the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Libyan and Indonesian governments, and others), the passage of three laws (the 1977 Marcos proclamation, Republic Act 6734, and Republic Act 9054), plebiscites and elections, and the creation of various transitional bodies such as the Southern Philippines Council for Peace Development and the Office of Muslim Affairs.<sup>1</sup>

Yet all these peace agreements have seemingly failed. The fighting continues with new and younger fighters on the ground engaged in a more protracted war. The principal signatory for the Moros in the two peace agreements, Nur Misuari, now languishes in jail, while the Moro movement has become even more splintered than ever. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has emerged with an Islamic agenda vastly different from that of the secular Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).<sup>2</sup> Then there is the Abu Sayyaf with its fiery rhetoric and its banditry and terrorist tactics.

Against this backdrop of continued conflict, the debilitating incidence of poverty persists. "Minoritized" over the decades in their homeland, the

last five provinces where Muslims remain as the majority are not only the poorest provinces but also those where the quality of life is worst. These five provinces—Maguindanao, Sulu, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, and Tawi-Tawi—according to the Human Development Index ranking of Philippine provinces have the least access to education, health, electricity, transport, water, and sanitation services—the basic infrastructure required to sustain any growth or development. Moreover, life expectancy and adult literacy are lowest in these provinces. In all, the Muslim areas of the Philippines are, generally speaking, at the bottom of the heap.

***Most immediately worrisome is the rise of the modern "entrepreneurs in violence."***

Most immediately worrisome is the rise of the modern "entrepreneurs in violence." These are the men and women who commit wanton acts of coercion and terrorism, often under the rubric of "Islamic fundamentalism" or "Moro national liberation." They are the specialists in violence who have emerged in the political context of the southern Philippines conflict—personified by the likes of Norberto Manero Jr. (Kumander Bucay), a feared anticommunist and anti-Muslim crusader in Mindanao infamous for his cannibalism, or Galib Andang (Kumander Robot), a streetwise Moro rebel who has been called the "Bill Gates of the Philippine underworld" by a lawmaker for his entrepreneurial cunning and skill in kidnapping. Their emergence on the ground complicates any meaningful long-term peace settlement, even as they provide short-term solutions to the various forces that utilize them.

The Mindanao conflict is indeed increasingly complex, and untangling the knots for a greater understanding of the problem is extremely difficult.<sup>3</sup> Yet underlying all these manifestations of a complex conflict is a straightforward political-economic explanation. This study argues that the continuing war, the persistence of poverty and landlessness, and the emergence of entrepreneurs in violence are mere symptoms of something that has not yet been sufficiently addressed by a succession of Philippine governments, by the Mindanao elite, or even by mainstream Moro revolutionary organizations—namely, the highly skewed distribution of ownership and control over land resources in the southern Philippines and the lack of state-regularized and state-guaranteed property security. In this study we contend that landlessness, as well as the continuing weakness of state institutions in implementing agrarian reform, enforcing ancestral domain claims, and securing property rights, is a fundamental issue whose

resolution may hold the key to establishing long-term peace in the southern Philippines.

The highly skewed distribution of ownership and control over land resources, brought about largely by a series of state-directed land and development policies, has persisted or even worsened. Contemporary state land policies—namely, the 1988 Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), carried out ostensibly to create more egalitarian ownership of land resources, and the 1995 Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA), supposedly to reclaim and secure the ancestral domain of the indigenous peoples including Muslims—have brought mixed outcomes. In some instances, implementation of these policies resulted in lands being redistributed to previously landless rural poor; on other occasions, these policies have, perhaps unintentionally, undermined the historical land claims of the indigenous communities including Muslims; in still other situations, the policies remain unimplemented. In the 2003 round of peace negotiations between the Philippine government and the MILF, the issue of land and ancestral domain has taken center stage. MILF spokesman Eid Kabalu explains that the ancestral domain "is the most ticklish issue" and "could be a stumbling block." Meanwhile, in the same negotiation process, the government "is worried that large tracts of land claimed by Muslims may already be in private hands or occupied by Christian or tribal groups."<sup>4</sup>

To date there has been little scientific inquiry into the correlation between landlessness and armed rebellion or even between religious differences and armed conflict in the southern Philippines. This study represents a step toward a more systematic inquiry by developing a political-economic explanation of the conflict. It starts from two observations: first, the geographic areas in the southern Philippines where there is a significant if not a majority presence of Muslims are marked by a high incidence of poverty and social exclusion; second, there has been an alarming surge of "entrepreneurs in violence" in these areas determined to enforce their own non-state systems of property relations. The study argues that these two observations result, to a significant degree, from the highly skewed distribution of ownership and control over land resources in the southern Philippines.

The link between poverty and landlessness has been explained in detail elsewhere. The fundamental assumption about the centrality of land in rural development and democratization has been emphasized in the classic literature on agrarian reform and rural development (de Janvry

1981; Lehmann 1974; Herring 1990) and has recently been revisited by broadly pro-market economists and institutions within the context of "securing property rights for the poor" (World Bank 2003; de Soto 2000). Specifically, South Asian scholar Ronald Herring (1990: 73) explains:

In the great uncertainty of development policy, the one certainty is that lack of independent access to the means of production in poor agrarian societies is associated with most of the affronts to human dignity that development is supposed to remove. Land reforms are neither easy nor costless—nor are they a panacea. But it is difficult to find a more direct route to creating some security and opportunity for those whose labor makes it possible for the rest of us to eat.

In its most recent land policy research report, the World Bank (2003: xix-xx) concludes:

For most of the poor in developing countries, land is the primary means for generating a livelihood and a main vehicle for investing, accumulating wealth, and transferring it between generations. Land is also a key element of household wealth. . . . Because land comprises a large share of the asset portfolio of the poor in many developing countries, giving secure property rights to land. . . . can greatly increase the net wealth of the poor people. By allowing them to make productive use of their labor, land ownership makes them less reliant on wage labor, thereby reducing their vulnerability to shocks.

A recent study on the relationship between land, violent conflict, and development at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Pons-Vignon and Lecomte 2004: 50; refer also to Kay 2001 in the context of Latin America) concludes:

An economically viable agricultural sector, providing jobs and improving livelihoods, is the safest ground for peace, as it deprives political entrepreneurs of their prospective "cases" for violent mobilisation. Land policy and conflict management may thus be integrated into a wider framework designed to support the long term agrarian transformation of developing economies towards an increasingly productive rural economy.

But the link between landlessness and the rise of entrepreneurs in violence can also be explained in terms of the role these entrepreneurs play as

enforcers of a certain set of property claims. The acquisition and possession of land in the southern Philippines, even if state-mandated, is mostly tenuous. Given the weakness of state institutions in enforcing a regular system of property rights, one of the best ways of securing these rights is to develop the capacity for "privatized violence." Multinational plantation companies, for example, will hire private security firms or private individuals with a reputation for violence to ensure that the lands they control are secure. Even small-scale landholders find it useful to gain the protection of individual entrepreneurs in violence—the more fearsome, the better—in order to secure their property. Entrepreneurs in violence, then, can be characterized as symptoms of state weakness in enforcing and ensuring property rights in areas where landownership is contested.<sup>5</sup> Entrepreneurs in violence can be used as instruments to keep the landless landless. But they may be used even by the landless themselves to ensure the security of their occupation of a piece of land.

This study therefore posits that redistributive land reform must be the keystone of any comprehensive solution to the crisis in the southern Philippines. Redistributive land reform not only holds the promise of addressing issues of poverty but eliminates the basis for the emergence of entrepreneurs in violence. In sum, then, we propose:

***redistributive land reform must be the keystone of any comprehensive solution to the crisis***

- First, the eradication of poverty in the southern Philippines can give poor Muslim households a workable alternative to joining the armed rebellion and the recent phenomenon of entrepreneurs in violence.
- Second, this process of poverty eradication must go beyond the current policy prescriptions by the central state in order to confront the issues of poverty and social exclusion from historical, social justice, and redistributive reform perspectives.
- Third, in the context of agrarian societies like the southern Philippines, development can only be achieved if there is a redistribution of productive assets, especially land. Land is central to rural development.
- Fourth, any policy discussions about the issue of ancestral domain of Muslim Filipinos must be intertwined with the issue of redistributive land reform.

- Fifth, redistributive land reform, as repeatedly emphasized by scholars past and present, is a necessary but not sufficient requirement for broad-based development. Support services for farm and beneficiary development are equally important. (See Pons-Vignon and Lecomte 2004; World Bank 2003; Lehmann 1974; Griffin et al. 2002.)

The rest of this study is organized as follows. In the next section we analyze the various settlement initiatives during the past century and their profound impact on agrarian structure, property rights, and rural politics and look into the minoritization of the indigenous communities in Mindanao, particularly the Muslims. We then examine the deepening degree of poverty and widening breadth of social exclusion among the poor in the southern Philippines, especially in areas where Muslims are the current majority; questioning official census data, this section underscores the institutional neglect committed by the state. Next we analyze the emergence and phenomenal proliferation of the entrepreneurs in violence; going beyond media reports and the government's superficial understanding, this section considers the problem and links it to other social and political processes. We then examine contemporary land policies, focusing on the outcomes of CARP implementation. In the final section we outline the outstanding problems of poverty, social exclusion, violence, and landlessness with particular reference to obstacles and opportunities to peace and development in the southern Philippines.

### **Settlement, Migration, and Dislocation**

The social processes of settlement, migration, and dislocation in Mindanao that started in the early part of the twentieth century can best be viewed from the two inseparable foundations of state rule: the maintenance of a certain level of political legitimacy and the pursuit of capital accumulation for both private and state interests.<sup>6</sup> It is within this framework that the nation-building process incorporated Mindanao in its national agenda to an unprecedented extent. It was considered a frontier land with an underlying assumption that most of its natural resources come under the property rights of the state. Settlement, migration, and social dislocation marked the political-economic and social history of Mindanao for most of the twentieth century. Most scholars have chronicled the state-sponsored settlement programs and their impact. Less often analyzed are the various socioeconomic processes outside the official state programs. Hence this section surveys the social processes that have trans-

formed Mindanao. As we shall see, contemporary land policies promoted by the central state cannot resolve the outstanding problems of poverty, social exclusion, and violence in the southern Philippines.

Settlement, migration, and social dislocation can be seen in the light of a number of distinct but interrelated social processes that occurred in the twentieth century: state-sponsored settlement of poor people from outside Mindanao; enterprising middle classes and bureaucrats; land-hungry elite including agricultural, mining, and timber interests; the opening up and consolidation of plantations by multinational companies; and voluntary (re)settlement of the hungry, desperate, and landless rural poor. Each element is discussed briefly here.

#### *State-Sponsored Settlement*

The political-military tension between the colonial state and Filipino revolutionaries in Luzon since the early years of the twentieth century, the push to extend the reach of nation-building, the pull of capital accumulation for both private and state interests—all converged to make settlement programs a major state undertaking. Poor people from Luzon and the Visayas were organized and encouraged to conquer the Mindanao land frontier—generally under the rule of homestead policy. Thus the first three quarters of the past century witnessed a massive inflow of settlers, most of them Christians, in Mindanao.

B. R. Rodil has listed a number of these government resettlement initiatives:

- The Interisland Migration Division of the Bureau of Labor was set up in the 1920s.
- The Quirino-Recto Colonization Act (Act 4197) was enacted in February 1935.
- The National Land Settlement Administration (NLSA) was created by Commonwealth Act 441 in 1939. The NLSA was abolished in 1950 after facilitating the settlement of 8,300 families; it was replaced by the short-lived Land Settlement Development Administration (LASEDECO), which was responsible for opening Tacurong, Isulan, and Bagumbayan (now part of Sultan Kudarat) as well as Buluan, Sultan sa Barongis, and Ampatuan (now part of Maguindanao).
- The Rice and Corn Production Administration, set up in 1949, was also involved in resettlement.

- The National Resettlement and Rehabilitation Administration (NARRA), established in 1954, administered a total of nine resettlement areas in Mindanao and one in Palawan.
- Under the Quirino and Magsasay administrations in the early 1950s, the Economic Development Corps opened resettlement areas for surrendered or captured Huk insurgents, who were sent into the heart of Maguindanao and Maranao ancestral territories.
- The Land Reform Code passed under the Macapagal administration in 1963 included resettlement as part of the land reform program.
- The creation of the Department of Agrarian Reform in 1971 brought into existence a Bureau of Resettlement (Rodil 1994: 38–39).

What distinguishes the population trends and peculiar politics seen in the southwestern half of Mindanao was the programs initiated by the central government in Manila, many of which were accepted or otherwise turned to their own advantage by the indigenous Muslim elite. Starting in 1912, the central government in Manila initiated resettlement programs that

***Ironically these  
settlement programs  
were assessed by  
most scholars and  
policymakers as failures***

brought Christian in-migration to Mindanao, particularly to the Cotabato Valley. The declared goal of these resettlement programs was to increase rice and corn production in the country. The first known settlers were a batch of 50 people from Cebu who were provided initial capital, farm tools, and an assurance that they would eventually own the homesteads (Rodil 1994: 37). In 1913, Act 2254 created more agricultural colonies, many of them becoming the municipalities that are known today as Pikit and Pagalungan. In some instances, settlers were allotted 16 hectares each while native Maguindanaoans were only given 8. By 1919, unable to finance the opening of more colonies, Act 2206 was passed authorizing provincial boards to manage colonies at their expense (Rodil 1994: 38).

Ironically these settlement programs were assessed by most scholars and policymakers as failures in terms of their officially stated goals—that is, to develop vibrant small-family-farm agriculture. The expense of setting up physical infrastructure had been cited as among the obstacles (Lichauco 1956). But the impact of such programs on the preexisting structural and institutional makeup of Mindanao would be far-reaching. As James Scott

(1998: 191), in a more global context, explains: "The concentration of population in planned settlements may not create what state planners had in mind, but it has almost always disrupted or destroyed prior communities whose cohesion derived mostly from nonstate sources."

*Voluntary (Re)settlement by the Rural Poor.* Over the years, the government initiated many other resettlement programs that kept the influx of Christian in-migration to Mindanao flowing. These programs provided the impetus for the independent migration of settlers to Mindanao on their own, as in the case of certain middle-class and bureaucrat entrepreneurs. But the social processes created by state-sponsored land and development policies also created a mass of landless poor desperate to have land to settle on and farm. These landless poor—whether Christian settlers who failed to secure land (or were not absorbed by the rural labor market) or Lumad (the collective name for non-Christian and non-Muslim indigenous peoples of Mindanao) and Muslims who were dislocated from their original communities—began to occupy what they thought was public land and carried out subsistence farming. Many of them entered the forests logged by big companies and started to engage in slash-and-burn farming.

*Enterprising Middle Classes and Bureaucrats.* While many of the poor people in Luzon and the Visayas who were declared the official beneficiaries of the settlement programs failed to secure homestead land parcels due to lack of state support in infrastructure construction, many other groups would take advantage of the legal framework set up by state laws and policies. Thus many people coming from the middle classes as well as bureaucrats, both from Mindanao and elsewhere, Muslim or otherwise, secured full ownership of tracts of land or exercised effective control over such land resources. While some of them farmed the land themselves, others recruited poor people to work the land under various forms of tenancy or labor arrangements. Still others have simply secured formal and informal claims over these tracts of land for speculative purposes, that is, "land banking."<sup>7</sup>

*Land-Hungry Elites and Multinational Companies.* Aside from the resettlement programs, big business with encouragement from the American colonial administration played a key role in displacing Muslim and indigenous groups in Mindanao. The southern Philippines was a land of rich resources, and American and other corporate interests went after them.

Leonard Wood, the first governor of Moro province (1903–6) and John Pershing, his successor, "tried to include amendments to the existing land laws in order to induce investments into the region." The American-dominated Zamboanga Chamber of Commerce "tried twice to have Mindanao and the adjacent islands separated from the rest of the Philippines—part of a larger effort to transform the region into a huge rubber plantation" (Rodil 1994: 41). Failing in these amendments, the colonial administration then took special steps to bend the rules on public land acquisition. As noted by James Putzel (1992: 54–55), it was common for U.S. cattle ranchers to exceed land limitations in Bukidnon "as long as they remained in the good graces of the governor." The colonial administration also facilitated the expansion of the Philippine Packing Corporation in Bukidnon, today's predecessor of Del Monte Philippines, by establishing "agricultural colonies" that dispensed with the need to amend land laws. And this bending of the rules would persist—as when Japanese corporations transformed Davao into an abaca province, when plantations were established in Basilan, or more recently when the Malaysian Palm Oil project was started in the two Lanao provinces (see also David et al. 1983).

Many of the politically dominant Christian families in Mindanao today are settlers who built big agribusiness or logging conglomerates on the island. Some of them took over where the Americans left off. Pablo Lorenzo was the patriarch of one such family. He represented Mindanao and Sulu in the House of Representatives from 1916 to 1925, became a delegate to the 1935 Constitutional Convention, and was mayor of Zamboanga City and, later on, education secretary, public works secretary, economic administrator, and chairman of various government corporations. The family built substantial interests in agribusiness, mainly in livestock and the coconut industry. Lorenzo's daughter Maria Clara, who married Celso Lobregat Jr., was president of the Philippine Coconut Producers Association before she became actively involved in politics. She became a director of the United Coconut Planters Bank and headed a chain of coconut oil mills throughout the country. In 1971, Maria Clara represented Zamboanga del Sur in the Constitutional Convention. She held three terms as representative of Zamboanga City from 1987 to 1998 and then became the city's mayor. Her son has now taken her place as representative (Gutierrez 1994: 183–84). Moreover, the Lorenzo family built what would become the biggest banana conglomerate in Davao. Luis Lorenzo Jr., the family's point person in the banana business, is the cur-

rent agriculture secretary. He has strongly advocated stopping CARP's implementation. Almost all of the estimated 7,000 hectares of Lorenzo-controlled banana plantations were exempted from CARP for various, dubious, reasons.

Furthermore, ownership of coconut lands in the Philippines is highly concentrated. Only 2 percent of farms occupy 1.25 million hectares (40 percent of the total coconut areas). In the 1970s and 1980s, the coconut land expanded greatly, mainly in Mindanao (Putzel 1992: 31; see also de la Rosa 1994). These large-scale commercial plantations used hired labor, sharecropping tenants (who paid as much as two-thirds of their produce to their landlords), or subdivided land administered by caretakers who hire the workers or engage tenants. Maria Clara Lobregat, along with Eduardo Cojuangco, Juan Ponce Enrile (who had substantial land interests in Basilan), and a handful of other large families, established control over the coconut sector through a state-sponsored monopoly over the processing and marketing of coconut oil (see Parreno 2003). During her term as representative in the Ninth Congress, Lobregat authored House Bill 554 ordering the soap and detergent industry to shift to 100 percent use of coconut-based chemicals. This bill eventually became law, and Lobregat parried charges of conflict of interest by taking credit for being an environmentalist since coconut oils are biodegradable (Gutierrez 1994: 10–12).

Another big agribusiness family in Mindanao are the Floirendos. Antonio Floirendo built the Tagum Agricultural Development Corporation (TADECO), the Philippines' largest producer and exporter of bananas. He married the sister of Rodolfo del Rosario, a businessman from Davao City. Del Rosario became a three-term representative of Davao del Norte and governor of the province. Del Rosario, in turn, is married to Milagros Garcia, sister of former Davao City representative Manuel Garcia. Floirendo, Del Rosario, and Manuel Garcia became powerful leaders of the Marcos's political party, the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (Gutierrez 1994: 125). This extended family has been able to survive shifts in regime and administration. The combined land area of the Floirendo-owned and controlled banana plantation is more or less 8,500 hectares. Some 3,500 hectares were privately owned, although these lands used to be public land. The largest chunk, 5,000 hectares, is leased from the government's Davao Penal Colony (DAPECOL) at a ridiculously low rate of P1,000 per hectare per year despite the prevailing rate of P40,000 in adjacent plantations. TADECO used to employ prison labor on its plantation

until Japanese buyers protested. (See also Hayami et al. 1990: 139–40; Manapat 1991; Borrás and Quiambao 1998; Borrás, Quiambao, and Gatche 1999.) The Floirendos were reported to have violently ejected numerous communities of early settlers in DAPECOL to pave the way for the plantation. Today these settlers continue to press the government to give back their land.<sup>8</sup>

***Today these settlers continue to press the government to give back their land.***

The modernization of agribusiness in Mindanao was facilitated by macroeconomic policies effected in Manila. The deregulation introduced by Diosdado Macapagal in 1961, for example, was a boon to agricultural exporters like TADECO. It was from this policy that transnational agribusiness corporations accelerated their drive to develop new export crops, particularly in Mindanao. Dole established a plantation to rival Del Monte in 1963 by leasing 8,903 hectares of land from the government-owned National Development Corporation (NDC) (Putzel 1992: 120; David et al. 1983; Hawes 1987). Later Marcos expanded the role of the NDC in order to bypass constitutional limits on the land area that foreign corporations could control (Putzel 1992: 145).

In logging, perhaps the most influential family in southern Mindanao are the Sarmientos. Originally from Bulacan, Lorenzo Sarmiento settled in Davao in the 1950s and established LS Sarmiento and Co., a highway engineering and construction firm that branched out into logging. He and his brother Pablo gained timber concessions in Mindanao and established the Plaridel Lumber Co. (later renamed Sarmiento Industries). At its height, Sarmiento Industries operated concessions that spanned Davao del Norte and North and South Cotabato. Lorenzo entered politics as representative of Davao from 1965 to 1972 while concurrently sitting as a member of the National Economic Council. His son, Rogelio, was elected to the Batasang Pambansa from 1978 to 1984 and served in the House of Representatives from 1992 to 1998 (Gutierrez 1994: 247–48). Lorenzo Sarmiento authored the bill that created the three Davao provinces in 1967: Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, and Davao del Sur. Their timber concessions were centered in Davao del Norte. Some 30 years later, his son Rogelio would author the bill that carved the province of Compostela out of Davao del Norte. While Davao del Norte became the bailiwick of the Floirendo-Del Rosario family, the Compostela Valley became the Sarmientos' home province. The first representative of the Compostela

Valley elected to the House of Representatives was Rogelio Sarmiento.<sup>9</sup>

The impact of such social processes on the socioeconomic and political makeup of Mindanao has been profound. The rest of this section considers three distinct but intertwined impacts: first, the dialectical minoritization/majoritization process among peoples in the southern Philippines alongside the expansion of nation-building; second, the semi-proletarianization and pauperization of the vast majority of people (settlers, Lumads, and Muslims) who have either remained or been transformed into a mass of landless peasants and farmworkers amid homogenization of legal institutions governing property rights; and third, consolidation of land monopoly in the hands of landlord-warlords, multinational companies, and the central state.

*Minoritization/Majoritization and Nation-Building*

The interlinked process of minoritization/majoritization has been dramatic, complex, and far-reaching. As Abinales (2000) explains systematically, the nation-building has been uneven—shaped and reshaped by the local elite's version of statebuilding "from below" or the periphery. Although demographic data are important in the analysis, they must be treated with caution. The difficulty here is that statistics on the number of Muslims in the Philippines have always been rough approximations. On census questions about religious affiliation, for example, inexact and incomplete replies were usually obtained. This problem is compounded by the hostility in Muslim areas to government personnel. Moreover census takers, because of disturbed conditions, apparently sometimes made extrapolations based on extremely limited surveys. In some areas, too, the mobility of Philippine Muslims—like the seafaring Tausogs and Samals—makes it hard to determine trends of growth or decline (Thomas J. O'Shaughnessy cited in Gowing 1979: 253). This problem occurs in the isolated upland Lumad communities as well.

Nevertheless, the data taken by the Bureau of Census and Statistics in 1918, 1939, 1948, 1960, and 1970 are probably the best approximation of demographic patterns in the Muslim areas of Mindanao. Table 1 presents the findings from the different census years. From 1918 to 1948, Muslims in the total population declined from 4.29 percent to 4.11 percent. O'Shaughnessy attributes this decreasing trend partly to the low standards of public health and sanitation that prevail in the Muslim regions. But he also cites another, perhaps more important, reason for this

**Table 1. Population Trends in the Muslim Areas: 1918–70**

Area	1918	1939	1948	1960	1970
<i>Muslims in total</i>					
<i>Philippine population</i>	4.29%	4.23%	4.11%	4.86%	4.32%
<i>Cotabato</i>					
Non-Muslims	61,052	135,939	284,507	672,659	711,430
Muslims	110,926	162,996	155,162	356,460	424,577
Ratio*	0.5504	0.8340	1.8336	1.8871	1.6756
<i>Lanao</i>					
Non-Muslims	8,140	80,805	106,703	236,670	308,328
Muslims	83,319	162,632	237,215	412,260	497,122
Ratio*	0.098	0.497	0.450	0.574	0.620
<i>Palawan</i>					
Non-Muslims	63,529	87,278	97,655	149,893	219,566
Muslims	5,524	6,395	8,614	12,776	17,069
Ratio*	11.501	13.648	11.337	11.732	12.863
<i>Sulu</i>					
Non-Muslims	4,147	16,584	1,393	15,972	23,633
Muslims	168,629	230,533	226,883	310,926	401,984
Ratio*	0.025	0.072	0.006	0.051	0.059
<i>Zamboanga</i>					
Non-Muslims	102,544	263,956	288,593	829,389	1,251,870
Muslims	44,789	92,028	133,348	194,444	191,527
Ratio*	2.289	2.868	2.164	4.265	6.536

\*Number of non-Muslims for every Muslim.

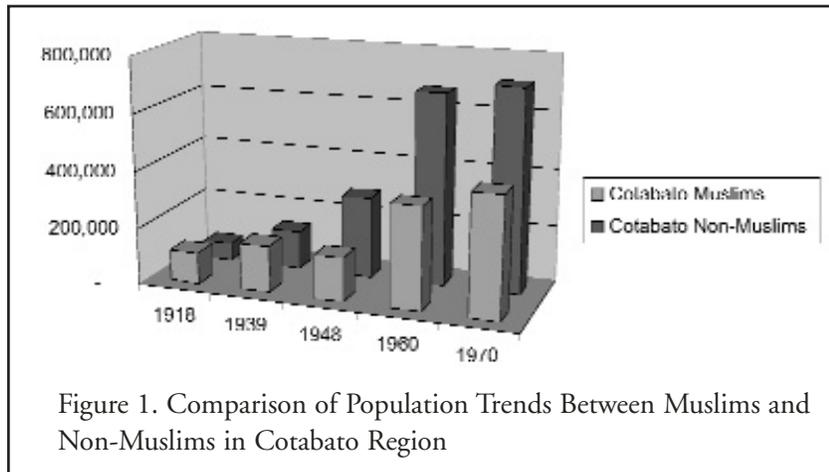
Source: Thomas J. O'Shaughnessy, 1975, using data from Bureau of Census and Statistics; see Gowing (1979: 252–56).

decline: Muslim resistance to government policy during the American regime. This resistance not only resulted in thousands of deaths but dismantled traditional Islamic society and stripped it of much of its former power (O'Shaughnessy cited in Gowing 1979: 256). From 1903 to 1905, between 15,000 and 20,000 Moros were estimated to have died in the resistance to

the U.S. presence (Rodil 1994: 37).

The other side of the coin is the sharp increase in the non-Muslim population in Mindanao during this period. This is shown by the steady rise in the number of non-Muslims for every Muslim in the different regions. This increase in the non-Muslim population was felt most significantly in the Cotabato region—one of the key concentration areas of government resettlement programs (see Abinales 2000). Figure 1 shows this trend graphically. From 1918 to 1960, the population of non-Muslims in Cotabato increased more than tenfold. The Muslim population, in comparison, grew by a little more than threefold. In 1918, Cotabato was a Muslim majority region and there were about two Muslims for every non-Muslim. By 1960, the situation had reversed—there were more than two non-Muslims for every Muslim.

The Lanao region presents a different story. While there was about a fivefold growth in the Muslim population from 1918 to 1960, the non-Muslim population increased nearly thirtyfold. Unlike Cotabato, however, the Lanao region as a whole remained a majority Muslim region. This is perhaps the main reason why, in 1959, Representative Laurentino



Lluch Badelles successfully engineered the creation of two Lanao provinces in Congress: Lanao del Norte was to become a mainly Christian-dominated province; Lanao del Sur would become a Muslim province. The population of the two Lanao provinces in the 1960 and 1970 census is shown in Table 2.

Thus when the two provinces were created, Muslims constituted about 20 percent of Lanao del Norte's population compared to 94 percent in Lanao del Sur. The creation of two Lanao provinces set a trend through the 1960s and the 1970s of dividing political jurisdictions along ethnic-religious lines. The original province of Cotabato created by the American adminis-

**Table 2. Muslim and Non-Muslim Population of the Two Lanao**

<b>Provinces</b>		
Province	1960	1970
<i>Lanao del Norte</i>		
Muslim	56,533	80,853
Non-Muslim	214,070	269,089
<i>Lanao del Sur</i>		
Muslim	355,727	416,269
Non-Muslim	22,600	39,239

tration in 1901 has now been subdivided into five smaller provinces. In 1967, the Chiongbians engineered the creation of the province of South Cotabato through Congress. The Chiongbians, originally from Misamis Occidental, started moving some of their businesses to what was to become South Cotabato, which includes General Santos City. In 1973, President Marcos, through Presidential Decree 373, further subdivided the remaining Cotabato province into three: the province of North Cotabato (today's province of Cotabato), Sultan Kudarat, and Maguindanao. The boundaries of these provinces were carved in a way that would make Maguindanao a majority Muslim province, while North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat would become predominantly Christian (Gutierrez 1994: 110).<sup>10</sup>

The object of subdividing political jurisdictions along ethnic-religious lines was to sort out the increasing conflicts between Muslim and Christian politicians. If they had their own jurisdictions, it was reasoned, these politicians would not have to fight each other for political control of larger jurisdictions. But all did not go as planned. When the predominantly Christian Lanao del Norte was created in 1959, for example, it was a Muslim—Mohammad Ali Dimaporo—who became governor after defeating the Badelles clan in the elections. As well, Ali's eldest son Abdullah was to become Lanao del Norte's governor in 1992. In South

Cotabato, James Chiongbian's wife Priscilla ran for governor in 1988 but lost to progressive Christian rivals. As a result, James (reelected representative in 1987) filed a bill in Congress further subdividing South Cotabato and creating the new province of Sarangani. Priscilla Chiongbian became Sarangani's first governor (Gutierrez 1994: 110).

*Semi-Proletarianization and Pauperization*

Many of the lands settled by incoming Christians were part of the indigenous ancestral domain—whether or not they were actually occupied or cultivated at the time when settlers came. In fact, many of the early settlement initiatives did not have an immediate and massive dislocation effect on Lumads and Muslims (Abinales 2000; Quitariano 1999), principally because the lands were not used as intensively as nonindigenous people of the Philippines used them. The massive logging activities may have caused immediate and widespread dislocation. But in general, the real impact of isolation and dislocation of indigenous communities was felt later when the incoming migrants, especially the corporate settlers, were able to formally secure and consolidate their ownership and control over these landholdings.

***In fact, many of the early settlement initiatives did not have an immediate and massive dislocation effect***

As the population grew and the land frontier was exhausted, massive semi-proletarianization and pauperization of the rural population of Lumads, Muslims, and Christian settlers became a remarkable feature of rural communities. While some Christian settlers were absorbed in the plantation enclaves from Basilan to South Cotabato, many of them were not regularly employed or were not employed at all by the agribusiness sector; many have become subsistence peasants, especially among Muslim and Lumad communities. When rubber plantations were opened up in Basilan during the early part of the twentieth century, for example, they were located in lands that were part of the Muslim ancestral domain. When a plantation started to operate, the owners brought in Christian settlers as farmworkers. This labor arrangement would have a strategic impact on contemporary land policies in these areas (see Quitariano 1999).

Rodil thinks the timber concessions that came to Mindanao in the postwar era "delivered the penultimate blow to the already precarious indigenous hold over their ancestral territory" (1994: 41). The government resettlement programs pushed the indigenous populations upward

into the forest areas, but then logging caught up with them too. In 1979, corporate logging concessions in Mindanao covered a total area of over 5 million hectares—at a time when the region's total commercial forest area was officially estimated at only 3.92 million hectares.

*Consolidation of Land Monopoly*

Many landlords and multinational companies were able to secure private land titles. Others were able to secure special long-term agreements with the government through timber lease agreements, pasture lease agreements, and other land leases like the ones secured by TADECO in DAPECOL and by Dole with the NDC in South Cotabato. While massive privatization of land originally belonging to the indigenous peoples (including Muslims) occurred, most of the remaining lands were declared state-owned. The homogenization of property rights based on the Regalian doctrine was nearly complete.<sup>11</sup>

In short, the minoritization of Muslims occurred side by side with the marginalization of the Muslim poor's access to productive resources, especially land. The combined problems of the state's failure to deliver on its promise of land settlements favoring the poor, as well as the local elite's manipulation of legal institutions to grab lands, have denied many incoming settlers of the promised land while at the same time promoting the encroachment of elite families and corporations into Lumad and Muslim lands. Most of the elites, individual or corporate, controlling vast tracts of land in what may well be ancestral territory of the Muslims, have been Christians. This intertwined minoritization and marginalization of Muslims coincided with the resurgence of armed conflict in the 1970s. It is likely that the Muslim rural poor, having their access to productive resources and livelihood cut or restricted, thought of armed resistance as a way to correct a historical injustice.

The central government has, to some extent, recognized the importance of the land question—within the context of ancestral domain and redistributive land reform—in resolving the contemporary armed conflict in the southern Philippines. As we shall see, CARP and IPRA are the two key policies the central state has instituted to address the land question. Meanwhile, since land is central to the ability of rural people to pursue their livelihoods, the widespread landlessness and social dislocation that occurred in many parts of Mindanao—largely caused by the series of central state policies on land, settlement, and plantation economy—have resulted in the impoverishment of many in the southern Philippines, not

only those who are indigenous in these parts of the country but also those who have come from the Visayas and Luzon.

### **Mass Poverty and Social Exclusion**

The unusually high incidence of poverty among Muslims in the Philippines is established by different indicators. The most important among these is the Human Development Index (HDI)—essentially a measure of a people's access to basic social services (health, education) and basic infrastructure (water, sanitation, electricity, transport). The HDI is a reflection of how governments—local, regional, and national—plan, spend, and implement these services. Some observers believe that the central state's scale of neglect in Muslim communities is systematic and deliberate; others believe it is simply a combination of ineptitude and lack of coordination between and within government agencies (see Gutierrez 1995). In the context of this study the key issue is, not whether the neglect is systematic and deliberate, but its extent and consequences. The HDI suggests how government is providing for the needs in these areas (see Table 3).

Table 3 shows that the provinces with the worst Human Development Index (rank 73 to 77) are those with the highest concentration of Muslims: Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, and Sulu. In comparison, other Christian-majority provinces of the Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD) have higher HDI rankings.<sup>12</sup> The table shows that Basilan and Tawi-Tawi have no reason to fail so dismally in the HDI rankings. These two provinces have significantly higher real per capita incomes than Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, and Sulu and hence local governments might be expected to perform better in delivering services. But this poor showing may very well reflect massive disparities in income distribution in Basilan and Tawi-Tawi.

Table 4 presents the other indices—health, education, and income—used in computing the HDI. It shows that the country's five provinces with the highest Muslim concentration occupy the bottom rows of rank 73 and 77. Sulu presents the worst case; it is worst in education and income, and only Tawi-Tawi ranks lower in the health index. Maguindanao fares badly in health and education but does better in income.

What makes this poverty especially anomalous in the provinces with the highest Muslim concentration is that other indicators typically hide the reality on the ground. A key example is the figures on literacy shown in Table 5. These figures from a UN body funded by the Japanese government show

**Table 3. Comparison of HDI Rank and Real Per Capita Income in the SZOPAD Areas: 1997**

Area	HDI Rank	Per Capita Income (pesos)	Per Capita Income (rank)
<i>Philippines (national)</i>	n.a.	21,877	n.a.
<i>National capital</i>	n.a.	48,930	n.a.
<i>Christian-dominated provinces where Muslims are found</i>			
Palawan	43	15,561	30
South Cotabato	47	15,187	35
Sultan Kudarat	49	13,852	44
Davao del Norte	52	12,450	57
Zamboanga del Sur	55	13,038	51
Davao del Sur	57	12,974	52
North Cotabato	59	12,312	61
Zamboanga del Norte	63	13,266	50
Davao Oriental	65	10,764	71
Sarangani	67	11,220	66
Lanao del Norte	71	9,637	76
<i>Provinces with highest concentration of Muslims</i>			
Basilan	73	14,053	41
Tawi-Tawi	74	18,409	15
Lanao del Sur	75	9,497	77
Maguindanao	76	10,841	70
Sulu	77	8,181	78

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board.

Note: In the HDI ranking, there were only 77 provinces in the Philippines and Sulu ranked last. In the per capita income ranking, there were 78 provinces and Sulu again ranked last.

a very optimistic picture. Based on personal interviews with education officials in Sulu, it turns out that the province had only a 33 percent literacy rate, for example.<sup>13</sup> These officials based their estimate on the number of primary-school-age children on Jolo Island and compared this with actual

school attendance (Gutierrez 1995: 127–67). Anecdotal evidence tends to validate this finding:<sup>14</sup> when the national government constructed 73 school

**Table 4. Worst-Performing Provinces Based on HDI Rank and Other Indices: 1997**

Rank	HDI	Health Index	Education Index	Income Index
71	Lanao del Norte	Agusan del Sur	Sarangani	Agusan del Norte
72	Ifugao	Samar (Western)	Lanao del Sur	Masbate
73	Basilan	Ifugao	Maguindanao	Samar (Eastern)
74	Tawi-Tawi	Lanao del Sur	Ifugao	Siquijor
75	Lanao del Sur	Maguindanao	Tawi-Tawi	Lanao del Norte
76	Maguindanao	Sulu	Basilan	Lanao del Sur
77	Sulu	Tawi-Tawi	Sulu	Sulu

*Source:* National Statistical Coordination Board.

buildings with 127 classrooms on the island, most remained unused because few teachers were willing to be deployed to these areas. Most primary school teachers on Jolo Island, which has a total of nine municipalities, live with their families in the relative security of the capital town. In a typical week, they would use much of Monday traveling from their homes in the capital to their areas of assignment around the island. They would then teach on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in school buildings where children of

**Table 5. Literacy Rates in the ARMM and Its Provinces**

Province	1996 (%)	1997 (%)
Philippine national literacy rate	95.00	95.00
ARMM literacy rate	79.92	78.37
Maguindanao	84.12	85.60
Lanao del Sur I	75.29	76.22
Lanao del Sur II	69.25	70.12
Sulu	76.54	77.20
Tawi-Tawi	82.30	82.70

*Source:* Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO.

different ages have no choice but to share rooms together. Friday would be spent mostly traveling back to town. When fighting breaks out between different armed groups (military, rebel, bandit, or political), schools are automatically abandoned. Only five of Sulu's eighteen municipalities have electricity, according to the provincial government, but lack of power is the least of the teachers' complaints. They are more disheartened by the lack of water supply and sanitation facilities in the schools.

The most probable reason for the faulty figures used nationally and internationally was explained by a principal on Jolo Island. Schoolchildren receive a substandard education, but this is not reported for two reasons. First, teachers are often intimidated by parents, most of them armed, into passing children who have failed the standard examinations. Second, the supervisors of these teachers have to report something to justify their salaries and budgets and show that government is present in these areas. MNLF chair Nur Misuari had a taste of this situation firsthand. In a speech at a conference at the Asian Institute of Management in the country's capital, he recounted that while on a visit to a part of Jolo the school principal took advantage of his presence and asked whether he could give a speech at the high school graduation ceremonies that happened to be on that day. Looking at the many children in the area, Misuari accepted. But as he started to speak, he was shocked to find there were only three graduating students. In contrast to Misuari's disappointment, education officials could report proudly to their superiors that none other than the regional governor himself came to speak at the graduation ceremonies.

Other government agencies routinely disseminate these faulty pictures of the situation on the ground. The National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) official website, for example, reports that literacy in the SZOPAD is 90 percent, the electrification rate is 78 percent, and 1.3 million or 68 percent of households are supplied with water from various sources. These figures hide the anomalies of the real situation in the provinces with the highest concentration of Muslims. In fact the failures cannot even be dealt with, because they remain hidden or are simply ignored in national budget decision making.

Another manifestation of state failure in the Muslim areas is the retreat of municipal government. Practically all of Sulu's eighteen mayors live in the capital town of Jolo or in Zamboanga City. Ironically, many of them are unable to hold office within the territory of the municipalities that they govern. As a result, the business of local government is conduct-

ed in their houses in the capital. Birth, marriage, and death certificates and other forms of civil registry are administered in the private, off-site residences of the mayors. Sometimes municipal council sessions are held in these private homes as well. The same patterns exist in Basilan and in the Cotabato region, where the conduct of local government is held in mayors' residences in Cotabato City. In January 1997, one such mayor—Macarampat Manalao of Buldon who was elected in May 1995 but has never held office within the boundaries of the town—decided to pay a visit to his municipality. The result was an encounter that left 22 people dead when the MILF attacked the military unit escorting the mayor after they entered the rebel defense perimeter in Galigaya (Gutierrez 2000b: 279). Even local police chiefs are unable to assert their authority in many villages. It was only in July 1997, for example, after twenty years, that a municipal chief of police was able to set foot in the village of Rajah Muda in Pikit, North Cotabato. This was after the Army's 40th Infantry Battalion overran the MILF camp in the village (p. 280). All through the years, the assumption in Manila and elsewhere has been that municipal governments are functioning in these areas. Budgetary support continues to flow from the national government to these "municipal governments" even when the reality on the ground is so starkly different from the assumptions in the national capital.

In short, the degree of poverty and social exclusion where Muslims have a significant presence is much higher than in the rest of the country. Any meaningful settlement of the conflict in southern Mindanao must make the eradication of poverty and social exclusion a central issue.

### **Entrepreneurs in Violence**

Aside from the poverty situation, social exclusion, and state failure in the Muslim-dominated areas, there is another key issue not being addressed squarely by national policymakers: the proliferation of "entrepreneurs in violence" in the region. On many occasions, these entrepreneurs are used by powerful interests for vested ends. The media reporting of this phenomenon fails to capture the complex roles performed by these characters. While this trend is, strictly speaking, not a new one because of similar occurrences in the past, the extent to which it has proliferated in recent years is unprecedented. Moreover, the current scale of this violence is significantly different from the past because of the current global context marked by transnational violent conflict involving Islamic groups.

Entrepreneurs in violence are those who use their reputations and capacity for violence to compete for the power to make decisions affecting inhabitants of an area. They are most useful where the situation is volatile. The typical economic entrepreneur starts by staking capital for an enterprise that is nurtured and grown. The "starting capital" of the entrepreneur in violence, by contrast, could be a simple act of coercion or crime (intimidation, kidnapping, or murder) for which fear or respect is earned (Gutierrez 2000a: 351–61). In relatively peaceful areas, violent individuals

***the capacity to strike  
back has become the best  
guarantee of security***

are shunned or treated with derision. A killer is regarded as someone with no sense of morality. But in the peculiar conditions of the southern Philippines, the capacity to strike back has become the best guarantee of security. An old farmer in Patikul, living in a cluster of houses 7 kilometers from Jolo town, was once asked why people are so used to the sight of weapons and why his own family was armed. (A teenage granddaughter was playfully leaning on a Browning automatic rifle like a crutch as she chatted with her friends, while a fourteen-year-old grandson was listening with an M-14 on his lap.) His reply was straightforward: "If I have five head of cattle and bring them out to graze in this area, those with firearms will seize my cattle. When that happens, where do I go to complain? We need arms for our own protection, and we rely on ourselves" (Gutierrez 1995: 77–78). The capacity for violence thus easily translates into *galang* (respect), arguably a form of social capital, which an entrepreneur may mobilize for high-stake activities.

There are two key examples of an entrepreneur in violence: Norberto Manero Jr. (Kumander Bucay) in the Cotabato region and Galib Andang (Kumander Robot) in Sulu. At first glance, both would seem to be opposites. On the one hand, Manero is an Ilaga commander from a group of Ilonggo-speaking settlers in the Cotabato region that came to be known for their practice of collecting the ears of Muslims they kill in battle. Manero himself first became known for the "Kinilis murders" in 1977 involving a land dispute, when he and his wife shot and killed two Muslim brothers and then ate parts of the bodies, according to eyewitnesses (Coronel 1993: 102–17).<sup>15</sup> Andang, on the other hand, is associated with the Abu Sayyaf, known for its extremist and Islamic fundamentalist rhetoric. The diminutive Andang was the ringleader and skilled negotiator in the kidnapping of 21 foreign tourists in Sipadan, Malaysia, by the Abu Sayyaf in April 2000.

Yet despite the differences, both can be seen as part of the same phenomenon and therefore say much about realpolitik in the southern Philippines. Both cite noble goals as justification for their acts of violence: Bucay fights in the name of God against Muslims and communists; Robot fights for a separate Islamic state where laws will derive from the Koran. Both stand out in their use of symbols. Bucay is known for his shaved head that had, at one time, a tuft of hair in the shape of a question mark and then in the shape of a heart. Robot presents himself as a very ordinary Tausog, without the emblems of Islam, and downplays his firearm whenever in front of cameras—unlike his comrades who revel in their firepower. Both firmly remain in rural poor communities where they have no lack of supporters who admire them, support them, and consider them champions. And both prey on those outside their immediate peasant community—very much unlike common criminals or even political warlords who kill and maim within their immediate community. Bucay has killed and decapitated both Muslims and communists, ostensibly to protect the Ilonggo settler community in the Cotabato region. Robot has fought the military and preys principally on foreigners (Gutierrez 2000a: 3–5).

Both Bucay and Robot have well-placed contacts in the state and in mainstream society who support and often protect them. Bucay has had invisible but powerful protectors since the time of Ferdinand Marcos, through Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos, and Joseph Estrada. When Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was installed as president, she met with Bucay briefly and shook hands on her first official trip to Mindanao. At the time, Bucay was an escaped prisoner being hunted by security forces and had given hints of wishing to cooperate—hence the presidential audience. Robot's links to powerful figures are less well known but nevertheless evident. Although initially limited in territory to a small coastal *barangay* in Patikul, Robot's band has been able to expand its reach considerably—crisscrossing territories controlled by local politicians, the MNLF, and Philippine marines at the height of the kidnapping venture. They had no trouble encamping with their 21 foreign hostages in Talipao municipality, a strategic area within firing distance from the Tulawie family estate and government howitzers. This ability to crisscross turfs across the island could not have been done without the tacit consent of those in control of the areas. Although the government appointed Sulu governor Abdusakur Tan to negotiate with Andang, it turns out that not only did Andang used to be a houseboy in the Tan household but it was Tan's mother herself who

gave the bandit the nickname "Robot."<sup>16</sup>

These new entrepreneurs in violence further complicate an already complex situation in the southern Philippines. Kumander Bucay is quite well known for his role as a paramilitary vigilante protected by the army in the fight against the communists. Kumander Robot has shown how quickly allegiances are made or unmade in the murky politics of Sulu, especially if one has millions to distribute. Yet these entrepreneurs in violence get much less attention than that given to the mainstream rebel movements, MNLF and MILF. While the connection between the entrepreneurs in violence and certain elite patrons may not be conclusive with regard to the nature and extent of these relationships, it is nevertheless strongly suggestive of the links between them that are most likely to influence each other's political and military clout. Although further empirical research is necessary to establish greater evidence about these relationships, it will be extremely difficult to carry out.

It is clear, though, that entrepreneurs in violence have a distinct political and economic role to play. This role explains why, despite their notoriety, two "hideous criminals" like Bucay and Robot enjoy genuine popular support even from respectable, middle-class people. The power of such

***It is clear, though, that entrepreneurs in violence have a distinct political and economic role to play.***

entrepreneurs in violence is most effective in its negative form—when it is used to prevent enemies from doing what they want or when it is deployed for what is commonly considered criminal activity. But Bucay and Robot have *positive* power as well. Both have political dependents—local people who see themselves as protected by these two bandits. Ordinary peasants with their harvest or even traders and businessmen who find

themselves prey in the unstable world of the southern Philippines need constant protection from men who can give them property and physical security—whether from the military, the rebels, local politicians, warlords, or bandits like Bucay and Robot. In such a situation, it is the bandits who have greatest flexibility. Military or rebel protectors are constrained by their organizations and the hierarchies they must follow. Local bosses who become politicians and occupy elective seats are equally constrained by their position. But men like Bucay and Robot have no such constraints. Even respectable businessmen or politicians therefore find it extremely useful to link up with them. So the question needs to be reversed. Instead

of asking who are the hidden protectors of Bucay and Robot who use them for various ends, the question should be: who are the people whose property, harvest, trade, business, and even physical safety are protected by their association with Bucay and Robot? Thus Bucay and Robot can be seen, not just as the typical bandit or criminal, but as enforcers of a certain set of property claims in the highly volatile southern Philippines. Entrepreneurs in violence must be seen in the context of the political and economic role they play.<sup>17</sup>

State policy aimed at addressing problems in the southern Philippines is not effective because there is no systematic understanding of their true nature and extent. The degree of mass poverty and social exclusion is concealed behind a façade of optimistic data; little systematic attention is given to a potentially more dangerous phenomenon: the proliferation of entrepreneurs in violence. This lack of knowledge about the real problems is closely related to the central state's utter lack of systematic knowledge about landownership from historical and political-economic perspectives. In 1992, the most comprehensive work on agrarian reform in the Philippines concluded: "There has never been a concentrated effort to collect ownership data in this country that has been talking of agrarian reform since 1946" (Putzel 1992: 33). Given the lack of systematic data about landownership, as well as the lack of coherent understanding of the historical and political-economic dimension of the contemporary land-based social and production relations, well-intentioned state policies are at best only partly effective.

### **Contemporary Land Policies**

This section is divided into several parts. The first part, which occupies the bulk of this section, outlines the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). The rest of the section discusses land reform and ancestral domain claims.

#### *Key Features of CARP*

CARP is a public policy that does not fit the ideal types of revolutionary, conservative, or market-led agrarian reform policies. Here a conservative land reform program is defined as a policy that is generally characterized by limited reforms focusing mainly on resettlement and usually excluding productive farms. Revolutionary land reform is broadly defined as a policy that expropriates all private estates without landlord compensation and redistributes land for free. CARP, while having some degree of expropria-

tionary power, has incorporated major elements that are less revolutionary and are market friendly—for example, paying landlords based on a "just compensation principle."

In theory, CARP covers all agricultural lands in the Philippines, private and public, regardless of tenure. Based on the original 1987 scope, CARP was intended to reform tenurial relations in all 10.3 million hectares of the country's farmland. The program was intended to redistribute these lands to some 4 million landless and land-poor households comprising close to 80 percent of the agricultural population. It should be noted that the average farm size in the country is about 2 hectares, while the land reform award ceiling is fixed at 3 hectares. Moreover, tenancy reform, through leasehold, is to be implemented in farms of 5 hectares or less. Private lands and some government-owned lands are to be redistributed by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR); redistribution of public alienable and disposable (A&D) lands is to be implemented by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Included in the DAR's jurisdiction are government-owned lands identified as "settlements," the "landed estates" (friar lands), and the so-called KKK lands (lands segregated during the Marcos era for a countryside livelihood program). The DENR distributes lands through the Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) program and the A&D lands.

A number of exclusions are guaranteed by CARP. Among them are military reservations, penal colonies, educational and research lands, timberland, and some church areas. Undeveloped hills with 18 degrees of slope are also excluded. In the mid-1990s, further exemptions were introduced—namely, agricultural sectors that are "less dependent on land" such as poultry, livestock, salt beds, and fishponds. CARP's scope was revised in January 1996, however, by the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council, the interagency and multisectoral body in charge of the program's overall implementation. The revision reduced the program's scope to 8.06 million hectares.

CARP has adopted various modes for acquiring private lands. First, Operation Land Transfer (OLT) is the mechanism used for rice and corn lands under the Marcos-era land reform program that was later integrated within CARP. Second, devised to lessen landlord resistance to reform, the voluntary offer-to-sell (VOS) increases the cash portion in the landlord's compensation by 5 percent with a corresponding 5 percent decrease in the bond portion. A third mode that aspires to court landlord cooperation is the market-friendly voluntary land transfer (VLT), which provides for the

direct transfer of land to peasants under mutually agreed terms between peasants and landlords. Government's role is reduced to providing information and enforcing contracts. Both the VOS and VLT operate schemes in the context of expropriation—that is, if landlords refuse VOS or VLT, their estates will nonetheless be acquired by the state. This brings us to the last acquisition mode: compulsory acquisition (CA), through which land is expropriated whether or not the landlord cooperates. Compulsory acquisition is akin to OLT.

A few more acquisition and distribution policies should also be noted. For one, the Stock Distribution Option (SDO) is a distinct mode designed for corporate farms. SDO exempts such lands from redistribution if the owner opts for corporate stock sharing with peasant beneficiaries. Moreover, the acquisition of some 50,000 hectares of highly productive commercial farms, such as banana plantations, was deferred in 1988 for a ten-year period—ostensibly to allow plantation owners to recoup their investments and to prepare farmworkers for eventual takeover. In addition, under certain conditions, CARP allows peasant beneficiaries to lease out awarded lands to an investor. Finally, acquired lands can be transferred to individuals or cooperatives, although the general bias is toward the former.

*Land Reform: 1972–2002*

The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program has great potential to resolve the land question in the Philippines and, to some extent, the land issues in the "tri-peoples" setting of Mindanao. The CARP law has inherent theoretical and empirical limitations in the context of the Muslim and Lumad-populated areas of Mindanao, however, the most important of which is that the historical complexities of the land question are not well understood. These limitations, as well as the persistent lack of systematic landownership data as pointed out earlier by Putzel (1992), largely account for the dismal outcomes in CARP (and IPRA) implementation in Muslim Mindanao.

***the historical complexities of the land question are not well understood***

A key example of this lack of understanding is the fact that the potential beneficiaries of land redistribution under CARP are arranged according to priorities. Those with top priority are the ones who are actually working the land at the time of the CARP process. This is, arguably, ahistorical. It does not account for original occupants who may

have a prior superior claim over the land resources. This weakness in CARP will work against many Muslims and Lumads—a weakness that even the devolution of CARP implementation from the central DAR to the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) or IPRA will be unable to resolve. In fact the coexistence of the central DAR, the ARMM-DAR, and IPRA complicates political-legal matters for the ethnic minorities even further.<sup>18</sup>

Under certain conditions, CARP can facilitate the victorious claim of landless poor peasants over the land. Many successful cases of land redistribution from landowning elite to landless poor, even on highly contentious modern plantations, demonstrate this (Borrás 1999; Feranil 2001; Franco 1999). Redistribution did occur through compulsory acquisition through Operation Land Transfer (OLT), or to a limited extent even through voluntary offer-to-sell (VOS). Under certain conditions, successful land redistribution also occurred via the DENR-implemented CBFM and A&D programs. These can be seen in the aggregated data of accomplishment from 1972 to 2001 in Tables 6 and 7. Moreover, under certain conditions, IPRA can facilitate the successful claims of indigenous communities over their ancestral domain. Its implementation has been quite limited to date, however, and difficult (Vidal 2002).

For Mindanao, the DAR has claimed that more than 88 percent of the land under its jurisdiction has been fully redistributed (see Tables 6 and 7), even exceeding the national average of 81 percent. Thus by the end of 2001, the outstanding balance for land redistribution in Mindanao was almost negligible. (The provinces under the ARMM are excluded from these data.) The DENR's reported accomplishment is a bit lower but still quite substantial (see Table 8). Meanwhile CARP's land redistribution accomplishment in the ARMM is only 55 percent, quite low compared to other regions. Nearly half of the reported accomplishment in the ARMM is in government-owned land, but such land represents only 30 percent of the ARMM's official scope. Accomplishment in private agricultural land is 30 percent. But the registered private land appears to be quite low—take, for example, the data for Lanao del Sur, a province that is geographically huge (see Table 9). Thus it is most likely that many holdings controlled by landowning Muslim elite (whether formally or informally) are not registered in the ARMM's land reform program.<sup>19</sup> Although these data suggest that the land problem in Mindanao is nearly fully resolved, realities at the ground level reveal contradictory symptoms. This requires us to

**Table 6. DAR's Land Redistribution by Region and Province: 2001**

Mindanao Rank Based on Absolute Number (ha)	National Rank Based on Absolute Number (ha)	Area	Net Output (ha)	% Accomplished	Original Scope (ha)	Deducted from Original Scope (ha)	Working Scope (ha)
		Philippines*	3,214,066	81.14	6,617,406	2,656,328	3,961,078
		Mindanao*	1,219,404	87.55	2,776,030	1,383,496	1,392,689
1	1	North Cotabato	157,968	77.26	204,439	0	204,439
2	3	Bukidnon	125,424	94.75	368,523	236,153	132,370
3	5	Zamboanga Sur	120,175	99.06	181,640	60,326	121,314
4	8	Sultan Kudarat	104,271	81.59	127,795	0	127,795
5	9	Agusan del Sur	98,205	91.56	284,990	177,740	107,250
6	10	Davao del Norte	92,530	91.68	262,641	161,722	100,919
7	17	South Cotabato	65,655	93.87	201,141	131,200	69,941
8	18	Lanao del Norte	61,398	77.64	80,139	1,067	79,071
9	19	Zamboanga Norte	53,948	98.93	60,610	6,084	54,526
10	26	Davao Oriental	46,136	93.11	212,199	162,653	49,546
11	33	Surigao del Sur	31,293	91.82	125,712	91,632	34,080
12	38	Surigao del Norte	28,111	97.94	35,776	7,074	28,702
13	39	Basilan	26,869	93.76	30,958	2,303	28,655
14	40	Davao del Sur	25,484	92.93	82,761	55,339	27,422
15	41	Misamis Oriental	24,945	88.08	31,225	2,907	28,318
16	45	Sarangani	23,709	80.60	153,591	124,177	29,414
17	52	Agusan del Norte	18,216	95.96	123,994	105,012	18,982
18	56	Davao City	15,243	86.25	68,702	51,030	17,672
19	69	Misamis Occidental	8,499	83.42	12,426	2,238	10,188
20	74	Camiguin	2,111	87.73	7,245	4,839	2,406
		Region 9	200,993	98.28	273,208	68,713	204,495
		Region 10	160,979	92.90	419,419	246,137	173,282
		Region 11	268,757	91.13	981,035	686,121	294,914
		Region 12	412,849	77.77	531,896	1,067	530,829
		Region 13	175,825	93.02	570,472	381,458	189,014

\*Excludes the ARMM.

*Source:* Data from Table 4 dated December 31, 2001, Management Information Service (MIS), Department of Agrarian Reform. Some data (rates and ranking) are from our own computations based on the MIS figures.

*Note:* In this table (and most other tables in this study) aggregated data for Mindanao—by region and province—do not normally tally, although the differences are minor. The most probable explanation is the inclusion/exclusion of Lanao del Sur in the Mindanao data tabulations. (This province was included in the Mindanao data until 1996, when data from this province were entered into the ARMM reports.) Other minor discrepancies in data may be the result of errors in the original DAR entries and rounding off of percentages. These discrepancies do not affect major insights and trends.

**Table 7. DAR's Land Acquisition and Distribution (LAD) in Mindanao (hectares): 1972/88–2001**

LAD Mode	National	Mindanao	Region 9	Region 10	Region 11	Region 12	Region 13
OLT	539,070	77,197	10,677	16,074	21,787	22,165	6,494
PAL>50	416,971	122,581	23,016	16,016	49,892	24,848	8,809
VOS	196,289	53,315	16,151	6,160	25,242	5,762	4,000
CA	161,219	35,332	6,580	6,151	19,242	47	3,312
VLT	59,463	29,934	285	3,705	5,408	19,039	1,497
PAL 24–50	102,771	34,633	5,382	9,289	13,608	2,463	3,891
VOS	45,754	14,796	1,533	1,861	8,180	984	2,238
CA	18,179	4,227	1,242	1,094	1,468	82	341
VLT	38,838	15,681	2,607	6,334	4,032	1,396	1,312
PAL 5–24	470,504	232,244	59,684	36,848	66,852	36,950	31,910
VOS	142,045	80,352	7,317	3,509	40,616	16,408	12,502
CA	26,608	13,722	11,115	824	1,280	32	471
VLT	301,851	138,171	41,252	32,515	24,956	20,511	18,937
PAL<5	50,725	25,000	2,895	3,664	13,940	4,501	0
VOS	15,857	13,703	86	179	10,665	2,773	0
VLT	34,867	11,296	2,808	3,485	3,275	1,728	0
GFI	157,910	58,430	10,403	9,419	18,490	12,709	7,409
KKK	741,348	242,746	64,041	24,270	32,220	26,470	95,745
Landed estate	69,383	0	0	0	0	0	0
Settlement	665,384	426,573	24,896	45,399	51,968	282,743	21,567
Total	3,214,066	1,219,404	200,993	160,979	268,757	412,849	175,825

*Source:* Column on Mindanao is based on data from Table 4, dated December 31, 2001, MIS, Department of Agrarian Reform.

*Note:* PAL = private agricultural land. GFI pertains to landholdings under the control of government-financial institutions. KKK or Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran landholdings are lands segregated for livelihood projects during the Marcos regime. Table excludes the ARMM.

examine official reports on land redistribution with a critical eye.

Closer inquiry into state claims about land reform accomplishment starts with CARP's original scope versus the reductions made over time. At the national level, 40 percent of the original DAR scope (1988) was eliminated between 1988 and 2001 (see Table 10). To date there has been

**Table 8. DENR's Annual Land Distribution in Mindanao (including ARMM) (hectares): 1987–2000**

Year	Public Alienable and Disposable (A&D) Lands								
	National	Mindanao	% of National	Region 9	Region 10	Region 11	Region 12	Region 13	ARMM
1987*	163,815	43,597	26.62	5,799	9,871	16,030	11,897		
1988	166,163	44,174	26.58	5,833	10,013	16,260	12,068		
1989	42,459	6,831	16.08	2,881	3,107	743	100		
1990	111,803	20,247	18.10	3,827	5,330	3,845	7,245		
1991	49,033	16,458	33.56	1,726	3,636	2,960	8,136		
1992	23,088	10,681	46.26	872	4,002	3,678	2,129		
1993	34,932	13,357	38.23	2,564	4,234	2,202	4,357		
1994	122,265	48,883	39.98	9,902	12,397	10,452	16,132		
1995	116,441	45,751	39.29	10,620	8,119	8,078	18,934		
1996	97,735	44,397	45.42	5,835	13,564	10,046	14,952		
1997	82,503	35,825	43.42	3,821	4,544	7,893	13,804	1,983	3,780
1998	82,096	41,091	50.05	4,109	6,199	6,554	12,831	7,797	3,601
1999	47,669	20,834	43.70	1,704	6,737	3,218	5,926	3,249	
2000	1,536	1,136	73.95	156	537		443		
Total	1,141,538	393,312	34.45	59,543**	91,909	92,496	128,511	13,472	7,381
Working scope	2,077,224	587,923	28.30	106,261	147,112	126,434	156,734	24,470	26,912
% accomplishment	55		66.89	56	62	73	84	55	27
Balance in 2000	935,686	194,611	20.79	46,718	55,203	33,938	28,223	10,998	19,531

Table 8 continued on next page.

no satisfactory explanation about this reduction (Borras 2003). But the reduction made in Mindanao, 50 percent, was even bigger (see Table 6). The biggest reductions occurred in Regions 10, 11, and 13. Nearly 9 out of every 10 hectares deducted from the scope came from the category of private land marked for compulsory acquisition—suggestive of the political, not merely administrative, nature of the basis for deducting these landholdings from the DAR scope. Region 12 (North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Lanao del Norte) shows no reduction at all, but a closer examination suggests that even in 1988 the private land marked for com-

Table 8. (continued)

Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM)									
Year	National	Mindanao	% of National	Region 9	Region 10	Region 11	Region 12	Region 13	ARMM
1987*	38,907	17,476	44.91	2,296	2,294	9,758	3,128		
1988	57,801	24,428	42.26	7,069	3,755	8,221	5,383		
1989	97,007	39,027	40.23	6,569	9,176	16,523	6,759		
1990	84,154	37,608	44.68	6,183	11,299	13,157	6,969		
1991	36,102	14,850	41.13	2,596	2,398	6,326	3,530		
1992	81,444	35,588	43.69	5,299	15,005	9,829	5,455		
1993	32,356	14,081	43.51	1,803	5,953	4,106	2,219		
1994	57,053	21,748	38.11	9,034	5,655	3,595	3,464		
1995	86,831	53,427	61.52	20,622	11,443	12,071	9,291		
1996	70,408	45,360	64.42	18,855	12,287	9,865	4,353		
1997	65,216	39,537	60.62	12,062	10,161	7,884	4,408	5,022	
1998	153,154	66,418	43.36	13,676		17,891	5,431	29,420	
1999	124,665	76,591	61.43	4,313	15,916	20,067	29,148	7,147	
2000	57,533	10,829	18.82	2,971	2,898			4,960	
Total	1,042,632	496,968	47.66	113,348	108,240	139,293	89,538	46,549	0
Working scope	1,284,088	507,243	39.50	183,805	108,550	132,083	64,238	14,822	3,745
% accomplishment	81		97.97	66	100	105	139	314	0
Balance in 2000	241,456	10,275		70,457	310	(7,210)	(25,300)	(31,727)	3,745

\*The year 1987 started in July.

\*\*If the entries are added for Region 9, the correct summary is 59,493.

Source: Data for the Mindanao column are from our own computation, including some percentage summaries. The rest of the data in the table are from the DENR's summary report: *Land Distribution Summary, 1987–2000*, CARP Secretariat, DENR, Quezon City, June 2001.

pulsory acquisition was already pegged at a quantity too marginal to merit any further reduction. While indeed Region 12 is largely a settlement region, the registered private land marked for compulsory acquisition was still unbelievably low. Interestingly, the ARMM-DAR does not report any reduction in scope. Therefore we must look at the reported land redistribution against the background of the original DAR scope. Thus the reported redistribution output of the DAR at 1.2 million hectares by the

**Table 9. ARMM-DAR Cumulative Land Distribution (hectares)**

Land Type by Province	Working Scope	Accomplishment by December 2001	Balance	Percentage of Accomplishment
<i>Rice and corn (OLT)</i>				
Sulu				
Maguindanao	35,984	22,288	13,696	62
Tawi-Tawi				
Lanao del Sur	1,338		1,338	0
Total	37,322	22,288	15,034	60
<i>Settlement and landed estates</i>				
Sulu	3,170	1,207	1,963	38
Maguindanao	19,000	16,026	2,974	84
Tawi-Tawi	10,822	10,416	406	96
Lanao del Sur	56,124	50,343	5,781	90
Total	89,116	77,992	11,124	88
<i>PAL &gt; 50 ha</i>				
Sulu	6,298	3,271	3,027	52
Maguindanao	4,828	515	4,313	11
Tawi-Tawi	1,135	554	581	49
Lanao del Sur	41,555	20,920	20,635	50
Total	53,816	25,260	28,556	47
<i>PAL 24–50 ha</i>				
Sulu	2,698	439	2,259	16
Maguindanao	2,776	88	2,688	3
Tawi-Tawi	2,164	497	1,667	23
Lanao del Sur	1,927	399	1,528	21
Total	9,565	1,423	8,142	15
<i>PAL 5–24 ha</i>				
Sulu	3,225	522	2,703	16
Maguindanao	19,315	6,998	12,317	36
Tawi-Tawi	32,359	1,268	31,091	4
Lanao del Sur	3,986	900	3,086	23
Total	58,885	9,688	49,197	16
<i>PAL &lt; 5 ha</i>				
Sulu				
Maguindanao				
Tawi-Tawi				
Lanao del Sur	254	71	183	28
Total	254	71	183	28
<i>Summary</i>				
Sulu	16,937	5,482	11,455	32
Maguindanao	95,115	48,340	46,775	51
Tawi-Tawi	50,849	14,564	36,285	29
Lanao del Sur	126,398	90,337	36,061	71
Total	289,299	158,723	130,576	55

Source: ARMM Land Acquisition and Distribution Report, February 2002, Cotabato City.

**Table 10. Regional Perspective of DAR Scope Reductions in Mindanao**

Region	Quantity (ha)	% of Original Scope (region)	% of Total Reduction (nation)	% of PAL>50 vs. Natl. Reduct.	% of PAL 24-50 vs. Natl. Reduct.	% of PAL 5-24 vs. Natl. Reduct.	% of PAL<5 vs. Natl. Reduct.	% of CA vs. Natl. Reduct.	% of VOS vs. Natl. Reduct.	% of VLT vs. Natl. Reduct.	% of GFI vs. Natl. Reduct.
National	2,656,328	40.14	100.00	14.34	11.29	57.78	0.63	78.66	2.44	2.94	1.08
Region 9	68,713	25.15	2.58	0.11	0.12	2.22	0.00	2.43	0.02	0.00	0.03
Region 10	246,137	58.68	9.26	1.30	0.82	5.30	0.01	7.15	0.05	0.24	0.07
Region 11	686,121	69.93	25.82	1.99	2.14	17.02	0.00	20.92	0.13	0.11	0.04
Region 12	1,067	0.20	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03
Region 13	381,458	66.86	14.36	1.04	1.48	8.98	0.00	11.28	0.14	0.08	0.00

Source: DAR (2001).

Note: The levels of political administration in the Philippines flow as follows: nation, region, province, municipality, and *barangay* (or village). There are fifteen regions in the country, including the ARMM. The ARMM is not included in Tables 6 and 7, as it is not in most DAR official records because it is popularly believed within the DAR that ARMM data are highly unreliable.

end of 2001 is in fact 43 percent of the original scope—far from the current government claim of an 88 percent accomplishment rate.

In essence, however, the 43 percent accomplishment rate in Mindanao is even lower because many of the landholdings reported as redistributed were allotted through land acquisition and distribution schemes that are most likely devoid of any redistributive element, namely, the voluntary land transfer (VLT) scheme and VOS. The VLT scheme is supposed to be a direct landlord/peasant arrangement of land transfer. In reality, faked land transfers were carried out via this scheme. The internal audit of DAR has systematically documented such practices across the country (PARC 1994; 1995; 1996; 1997; 1998). Thus VLT-based reports are considered spurious and must not be counted as part of the accomplishment report. (See also Borrás, forthcoming, for details.) In fact, an immediate investigation of these cases must be made. By the end of 2001, a total of 195,082 hectares of land was reported under such a scheme. This is 16 percent of the total accomplishment in Mindanao for private and public lands combined—and 36 percent of the total reported for private lands. In Lanao del Sur, 78 percent of all its "transfers" of private land were made through VLT.

Moreover, the voluntary offer-to-sell scheme had been abused in CARP's implementation, as exemplified by the infamous 1989 Garchitorena land scam in Bicol where a marginal piece of land was sold

to the DAR for a price several times higher than its real value (Putzel 1992). Yet the 1989 scam is a trivial case compared to the grand scale of VOS abuse in Mindanao—particularly in the ARMM, where almost all of the private lands transacted through CARP were handled via VOS through which landlords were supposed to voluntarily sell their lands to the government for redistribution. (The ARMM-DAR, however, refused to follow the accomplishment report format of the national DAR, where land acquisition modes must be specified; thus in the ARMM-DAR report such specifics are not reported—see Table 9.) But in the ARMM not only was overpricing a problem, but fictitious lands were sold to the ARMM-DAR. Indeed the abuses became so egregious that the central DAR in 1999 ordered an investigation. When all land titles processed through VOS were revalidated at the Central Bank of the Philippines in Manila, it was discovered that eight out of every ten titles were fake.<sup>20</sup>

***Yet the 1989 scam  
is a trivial case com-  
pared to the grand scale  
of VOS abuse***

A DAR official based in Cotabato City explained that a fake land title could be bought for as little as P5,000 in any town market in the ARMM. These fake titles were then used for VOS. According to the DAR official, armed syndicates operated the VOS scam whereby armed escorts would accompany "landlords" to DAR offices to offer these "land titles" for VOS. The CARP implementation was halted toward the end of 1999 due to this crisis, but an estimated P2 billion had already been disbursed to the "landlords who volunteered their lands" and tremendous tension had been created because the armed warlords wanted VOS to continue. After the VOS scam was exposed in the ARMM, it was reported to have spilled over to the nearby provinces of Lanao del Norte, Sultan Kudarat, and North Cotabato.<sup>21</sup>

Thus if we eliminate most of the VOS reports as spurious, there is not much left to the government's land redistribution report from the ARMM except for the huge accomplishments reported in settlement areas. But the settlement program, mainly in Region 12, is not problem-free. Big parcels of settlement areas concentrated in North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat have seen a profound transformation in their political economy. Land rights have been passed on to various parties. Tenancy relations have existed. Moreover, many of these settlements seem to be part of the ancestral domain claims of Lumads and Muslims. Based on an extensive preliminary field investigation,<sup>22</sup> it appears that the DAR's approach is basically

to process an entire chunk of settlement area, for example, 50,000 hectares. In this way the "land redistribution" process is completed quickly and reported as an accomplishment immediately. The "parcelization" method, according to DAR officials, simply formalizes the existing claims for *pwesto* (right of occupancy) within the settlement area. Although careful empirical investigation is needed, it is most likely that the informal claims of private landlords and other nonfarming nonpoor households over many of these lands have been formalized through CARP. Landlords can easily appoint family members as CARP beneficiaries. This also means that CARP has inadvertently institutionalized the landlessness of tens of thousands of poor peasants who stayed in these settlements as (informal) tenants to these elites. Many of these poor peasants were in fact Muslims and Lumads; many of these settlement areas are in the hotspots of Moro and communist rebellion.

Furthermore, it appears that the settlement areas were used by the DAR to evade the expropriation of private lands. In Region 12, for example, from 1988 to 2001 the total quantity of land placed under compulsory acquisition was ridiculously low—161 hectares—while the huge quantity of the region's output in settlement boosted not only its total accomplishment but even the national CARP outcome. (Sultan Kudarat and Lanao del Norte posted zero output in this category in 2001.) Finally, as hinted in the settlement areas, the choice of beneficiaries made through the CARP process had often been made with a bias against the landless poor peasants (the poorest of the poor) and ethnic minorities. This can be seen in a number of ways.

The principle of choosing those who are actually occupying or controlling the land favors the elite (or at least the nonpoor), as suggested by the many cases in settlement areas. This inherent weakness by CARP could have been adjusted with proper consideration within the bureaucracy. Wittingly or unwittingly, however, the bureaucrats failed to see that their actions could cause far-reaching dispossession of landless peasants. In fact, some DAR officials tried to persuade local chieftains of Lumad groups in Sultan Kudarat to use the legal instruments provided by CARP instead because that would allow them to parcelize and privatize their ancestral domain (and perhaps sell it later in the commercial market) as compared to the constraints imposed by Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADC).<sup>23</sup> Violence in these settlement areas located in North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, South Cotabato, Lanao del Sur, and Lanao del

Norte are likely to continue or even escalate—fueled largely by the recent dispossession of lands partly institutionalized by CARP's implementation.

Moreover, the CARP principle of prioritizing the actual farmworkers on the plantation as the primary CARP beneficiaries is, arguably, both antipoor and anti-Muslim in many settings. For example, this principle has prevented thousands of landless poor Muslims in Basilan and Zamboanga from benefiting from the land distribution of plantations (such as rubber) that were voluntarily offered (VOS) for CARP because only the actual farmworkers (usually Christian) were prioritized as beneficiaries. In turn, these cooperatives of Christian workers proved to be elitist and exclusionary. Under CARP on commercial plantations, lands awarded to farmworkers can be 1 or 2 hectares for every beneficiary; the maximum award is 3 hectares. Instead of distributing 1 or 2 hectares of land on the reformed plantations, the plantation workers, with prodding from the government, automatically opted to get the maximum award of 3 hectares. This process has a priori excluded many seasonal farmworkers and other poor households employed on these plantations—many of whom are Muslims (especially on rubber plantations)—although the same process has allowed nonpoor households (such as former plantation managers) to become beneficiaries as well. And these plantations are in fact in areas that are part of the ancestral domain of the Muslims and Lumads. Arguably, many landless Muslims and Lumads could have been absorbed in the CARP process if DAR officials had been more politically conscious of the history of these landholdings (see also Quitarano 1999).

The CARP principle of favoring only the actual farmers as beneficiaries excluded thousands of farmworkers who were earlier retrenched by big plantation owners in their drive to get rid of militant union members and claimants. When CARP was implemented on many of the deferred commercial plantations, most of the actual farmworkers belonged to company unions, as on the plantations owned and controlled by the Floirendos, Ayalas, and Lorenzos. (See Borrás and Quiambao 1998; Franco 1998, 1999, forthcoming; Franco and Acosta 1999; Feranil 2001.)

#### *Ancestral Domain Claims*

Before the promulgation of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) in 1995, the main legal instrument to facilitate ancestral domain claims was the DENR's Administrative Order 2 (series of 1993): "It prescribes the rules and regulations for the identification, delineation, and recognition of ancestral

land and domain claims. The Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADC) and the Certificate of Ancestral Lands Claims (CALC) were the tenure instruments issued to the [indigenous peoples]" (Bello et al. 1998: viii; see also Hirtz 2003). Later this order was supplanted by the IPRA's guidelines under the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). By 1998, a total of 538,123 hectares of land in Mindanao had been confirmed as ancestral domain through the issuance of CADCs, accounting for one-third of the total land areas so confirmed. (see Table 11).

**Table 11. Summary of Ancestral Domain Claims in Mindanao: 1998**

Region	No. of CADCs	Indigenous Groups	Total Land (ha)
9	9	Samal, Subanen, Yakan, Kalibugan	52,742
10	9	Matigsalog-Manobo, Higa-onon, Bukidnon-Umayamnon, Subanen, Manobo-Higa-onon	129,308
11	13	T'Boli, Ubo, B'laan, Ata-Manobo, Tagacaolo, Kalagan, Obo-Manobo, Mandaya, Langilan-Ata Manobo	302,384
12	15	Manobo, Manobo-Aromanon, T'Boli, Tiruray, B'laan	31,305
13	3	Pukuan-Manobo, Higa-onon, Mamanua, Manobo	22,384
Total	49		538,123

*Source:* Bello et al. (1998: app.).

It is quite obvious, however, that most of the ancestral domain claims involved non-Muslim indigenous communities. Thus while CARP has not gained much ground in Muslim communities, it also appears that Muslims have not particularly used the instruments provided by Administrative Order 2 (and later IPRA) to secure their ancestral domain

claims. In fact, multiethnic conflicts involving Muslims and non-Muslims over ancestral domain claims have occurred, as in Columbio, Sultan Kudarat.<sup>24</sup> It is possible that landless Muslims are caught in a multiple squeeze: CARP has been encroaching onto their ancestral lands; non-Muslim indigenous communities have been claiming part of the Muslim ancestral lands through CADCs; some Muslim elites may have appropriated their land for personal private use; and, finally, other non-Muslim elites, domestic and transnational, have appropriated portions of the Muslim ancestral domain.

But securing CADCs for ancestral domain claims does not automatically guarantee effective control of the indigenous communities. In the same year that IPRA was promulgated, the Mining Act of 1995 was also passed into law. Since then this measure has conflicted with IPRA—resulting in the displacement or threat of displacement of many indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands despite the formalities of CADCs. (See Table 12.)

### Lessons

There are three fundamental problems whose resolution is most likely to contribute to long-term peace and development in the southern Philippines: the persistent lack of access to productive resources by the poor; the continuing problem of mass poverty and social exclusion; and the proliferation of entrepreneurs in violence. The central argument put forward here is that the eradication of mass poverty, social exclusion, and landlessness of poor Muslim households is most likely to contribute to the attainment of peace and development in the southern Philippines. But this is no longer a contentious policy issue. The central state has already instituted land policies and rural development strategies to address such concerns. The truly contentious issue is the character of these policies. As we have seen, current policies fail to address the problems related to poverty, social exclusion, violence, and landlessness. If peace and development are to be achieved in the near future, the state must recast its approach to poverty and land. In this regard, we offer some preliminary thoughts.

*It is possible that landless Muslims are caught in a multiple squeeze*

*If peace and development are to be achieved in the near future, the state must recast its approach*

**Table 12. Indigenous Communities in Mindanao Affected by Mining and Mega Projects: 1998**

Mining Company	Location	Impact
<i>Region 9</i>		
Philex Gold	Sibutad, Zamboanga del Norte	Affects 3,515 ha
TVI Resource Dev.	Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte	Subanen displacement
<i>Region 10*</i>		
<i>Region 11</i>		
Western Mining Co.	Davao del Sur	B'laan displacement
<i>Region 12</i>		
Redmount Resources	Cotabato	Manobo displacement
Lumintao Mining	Cotabato	Manobo-Aromanon displacement
Palimbang Mining	Cotabato	T'Boli displacement
FADICASU Mining	Cotabato	Tiruray displacement
Hillcrest, Inc.	Cotabato	B'laan displacement
Western Mining Co.	Cotabato	B'laan displacement

\*No large-scale mining reported.

Source: Bello et al. (1998: app.).

First, we reject the idea that CARP is a program that can help in the democratic, political, and historically correct resolution of the land questions in the southern Philippines. While CARP has some potential in resolving various forms of landlessness, it delivers at best mixed results. But for the landless Moro and Lumad poor in the southern Philippines, CARP is ahistorical. In fact, under certain circumstances it perpetuates a historical injustice. CARP redistributes land to those who are working the land—even though there are communities with prior ancestral domain claims whether or not they are actually occupying or working these landholdings. Furthermore, official records and statistics with regard to landownership and land reform accomplishment, especially in the southern Philippines, are problematic in terms of reliability. There is reason to suspect that substantial elite landholdings in the region are hidden from view. The weakness of local institutions such as regional DAR and DENR offices, as well

as their continued inability to understand the complexity and actual extent of the problems, have frustrated the quest for peace and development in the region. Such ineptitude has in fact been exploited to perpetrate scams such as faking land titles or selling marginal lands to DAR at many times their actual value. A serious review of CARP official reports is an important step forward and may lead to greater clarity, but it will still fall short of looking at the historical roots of land dispossession in Mindanao.

Second, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act may hold more promise but this program needs to be carefully and vigorously implemented. IPRA is often seen as a progressive state measure to recognize the rights of indigenous peoples over ancestral lands. But the challenges to its constitutionality are not over, and there appears to be foot-dragging on the part of weak state institutions in enforcing its provisions on ancestral domain claims. The September 2001 Supreme Court resolution on the *Cruz vs. NCIP* case came on a hung jury with unresolved contending opinions and hence did not establish any doctrine of law and will not prevent the filing of similar cases in the future.<sup>25</sup> Thus IPRA has not become the instrument it was intended to be in addressing landlessness.

And third, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP)-MILF peace negotiations can become a forum where the inherent limitations of CARP and foot-dragging on IPRA implementation can be hammered out so that better instruments may be developed. But this depends on both sides taking decisive steps on the issue. On the part of government, its negotiating panel will be subject to pressure from the various vested interests across Mindanao who want the status quo maintained and whose political clout is strengthening as a result of whipping up anti-Moro sentiment among the settlers. More than ever, central government leadership is needed to make the peace negotiations a venue for a just political settlement. On the part of the Moros, particularly the MILF, a clear program on the land question is needed. It should be noted that neither the MNLF nor the MILF has so far specified a clear program of action to break the concentration of wealth and ownership of resources in the claimed Moro land—hence the failure of the Bangsamoro revolution to deliver socioeconomic equity and justice to its constituency. The land issue was never an item on the agenda of the MNLF's negotiation with government. Agrarian reform and ancestral domain claims are on the MILF agenda, but it remains unclear how the MILF leadership will approach these issues (see Salamat 2001). Influencing the MILF agenda to include

the intertwined policy issues of ancestral domain-cum-land redistribution is therefore important. In the absence of clear positions, it has been easy for government since the time of Marcos to divide the Moro movement by treating land, not as a strategic issue on which a comprehensive settlement should be agreed, but as a trophy to be awarded to rebel leaders who can be lured away from the fighting.

More than ever, efforts must be renewed to make peace negotiation—rather than a military solution—the chief instrument for attaining a settlement in Mindanao. It should be noted that the present military leadership increasingly pursued a military solution in both the Estrada and Macapagal administrations. The military is still known as the chief institution that has perpetrated the historical injustices on the Muslims. It has even pursued collaboration with American troops for joint combat roles—a move that some legislators have labeled as treasonous and that has revived memories of the brutal American occupation of Jolo Island in 1906 and 1913.<sup>26</sup>

The substantive phase of the peace negotiations can become a forum for an official deliberation on the problems of landlessness in Mindanao. Given CARP's ahistorical limitations, for example, discussions can be

***Time is not on the side  
of the Muslims and  
Lumads.***

started on how to approach the resolution of superior versus inferior claims to land. Time is not on the side of the Muslims and Lumads. The more land that is redistributed according to the narrow limits of CARP, the harder it will be to settle the historical cases of dispossession. The

peace negotiations can also be a source of proposed legislation to attain a more realistic and equitable resolution of the land issue.

These three steps are concerned with the development of a legal-political framework involving the state and Moro leaders in resolving the land question.<sup>27</sup> But this will not be enough. The difficult part is the development of cooperative action and community effort on the ground to complement and consolidate agreements made at the negotiating table and in national legislation. The desire for a political settlement among grassroots communities—Moro, Lumad, and Christian—must be nurtured and developed, and this is where the truly complex task begins. Moreover, political and legal tensions regarding overlaps between CARP and IPRA coverage must be further examined. Meanwhile, land redistribution is a necessary but not sufficient requirement to eradicate rural poverty and

social exclusion. Thus the state must continue to carry out efficient support services—especially in areas where CARP and IPRA have been implemented successfully.

As shown in CARP's land redistribution in the Philippines, successful transfers that benefit the landless poor have required an active alliance between reformist state actors launching initiatives from above and autonomous rural social movements and civil society organizations consolidating collective action and launching initiatives from below. (See Borras 1999, 2001.) As state reformist and former DAR secretary Ernesto Garilao explained: "State reforms are rarely won by state reformists alone. They are won when the alliance between autonomous peasant organizations and state reformists is much stronger than whatever coalition of the anti-reformists within and outside government can mount" (Borras 1999: xix–xxi). This *bibingka* (sandwich) strategy is all the more relevant in the complicated setting of the southern Philippines.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, such a strategy does not emerge in an instant. It evolves through sustained, dynamic state/society interactions. It demands the widespread building of autonomous social movements, and Muslim Mindanao has a long way to go in this task. The strategy also requires the massive presence of state reformists, which again remains a herculean challenge in most of Muslim Mindanao. Nevertheless, social movement building and state reformism can start in small, pragmatic, and concrete policies and actions.

The current situation does not bode well for reinvigorated peace building from below. In the last two local elections, openly anti-Moro politicians have won seats at the expense of those who favor a comprehensive political settlement. For example, the big landholding families have consolidated their control of various political jurisdictions: the Lobregat-Lorenzo family in Zamboanga; the Floirendos-Del Rosarios in Davao; the Chiongbians and Antoninos in South Cotabato and Sarangani; the Sarmientos in the Compostela Valley. The politics of these consolidating political families have been increasingly anti-Muslim. Even politicians known for progressive leanings like former House deputy speaker and now South Cotabato governor Daisy Avance-Fuentes use racist anti-Muslim rhetoric (she refers to Muslims as "the killers of our relatives") to consolidate political backing. These local political leaders and their allies in Congress have maneuvered to make the transition bodies created in the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF practically useless through budget cuts and limits imposed on the power of the president in taking extraor-

dinary measures for peace building (Gutierrez 1999: 66–73).

In contrast, local politicians known to favor a more comprehensive settlement with the Moros have lost local support from an increasingly anti-Muslim electorate. This trend started when the former mayor of General Santos City, Rosalita Nunez, lost to Adelbert Antonino in 1998. The Antoninos made their wealth from logging. Adelbert's wife Lualhati, a politician herself, was one of the "Tres Marias"—three women representatives who became known for their opposition to the 1996 peace agreement.

Furthermore, the MNLF (or what remains of it) has had to contend with growing political isolation and in-fighting. Rather than try to create a wide constituency of support for the 1996 peace agreement, the MNLF chose to build an exclusive partnership with Lakas-NUCD, the political party of Presidents Ramos and Macapagal-Arroyo. As a result, they have had trouble winning political seats in places where they have been challenged effectively by Muslim ex-rebels or traditional elites. As a result of this fragmentation and isolation of the Moro leadership, Manila has taken a more militaristic posture. Both Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ordered what have become the biggest military offensives against the Moro rebels since the 1970s.

Even local Catholic churches, particularly in settler areas, have become more virulently anti-Muslim. Although a number of church leaders are prominently involved in grassroots and national peace building these leaders belong mostly to the orders—the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (who run schools in Cotabato and Sulu) and the Claretians (active in Zamboanga and Basilan). Diocesan priests, who themselves are mostly children of settlers, are known for their anti-Muslim rhetoric. In South Cotabato, for instance, rumors that a peace agreement will result in the imposition of Islam in schools and the banning of pork were attributed to priests running parishes in the region. On the other side is the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. The leadership core of Abu Sayyaf made their debut with attacks on Christian targets and became known for threatening Christians. They have beheaded at least one priest in Basilan.

The policy propositions put forward here are broad outlines of possible options based on fundamental principles explained earlier. Thus the actual form of state policies may vary as long as the general principles we underscore are maintained. Moreover, the propositions we offer do not necessarily contradict other interpretations of the conflict in the southern Philippines. Whether coming from the strictly economic reform perspec-

tive, the political-constitutional reform (federalist) framework, or, most radically, secession and the creation of a new Moro state, the fundamental issues raised here will remain relevant.

In closing: peace building from below is necessary if only to ensure that agreements settled at the negotiating table can be properly implemented. There is no easy solution. Policies that focus only on strengthening state authority may be important but insufficient; policies that focus only on building civil society are crucial but incomplete. An interactive state/society institutional policy framework may be more useful. The challenge is to attain a redistribution of wealth and power through land redistribution and agrarian reform, alongside peace building, to be generated from below as well as above.



# Endnotes

---

1. For a scholarly analysis of past initiatives on the peace process, as well as the prospects of peace negotiations, refer to Santos (2001).
2. It is often said that ethnicity is the main difference between the Tausog-dominated MNLF and the Maguindanao-dominated MILF. While this distinction is important, both groups have sought to downplay ethnicity while emphasizing other symbols of pan-Moro unity. The MNLF's symbols are those of a secular Moro nationalism; the MILF has built its identity around Islam, and even its organization is based on religious structures. For more on this comparison see Gutierrez (2000c).
3. For a scholarly analysis of the conflict in the southern Philippines refer to McKenna (1998).
4. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, September 10, 2003.
5. For more details on the political-economic role of entrepreneurs in violence see the case study of Norberto Manero Jr. in Gutierrez (2003).
6. For a concise discussion about this twin foundation of state power refer to Fox (1993: chap. 2). In the context of the Philippines and Mindanao see the excellent analysis by Abinales (2000).
7. Based on personal discussions with middle-class settlers in the Davao-Cotabato-Bukidnon areas.
8. Based on various interviews with three different settler groups in Davao in 2001 and 2002 who were ejected from DAPECOL in the 1960s and 1970s. See Borrás, Quiambao, and Gatche (1999).
9. Refer also to Angeles (1999) for a nuanced analysis of the political-economic resilience of certain Mindanao agrarian elites.
10. See also Cotabato province's official website.

11. The Regalian doctrine frames the legal claim that all natural resources belonged to the State. For a scholarly analysis of the land monopoly and the development of capitalism in Mindanao's agriculture, refer to Hawes (1987), Tadem (1992), Tadem et al. (1984), and Ofreneo (1980).
12. The SZOPAD was created in 1996 by a proclamation of President Fidel V. Ramos. It refers to those territories originally covered by the 1976 Tripoli Agreement, which are the provinces presented in Table 1.
13. Based on fieldwork interviews in Sulu by Gutierrez in 1994 and 1997. The officials requested anonymity.
14. Based on the same field interviews in 1994 by Gutierrez.
15. Manero would gain national infamy seven years later for leading the gang that shot the Italian priest Fr. Tullio Tavali and then took pieces of his brain.
16. The story goes that Tan's son would occasionally ask Andang to dance like the American pop star Michael Jackson, and everybody would get a laugh as Andang obliged. Tan's mother thought Andang danced like a robot, hence the nickname.
17. A more extensive discussion is presented in Gutierrez (2003).
18. See the relevant case studies by Gaspar (2000), Fianza (1999), and TRICOM (1998).
19. It is highly possible that many of the Muslim landed elites did not feel obliged to participate in land programs instigated by a central state that most of them were waging war against. (This point was raised by Jennifer Franco, who did extensive field research in North Cotabato. Thanks to her.)
20. Interviews with DAR Regional Director Mambuay and DAR Secretary Horacio Morales Jr., Cotabato City and Quezon City, respectively, in early 2002.
21. Various interviews with top DAR officials who requested anonymity in 2001–2002 in Cotabato City, Lanao del Norte, Sultan Kudarat, and North Cotabato.
22. Interviews conducted in 2000–2002 in North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat.
23. Interviews with NGO activists and church-related organizations assisting a group of Lumads in Sultan Kudarat to secure their CADC, March 2002, Kidapawan City/Tacurong City.
24. Interview with Fr. Peter Geremia, PIME, Kidapawan, March 2002.
25. Former Supreme Court Justice Isagani Cruz and Cesar Europa questioned the constitutionality of IPRA because it is alleged to be violating the Regalian doctrine that all natural resources and public lands belong to the state. For details see [www.lrcksk.org/articles/survive.htm](http://www.lrcksk.org/articles/survive.htm). See also Hirtz (2003).
26. See [www.bangsamoro.org](http://www.bangsamoro.org) for details.
27. In this regard, Houtzager and Franco (2003) offer preliminary but very relevant perspectives.
28. *Bibingka* is a traditional rice cake that is baked in a clay oven with smoldering embers above and below the rice patty (see Borrás 1999). The term "sandwich strategy" was coined by Jonathan Fox (1993) in the context of rural Mexico.

# Bibliography

---

- Abinales, Patricio. 2000. *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation-State*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Angeles, Leonora. 1999. "The Political Dimension in the Agrarian Question: Strategies of Resilience and Political Entrepreneurship of Agrarian Elite Families in a Philippine Province." *Rural Sociology* 64(4): 667–92.
- Bello, Rolando, et al. 1998. *Study on the Impact of CARP on the Preservation of Ancestral Lands and Welfare of Indigenous Communities*. Laguna: College of Economics and Management, University of the Philippines at Los Baños/UNDP.
- Borras, Saturnino Jr. 1999. *The Bibingka Strategy in Land Reform Implementation: Autonomous Peasant Movements and State Reformists in the Philippines*. Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "State-Society Relations in Land Reform Implementation in the Philippines." *Development and Change* 32(3): 545–75.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002. "Problems and Prospects of Redistributive Land Reform in Mindanao, 1972/1988–2001." *Mindanao Focus Journal* 1: 1–45. Davao: AFRIM.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. "Inclusion-Exclusion in Public Policies and Policy Analyses: The Case of Philippine Land Reform, 1972–2002." *Journal of International Development* 15(8): 1049–65.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Forthcoming. "Can Redistributive Reform Be Achieved via Market-Based Land Transfer Schemes? Lessons and Evidence from the Philippines." *Journal of Development Studies*.
- Borras, Saturnino Jr., and Manuel Quiambao. 1998. "The Difficult Challenge of Agrarian Reform, Rural Development, and Democratization in Banana Plantations." *Conjuncture* 10(4): 8–10. Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy. (See also [www.ipd.ph](http://www.ipd.ph).)

- Borrás, Saturnino Jr., Manuel Quiambao, and Danilo Gatche. 1999. "The Difficult Challenge of Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in Commercial Plantations." Quezon City: FAO-SARC/TSARRD Program; Office of the Secretary, DAR; Project Development Institute (PDI).
- Coronel, Sheila. 1993. "Missionaries and Cannibals." In *Coups, Cults, and Cannibals*. Pasig: Anvil Publishing. Originally published in *Philippine Panorama*, June 16 and 23, 1985.
- Cotabato Province. 2003. "History." Accessed from the province's official website at [www.cotabatoprov.gov.ph/history.htm](http://www.cotabatoprov.gov.ph/history.htm).
- Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). 2000. "Land Acquisition and Distribution Status (Table 4) as of September 30, 2000." Quezon City: Management Information Service (MIS), Department of Agrarian Reform. Photocopy version.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "Land Acquisition and Distribution Status (Table 4) as of December 31, 2001." Quezon City: Management Information Service (MIS), Department of Agrarian Reform. Photocopy version.
- David, Randolph, Temario Rivera, Patricio Abinales, and Oliver Teves. 1983. "Transnational Corporations and the Philippine Banana Export Industry." In *Political Economy of Philippine Commodities*. Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, University of the Philippines.
- de Janvry, Alain. 1981. *The Agrarian Question and Reformism in Latin America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- de la Rosa, Romulo. 1994. *CAP and the European Market for Coconut Oil and Copra Meal*. Davao: AFRIM.
- de Soto, Hernando. 2000. *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*. New York: Basic Books.
- Feranil, Salvador. 2001. "The Politics of Agrarian Reform in Philippine Commercial Banana Plantations: The Case of Hijo Plantation in Davao." Unpublished MA thesis, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague.
- Fianza, Myrthena. 1999. "Conflicting Land Use and Ownership Patterns and the 'Moro Problem' in Southern Philippines." In M. Coronel Ferrer, ed., *Sama-sama: Facets of Ethnic Relations in South East Asia*. Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, University of the Philippines.
- Fox, Jonathan. 1993. *The Politics of Food in Mexico: State Power and Social Mobilization*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Franco, Jennifer. 1998. *Problems-Needs Assessment of Agrarian Reform Communities (ARC) Organizations in the Least Developed ARCs*. Quezon City: FAO-SARC/TSARRD Program.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. "Post-CARP Banana Split Turns Deadly: What Went Wrong at Hijo Plantation." *Conjuncture* 11(3). Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. *Elections and Democratization in the Philippines*. London: Routledge; Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Forthcoming. "Making Agrarian Law Right: Movement Innovations in the Political-Legal Struggle to Claim Land Rights in the Philippines." Law, Development, and Democracy Working Paper Series, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Brighton, Sussex.

- Franco, Jennifer, and Norman Acosta. 1999. "The Hijo Banana War: Part Two, Conclusion." *Conjuncture* 11(5). Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy.
- Garilao, Ernesto. 1999. "Foreword." In S. Borras Jr., *The Bibingka Strategy in Land Reform Implementation*. Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy.
- Gaspar, Karl. 2000. *The Lumad's Struggle in the Face of Globalization*. Davao: AFRIM.
- Gowing, Peter Gordon. 1979. *Muslim Filipinos: Heritage and Horizon*. Quezon City: New Day.
- Griffin, Keith, Azizur Rahman Khan, and Amy Ickowitz. 2002. "Poverty and Distribution of Land." *Journal of Agrarian Change* 2(3): 279–330.
- Gutierrez, Eric. 1994. *The Ties That Bind: A Guide to Family, Business, and Other Interests in the Ninth House of Representatives*. Quezon City: Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism and Institute for Popular Democracy.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. "In the Battlefields of the Warlord." In *Boss: Five Case Studies of Local Politics in the Philippines*. Quezon City: Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism and Institute for Popular Democracy.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. "The Politics of Transition." *Accord: An International Review of Peace Initiatives* 6 (London).
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000a. "New Faces of Violence in Muslim Mindanao." In *Rebels, Warlords, and Ulama: A Reader in Muslim Separatism and the War in Southern Philippines*. Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000b. "The Unfinished Jihad." In *Rebels, Warlords, and Ulama: A Reader in Muslim Separatism and the War in Southern Philippines*. Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000c. "Re-imagining the Bangsa-Moro." In *Rebels, Warlords, and Ulama: A Reader in Muslim Separatism and the War in Southern Philippines*. Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. "From Ilaga to Abu Sayyaf: New Entrepreneurs in Violence and Their Impact on Local Politics in Mindanao." *Philippine Political Science Journal* 24(47) (October).
- Hawes, Gary. 1987. *The Philippine State and the Marcos Regime: The Politics of Export*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Hayami, Yujiro, Ma. Agnes R. Quisumbing, and Lourdes S. Adriano. 1990. *Toward an Alternative Land Reform Paradigm: A Philippine Perspective*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Herring, Ronald. 1983. *Land to the Tiller*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1990. "Explaining Anomalies in Agrarian Reform: Lessons from South India." In R. Prosterman, M. Temple, and T. Hanstad, eds., *Agrarian Reform and Grassroots Development: Ten Case Studies*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Hirtz, Frank. 2003. "It Takes Modern Means to Be Traditional: On Recognizing Indigenous Cultural Communities in the Philippines." *Development and Change* 34(5): 887–917.

- Houtzager, Peter, and Jennifer Franco. 2003. "When the Poor Make Law: Comparisons Across Brazil and the Philippines." Research note, Law, Democracy, and Development Program of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Brighton, Sussex.
- Kay, Cristóbal. 1998. "Latin America's Agrarian Reform: Lights and Shadows." *Land Reform, Land Settlements, and Cooperatives* 2: 9–31.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "Reflections on Rural Violence in Latin America." *Third World Quarterly* 22(5): 741–75.
- Lehmann, David. 1974. "Introduction." In D. Lehmann, ed., *Peasants, Landlords, and Governments: Agrarian Reform in the Third World*. New York: Holmes & Meier.
- Lichauro, Luis. 1956. "Land Settlement in the Philippines." In K. Parsons, R. Penn, and P. Raup, eds., *Land Tenure*. Proceedings of the International Conference on Land Tenure and Related Problems in World Agriculture held at Madison, Wisconsin, 1951. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Manapat, Ricardo. 1991. *Some Are Smarter Than Others*. New York: Alethia.
- McKenna, Thomas. 1998. *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Muslim, Macapado A., and Rufa Cagoco-Guiam. 1999. "Mindanao: Land of Promise." *Accord: An International Review of Peace Initiatives* 6 (London).
- Ofreneo, Rene. 1980. *Capitalism in Philippine Agriculture*. Quezon City: Foundation for Nationalist Studies.
- Parreno, Earl. 2003. *Boss Danding*. Quezon City: Earl Parreno/First Quarter Storm Foundation.
- Philippine Daily Inquirer*. 2003. "Land, Administrative Control Issues Dog Talks with MILF." September 10.
- Pons-Vignon, Nicolas, and Henri-Bernard Solignac Lecomte. 2004. "Land, Violent Conflict, and Development." *OECD Development Center Working Paper* 233.
- Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC). 1994. *CARP Audit Report Covering the Years 1992–1993*. Quezon City: Presidential Agrarian Reform Council-Audit Management and Investigation Committee (PARC-AMIC). Photocopy version.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. *CARP Audit Report Covering the Year 1994*. Quezon City: Presidential Agrarian Reform Council-Audit Management and Investigation Committee (PARC-AMIC). Photocopy version.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1996. *CARP Audit Report Covering the Year 1995*. Quezon City: Presidential Agrarian Reform Council-Audit Management and Investigation Committee (PARC-AMIC). Photocopy version.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997. *CARP Audit Report Covering the Years 1996–1997*. Quezon City: Presidential Agrarian Reform Council-Audit Management and Investigation Committee (PARC-AMIC). Photocopy version.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1998. *CARP Audit Report Covering the Year 1998*. Quezon City: Presidential Agrarian Reform Council-Audit Management and Investigation Committee (PARC-AMIC). Photocopy version.

- Putzel, James. 1992. *A Captive Land: The Politics of Agrarian Reform in the Philippines*. London: CIIR.
- Quitatoriano, Eddie. 1999. "Case Studies on the Multi-ethnic Communities in Basilan." *Mindanao Focus Journal* 3: 1–35. Davao: AFRIM.
- Rodil, B. R. 1994. *The Minoritization of the Indigenous Communities of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago*. Philippine Edition. Davao City: AFRIM.
- Roquas, Esther. 2002. *Stacked Law: Land, Property, and Conflict in Honduras*. Amsterdam: Thela Latin America Series/Rozenberg Publishers.
- Salamat, Hashim. 2001. *The Bangsa Moro People's Struggle Against Oppression and Colonialism*. Camp Abubakre As-Siddique: Agency for Youth Affairs–MILF.
- Santos, Soliman. 2001. *The Moro Islamic Challenge: Constitutional Rethinking for the Mindanao Peace Process*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.
- Scott, James. 1998. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Tadem, Eduardo. 1992. "The Political Economy of Mindanao: An Overview." In M. Turner, R. J. May, and L. S. Turner, eds., *Mindanao: Land of Unfulfilled Promise*. Quezon City: New Day.
- Tadem, Eduardo, J. Reyes, and Susan Magno. 1984. *Showcases of Underdevelopment in Mindanao: Fishes, Forests, and Fruits*. Davao: AFRIM.
- Tri-People Consortium for Peace, Progress, and Development of Mindanao (TRICOM). 1998. *Defending the Land: Lumad and Moro People's Struggle for Ancestral Domain in Mindanao*. Davao: TRICOM with SNV, ICCO, and AFRIM.
- Vidal, Aida. 2002. "The Politics and Formation of Indigenous People's Right to Land: The Case of Mindanao with Special Reference to the Subanen." Unpublished MA thesis, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague.
- World Bank. 2003. *Land Policies for Growth and Poverty Alleviation*. Edited by Klaus Deininger. Washington, D.C.: World Bank; Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wurfel, David. 1988. *Filipino Politics: Development and Decay*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

#### Web-Based References

- Table 1: [www.nscb.gov.ph/ru5/updates/hdi/comparison.html](http://www.nscb.gov.ph/ru5/updates/hdi/comparison.html) and [stednet.sei.dost.gov.ph/surveys/SEI/SEI\\_Human-Devt\\_99.htm](http://stednet.sei.dost.gov.ph/surveys/SEI/SEI_Human-Devt_99.htm)
- Table 2: [www.accu.or.jp/litdbase/literacy/wed/stat1.htm](http://www.accu.or.jp/litdbase/literacy/wed/stat1.htm)
- Table 3: [szopad.neda.gov.ph/sep/infrastructure\\_development.htm](http://szopad.neda.gov.ph/sep/infrastructure_development.htm)
- Ranking of provinces: [www.nscb.gov.ph/ru5/updates/hdi/rankings.html](http://www.nscb.gov.ph/ru5/updates/hdi/rankings.html) and [www.nscb.gov.ph/armm/updates/hdi/rankings.html](http://www.nscb.gov.ph/armm/updates/hdi/rankings.html)
- Poverty ranking: [www.nscb.gov.ph/poverty/2000/default.htm](http://www.nscb.gov.ph/poverty/2000/default.htm)



## Project Information



## **The Dynamics and Management of Internal Conflicts in Asia**

### **Project Rationale, Purpose and Outline**

Project Director: Muthiah Alagappa  
 Principal Researchers: Edward Aspinall (Aceh)  
 Danilyn Rutherford (Papua)  
 Christopher Collier (Southern Philippines)  
 Gardner Bovington (Xinjiang)  
 Elliot Sperling (Tibet)

#### *Rationale*

Internal conflicts have been a prominent feature of the Asian political landscape since 1945. Asia has witnessed numerous civil wars, armed insurgencies, coups d'etat, regional rebellions, and revolutions. Many have been protracted; several have far reaching domestic and international consequences. The civil war in Pakistan led to the break up of that country in 1971; separatist struggles challenge the political and territorial integrity of China, India, Indonesia, Burma, the Philippines, Thailand and Sri Lanka; political uprisings in Thailand (1973 and 1991), the Philippines (1986), South Korea (1986), Taiwan, Bangladesh (1991), and Indonesia (1998) resulted in dramatic political change in those countries; although the political uprisings in Burma (1988) and China (1989) were suppressed, the political systems in these countries as well as in Vietnam continue to confront problems of political legitimacy that could become acute; and radical Islam poses serious challenges to stability in Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and India. In all, millions of people have been killed in the internal conflicts, and tens of millions have been displaced. And the involvement of external powers in a competitive manner (especially during the Cold War) in several of these conflicts had negative consequences for domestic and regional security.

Internal conflicts in Asia (as elsewhere) can be traced to three issues—national identity, political legitimacy (the title to rule), and distributive justice—that are often interconnected. With the bankruptcy of the socialist model and the transitions to democracy in several countries, the number of internal conflicts over the legitimacy of political system has declined in Asia. However, political legitimacy of certain governments continues to be contested from time to time and the legitimacy of the remaining communist and authoritarian systems are likely to confront challenges in due course. The project deals with internal conflicts arising from the process of

constructing national identity with specific focus on conflicts rooted in the relationship of minority communities to the nation-state. Here too many Asian states have made considerable progress in constructing national communities but several states including some major ones still confront serious problems that have degenerated into violent conflict. By affecting the political and territorial integrity of the state as well as the physical, cultural, economic, and political security of individuals and groups, these conflicts have great potential to affect domestic and international stability.

#### *Purpose*

The project investigates the dynamics and management of five key internal conflicts in Asia—Aceh and Papua in Indonesia, the Moro conflict in southern Philippines, and the conflicts pertaining to Tibet and Xinjiang in China. Specifically it investigates the following:

1. Why (on what basis), how (in what form), and when does group differentiation and political consciousness emerge?
2. What are the specific issues of contention in such conflicts? Are these of the instrumental or cognitive type? If both, what is the relationship between them? Have the issues of contention altered over time? Are the conflicts likely to undergo further redefinition?
3. When, why, and under what circumstances can such contentions lead to violent conflict? Under what circumstances have they not led to violent conflict?
4. How can the conflicts be managed, settled, and eventually resolved? What are policy choices? Do options such as national self-determination, autonomy, federalism, electoral design, and consociationalism exhaust the list of choices available to meet the aspirations of minority communities? Are there innovative ways of thinking about identity and sovereignty that can meet the aspirations of the minority communities without creating new sovereign nation-states?
5. What is the role of the regional and international communities in the protection of minority communities?
6. How and when does a policy choice become relevant?

#### *Design*

A study group has been organized for each of the five conflicts investigated in the study. With a principal researcher each, the study groups comprise practitioners and scholars from the respective Asian countries including the region or province that is the focus of the conflict, the United

States, and Australia. For composition of study groups please see the participant list.

All five study groups met jointly for the first time in Washington, D.C. from September 29 through October 3, 2002. Over a period of four days, participants engaged in intensive discussion of a wide range of issues pertaining to the five conflicts investigated in the project. In addition to identifying key issues for research and publication, the meeting facilitated the development of cross country perspectives and interaction among scholars who had not previously worked together. Based on discussion at the meeting five research monograph length studies (one per conflict) and twenty policy papers (four per conflict) were commissioned.

Study groups met separately for the second meeting. The Aceh and Papua study group meetings were held in Bali on June 16–17, the Southern Philippines study group met in Manila on June 23, and the Tibet and Xinjiang study groups were held in Honolulu from August 20 through 22, 2003. The third meeting of all study groups was held from February 28 through March 2, 2004 in Washington, D.C. These meetings reviewed recent developments relating to the conflicts, critically reviewed the first drafts of the policy papers prepared for the project, reviewed the book proposals by the principal researchers, and identified new topics for research.

#### *Publications*

The project will result in five research monographs (book length studies) and about twenty policy papers.

*Research Monographs.* To be authored by the principal researchers, these monographs present a book-length study of the key issues pertaining to each of the five conflicts. Subject to satisfactory peer review, the monographs will appear in the East-West Center Washington series *Asian Security*, and the East-West Center series *Contemporary Issues in the Asia Pacific*, both published by the Stanford University Press.

*Policy Papers.* The policy papers provide a detailed study of particular aspects of each conflict. Subject to satisfactory peer review, these 10,000 to 25,000-word essays will be published in the EWC Washington *Policy Studies* series, and be circulated widely to key personnel and institutions in the policy and intellectual communities and the media in the respective Asian countries, United States, and other relevant countries.

*Public Forums*

To engage the informed public and to disseminate the findings of the project to a wide audience, public forums have been organized in conjunction with study group meetings.

Two public forums were organized in Washington, D.C. in conjunction with the first study group meeting. The first forum, cosponsored by the United States-Indonesia Society, discussed the Aceh and Papua conflicts. The second forum, cosponsored by the United States Institute of Peace, the Asia Program of the Woodrow Wilson International Center, and the Sigur Center of the George Washington University, discussed the Tibet and Xinjiang conflicts.

Public forums were also organized in Jakarta and Manila in conjunction with the second study group meetings. The Jakarta public forum on Aceh and Papua, cosponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta, and the Southern Philippines public forum cosponsored by the Policy Center of the Asian Institute of Management, attracted persons from government, media, think tanks, activist groups, diplomatic community and the public.

In conjunction with the third study group meetings, also held in Washington, D.C., three public forums were offered. The first forum, cosponsored by the United States-Indonesia Society, addressed the conflicts in Aceh and Papua. The second forum, cosponsored by the Sigur Center of the George Washington University, discussed the conflicts in Tibet and Xinjiang. A third forum was held to discuss the conflict in the Southern Philippines. This forum was cosponsored by the United States Institute of Peace.

*Funding Support*

This project is supported with a generous grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

*Project Director***Muthiah Alagappa**

East-West Center Washington

---

**Aceh Study Group****Edward Aspinall**

University of Sydney

Principal Researcher

**Saifuddin Bantasyam**

Human Rights Forum, Banda Aceh

**Harold Crouch**

Australian National University

**Ahmad Humam Hamid**

Care Human Rights, Banda Aceh

**Bob Hadiwinata**

University of Parahyangan, Indonesia

**Konrad Huber**

Council on Foreign Relations

**Sidney Jones**

International Crisis Group, Jakarta

**T. Mulya Lubis**

Lubis, Santosa and Maulana, Jakarta

**Marcus Meitzner**

USAID, Jakarta

**Kelli Muddell**

International Center for Transitional

Justice, New York

**Michael Ross**

University of California, Los Angeles

**Kirsten E. Schulze**

London School of Economics

**Rizal Sukma**

CSIS Jakarta

**Paul Van Zyl**

International Center for Transitional

Justice, New York

**Agus Widjojo**

Former Chief of Staff for Territorial

Affairs, Government of Indonesia

**Sastrohandoyo Wiryono**

Chief Negotiator for the Government

of Indonesia in the peace talks with

the Free Aceh Movement

**Daniel Ziv**

USAID, Jakarta

---

**Papua Study Group****Danilyn Rutherford**

University of Chicago

*Principal Researcher***Ikrar Nusa Bhakti**

Indonesian Institute of Sciences

(LIPI), Jakarta

**Richard Chauvel**

Victoria University, Melbourne

**Benny Giay**

The Institute for Human Rights Study

and Advocacy, Jayapura

**Barbara Harvey**

Former Deputy Chief of Mission for

the U.S. Embassy in Indonesia

**Rodd McGibbon**

USAID, Jakarta

### Papua Study Group continued

**Octavianus Mote**

Yale University

**Samsu Rizal Panggabean**

Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta

**John Rumbiak**

ELS-HAM, Jayapura

**Barnabas Suebu**

Former Governor of Irian Jaya

**Agus Sumule**

Universitas Negeri Papua, Amban

### Southern Philippines Study Group

**Christopher Collier**

Australian National University

*Principal Researcher*

**Robert F. Barnes**

USAID, Philippines

**Noemi Bautista**

USAID, Philippines

**Saturnino M. Borras, Jr.**

Institute of Social Studies, The Hague

**Jesus Dureza**

Presidential Assistant for Mindanao,  
Philippines

**Alma Evangelista**

United Nations Development  
Programme, Manila

**Eric Gutierrez**

WaterAid, United Kingdom

**Carolina Hernandez**

Institute for Strategic and  
Development Studies, Manila

**Abraham S. Iribani**

Assistant Secretary, Department of the  
Interior and Local Government  
Government of the Philippines,  
Manila

**Mary Judd**

The World Bank - Philippines

**Macapado Muslim**

Mindanao State University  
Fatima, General Santos City

**Amina Rasul-Bernardo**

Asian Institute of Management,  
Manila

**Steven Rood**

The Asia Foundation, Philippines

**David Timberman**

USAID, Washington, D.C.

**Michael Yates**

USAID, Philippines

### Tibet Study Group

**Elliot Sperling**

Indiana University

*Principal Researcher*

**Allen Carlson**

Cornell University

## Tibet Study Group continued

### Shulong Chu

Tsinghua University, Beijing

### Yongbin Du

Chinese Center for Tibet Studies,  
Beijing

### Mark D. Koehler

U.S. Department of State

### Carole McGranahan

University of Colorado at Boulder

### Warren W. Smith, Jr.

Radio Free Asia

### Tashi Rabgey

Harvard University

### Tseten Wangchuk

Voice of America

## Xinjiang Study Group

### Gardner Bovingdon

Indiana University  
*Principal Researcher*

### Jay Dautcher

University of Pennsylvania

### Arienne Dwyer

University of Kansas

### Talant Mawkanuli

Indiana University

### James Millward

Georgetown University

### Susan Shirk

University of California, San Diego

### Stan Toops

Miami University

### Nury Turkel

American University

### Nabijan Tursun

Radio Free Asia

### Shengmin Yang

Central University for Nationalities,  
Beijing

## Other Participants

### Allen Choate

Asia Foundation, Hong Kong

### Chester Crocker

Georgetown University

### Stephen Del Rosso, Jr.

Carnegie Corporation of New York

### Pauline Kerr

Australian National University

### Federico M. Macaranas

Asian Institute of Management,  
Manila

### Christopher McNally

East-West Center

### Charles Morrison

East-West Center

### Holly Morrow

U.S. Department of State

### Hadi Soesastro

CSIS Jakarta

### Sheila Smith

East-West Center

### Arun Swamy

East-West Center

### Barbara Walter

University of California, San Diego



### **Background of the Moro Conflict**

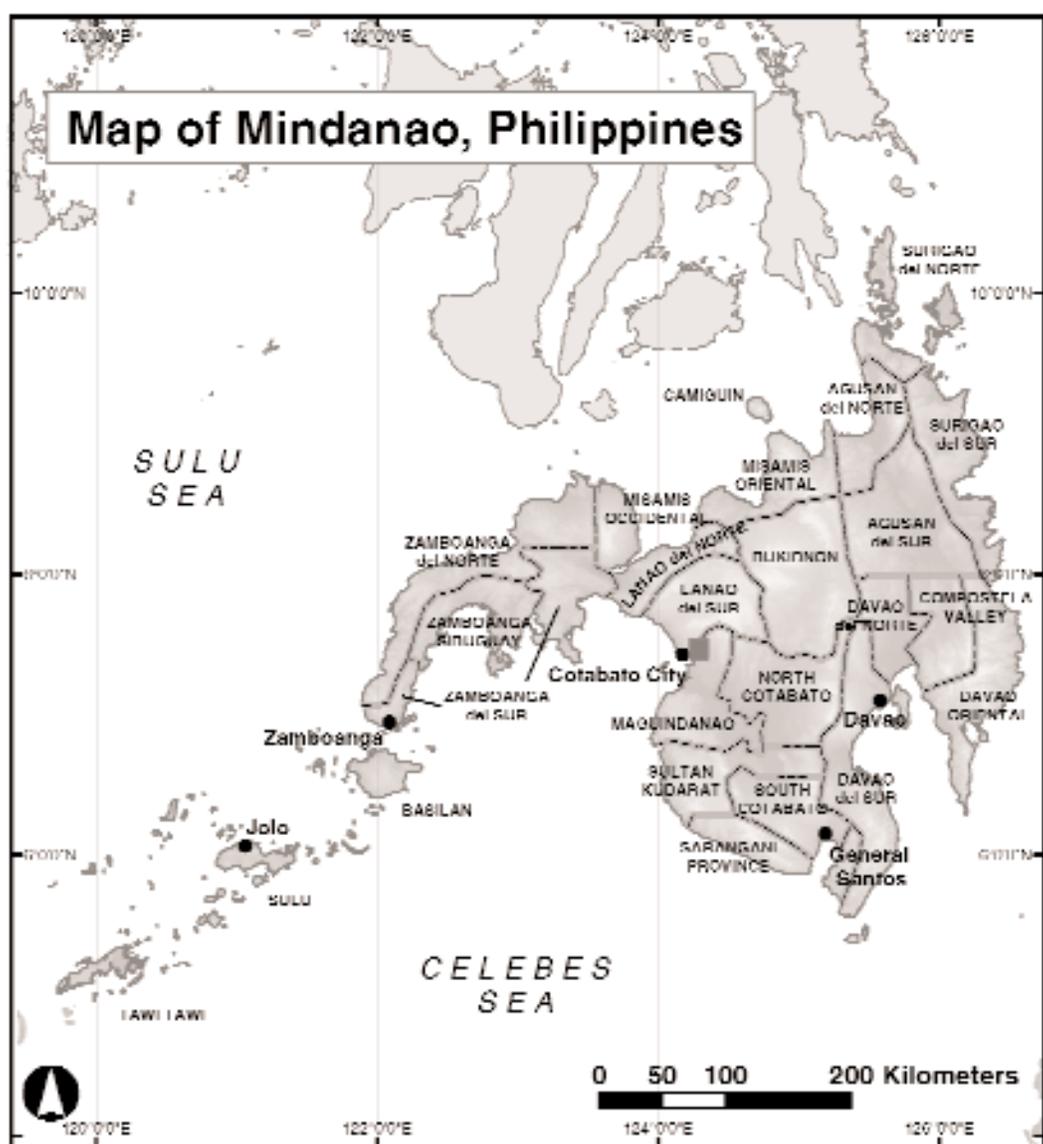
The Philippines traces its unique status as Asia's sole Christian-majority state to more than three centuries of Spanish colonial rule (1565–1898). Ninety percent of the country's 82 million people profess Christianity today, but in the southwestern provinces of the Sulu archipelago and western Mindanao, where Spanish control came late and remained tenuous, indigenous state formation proceeded much further than anywhere else in the country, undergirding a tradition of resistance to alien rule. Muslim sultanates in Sulu (from about 1450), Cotabato (c.1515) and Lanao (c.1600) retained varying degrees of independence well into the nineteenth century, only becoming fully incorporated into the Philippines under the aegis of American colonialism (1898–1946), and giving rise to a transcendent, multi-tribal "Moro" identity. In the final decades of U.S. rule, and accelerating through the 1950s and 1960s, mass migration from the Christian North to the Mindanao frontier fundamentally altered the demographic balance in the South, today leaving Muslim majorities in only five of the region's twenty-five provinces. This shift coincided with a revival of Islamic consciousness beginning in the 1950s.

Intensifying electoral competition in the newly vote-rich South between 1967–71, combined with proliferating land disputes and armed militias, led to a spiral of sectarian polarization. Beginning in Cotabato province, at the forefront of postwar Christian in-migration, in early 1970, militia skirmishes spread rapidly to Lanao in 1971 and Zamboanga in early 1972. President Ferdinand Marcos, facing the end of his final term in office, cited this disorder in imposing martial law on the country in September 1972 and overthrowing the constitutional system. By December, the armed forces were locked in full-scale civil war with the secessionist Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) on the island of Jolo, and by early 1973, mainland Mindanao was also at war. The intercession of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, lead by Libya, helped bring about a cease-fire and autonomy agreement in Tripoli in December 1976, but the subsequent splintering of the MNLF into a number of contending factions, and disputes over Tripoli's implementation, have continued to draw the conflict out. To date, possibly 120,000 have died in the fighting, and millions have been displaced.

A "final" autonomy agreement mediated by Jakarta in 1996 now embraces all five Muslim-majority provinces, but has failed to satisfy pop-

ular expectations, or the demands of three main armed factions. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which broke away from the MNLF after Tripoli, commands widespread support among Maguindanao and Maranao Muslims in the Cotabato and Lanao regions, and is engaged in a fragile peace process supported by Malaysia and the United States. An MNLF faction lead by imprisoned founding chairman Nur Misuari is strongest in Sulu. The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), centered on the Sulu and Basilan islands, is far smaller, but highly mobile, and draws on kinship ties with MNLF and MILF members to seek refuge from government forces. At other times ASG and government elements may act in collusion. Further complicating this volatile situation are transnational terrorist networks linked to Jemaah Islamiyah and al-Qaeda, which view the Southern Philippines as a key front in their wider regional and global *jihād*.

# Map of Mindanao, Philippines



- Cities
- Camp Abu Bakr
- ⋈ District Boundaries

Note: Tawi Tawi, Sulu, Basilan and Camiguin all have district status.

*Note: Map boundaries and locations are approximate. Geographic features and their names do not imply official endorsement or recognition by the UN.*

## List of Reviewers 2003-2004

The East-West Center Washington would like to acknowledge the following who have offered reviews of manuscripts submitted for publication in the *Policy Studies* series.

**Patricio Nunes Abinales**

Kyoto University

**Muthiah Alagappa**

East-West Center Washington

**Dewi Fortuna Anwar**

Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI)

**Edward Aspinall**

The University of Sydney

**Robert Barnett**

Columbia University

**Gardner Bovingdon**

Indiana University

**Leslie Butt**

University of Victoria

**Allen Carlson**

Cornell University

**Harold Crouch**

Australian National University

**Jay Dautcher**

University of Pennsylvania

**Brigham Golden**

Columbia University

**Reuel Hanks**

Oklahoma State University

**Eva-Lotta Hedman**

University of Oxford

**Paul Hutchcroft**

University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Sidney Jones**

International Crisis Group, Jakarta

**Stephanie Lawson**

University of East Anglia

**David Leheny**

University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Tashi Rabgey**

Harvard University

**Geoffrey Robinson**

University of California-  
Los Angeles

**Michael Ross**

University of California-  
Los Angeles

**Danilyn Rutherford**

University of Chicago

**Yitzhak Shichor**

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

**Timothy Sisk**

University of Denver

**Anthony Smith**

Asia Pacific Center for Security  
Studies, Honolulu

**Warren W. Smith**

Radio Free Asia

**Elliot Sperling**

Indiana University

**Arun Swamy**

East-West Center

**Barbara Walter**

University of California-San Diego

# *Policy Studies*

## **Previous Issues**

### **Policy Studies 1**

The Aceh Peace Process:  
Why it Failed

Dr. Edward Aspinall, University of  
Sydney  
Dr. Harold Crouch, Australian National  
University

### **Policy Studies 7**

The Tibet-China Conflict:  
History and Polemics

Dr. Elliot Sperling, Indiana University

### **Policy Studies 2**

The Free Aceh Movement (GAM):  
Anatomy of a Separatist Organization

Dr. Kirsten E. Schulze, London School  
of Economics

### **Policy Studies 3**

Security Operations in Aceh:  
Goals, Consequences, and Lessons

Dr. Rizal Sukma, Centre for Strategic  
and International Studies - Jakarta

### **Policy Studies 4**

Beijing's Tibet Policy:  
Securing Sovereignty and Legitimacy

Dr. Allen Carlson, Cornell University

### **Policy Studies 5**

The Papua Conflict:  
Jakarta's Perceptions and Policies

Dr. Richard Chauvel, Victoria  
University-Melbourne  
Dr. Ikrar Nusa Bhakti, Indonesian  
Institute of Sciences

### **Policy Studies 6**

Violent Separatism in Xinjiang:  
A Critical Assessment

Dr. James Millward, Georgetown  
University

**These issues of *Policy Studies* are presently available in print and online.**

Online version available at:

<http://www.eastwestcenterwashington.org/Publications/publications.htm>

# *Policy Studies*

A Publication of the East-West Center Washington

**Editor:** *Dr. Muthiah Alagappa*

The aim of *Policy Studies* is to present scholarly analysis of key contemporary domestic and international political, economic, and strategic issues affecting Asia in a policy relevant manner. Written for the policy community, academics, journalists, and the informed public, the peer-reviewed publications in this series will provide new policy insights and perspectives based on extensive fieldwork and rigorous scholarship.

Each publication in the series presents a 15,000 to 25,000 word investigation of a single topic. Often publications in this series will appear in conjunction with East-West Center research projects; stand-alone investigations of pertinent issues will also appear in the series.

## ***Submissions***

Submissions may take the form of a proposal or completed manuscript.

*Proposal.* A three to five page proposal should indicate the issue, problem, or puzzle to be analyzed, its policy significance, the novel perspective to be provided, and date by which the manuscript will be ready. The editor and two relevant experts will review proposals to determine their suitability for the series. The manuscript when completed will be peer-reviewed in line with the double blind process.

*Complete Manuscript.* Submission of complete manuscript should be accompanied by a two page abstract that sets out the issue, problem, or puzzle analyzed, its policy significance, and the novel perspective provided by the paper. The editor and two relevant experts will review the abstract. If considered suitable for the series, the manuscript will be peer reviewed in line with the double blind process.

Submissions must be original and not published elsewhere. The East-West Center Washington will have copyright over material published in the series.

A CV indicating relevant qualifications and publications should accompany submissions.

## ***Notes to Contributors***

Manuscripts should be typed and double-spaced. Citations should be inserted in the text with notes double-spaced at the end. The manuscript should be accompanied by a completed bibliography. All artwork should be camera ready. Authors should refrain from identifying themselves in their proposals and manuscripts and should follow the *Policy Studies* stylesheet, available from the series' editorial office. Submissions should be sent to:

Editor, *Policy Studies*  
East-West Center Washington  
1819 L Street NW, Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Submissions can also be forwarded by Email to  
[Publications@EastWestCenterWashington.org](mailto:Publications@EastWestCenterWashington.org)

## About this Issue

The conflict in the southern Philippines is becoming increasingly complex, and untangling the knots for a greater understanding of the problem is no easy task. Yet underlying all these manifestations of a complex conflict is a straightforward political-economic explanation. This study argues that the continuing war, the persistence of poverty and landlessness, and the emergence of "entrepreneurs in violence" are mere symptoms of something that has not yet been sufficiently addressed by a succession of Philippine governments or even by mainstream Moro revolutionary organizations: the highly skewed distribution of ownership and control over land resources in the southern Philippines. It contends that landlessness and the continuing weakness of state institutions in implementing agrarian reform and enforcing ancestral domain claims are fundamental issues whose resolution may well hold the key to establishing long-term peace in the southern Philippines. The policy propositions put forward here are broad outlines of possible options; actual forms of state policies may vary as long as the general principles underscored in this study are maintained. Whether these policy options are politically practical in the immediate context should be informed by further research on certain contentious issues identified in this study—how, for example, can autonomous social movements emerge in the context of the contemporary southern Philippines? The propositions offered here do not necessarily contradict other interpretations of the conflict in the southern Philippines and their corresponding policy prescriptions. Whether coming from the strictly "economic reform" perspective or from the political-constitutional reform (federalist) framework—or, most radically, secession and the creation of a new Moro state—the propositions put forward in this study are likely to remain relevant.

## About the Authors

Mr. Eric Gutierrez is a Regional Advocacy and Research Adviser for the British charity WaterAid, U.K., in Southern Africa. Mr. Saturnino (Jun) Borrás, Jr. is a doctoral candidate at the Institute of Social Studies at The Hague.

## Previous Issues:

Policy Studies 3  
Security Operations in Aceh:  
Goals, Consequences, and Lessons  
Dr. Rizal Sukma, Centre for Strategic and  
International Studies - Jakarta

Policy Studies 4  
Beijing's Tibet Policy:  
Securing Sovereignty and Legitimacy  
Dr. Allen Carlson, Cornell University

Policy Studies 5  
The Papua Conflict:  
Jakarta's Perceptions and Policies  
Dr. Richard Chauvel, Victoria University-Melbourne  
Dr. Ikrar Nusa Bhakti, Indonesian Institute of  
Sciences

Policy Studies 6  
Violent Separatism in Xinjiang:  
A Critical Assessment  
Dr. James Millward, Georgetown University

Policy Studies 7  
The Tibet-China Conflict:  
History and Polemics  
Dr. Elliot Sperling, Indiana University-Bloomington

## Forthcoming Titles

"The HDC in Aceh: Promises and Pitfalls of  
Third-Party (NGO) Facilitation"  
Mr. Konrad Huber, Council on Foreign Relations

"From Bargaining to Backsliding: Special  
Autonomy and Separatist Conflict in Aceh and  
Papua"  
Dr. Rodd McGibbon, USAID, Jakarta

"The System of Autonomy in Xinjiang"  
Dr. Gardner Bovingdon, Indiana University