



EQALLS2 PROJECT EDUCATION QUALITY AND ACCESS FOR LEARNING AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS PROJECT

Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao | Region IX | Region XII



PEACE EDUCATION in Mindanao Schools and Communities Assisted by the Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA) under the USAID/EQuALLS2 Project



The **Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills Project Phase 2 (EQuALLS2)** is a Mindanao-focused education project of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with the Philippine Department of Education, DepEd ARMM and Technical Education Skills Development Authority (TESDA), local government units and other government/ non-government organizations.



EQuALLS2 aims to:

- Increase learning opportunities for children and youth through community support for education (community engagement)
- Strengthen capacity for teaching English, science and math at the elementary level (educator professional development), and;
- Improve relevance of education and training for out-of-school children and youth (OSCY Programs)

EQuALLS2 is managed by the Education Development Center (EDC) in partnership with three lead implementing organizations, including the Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA). ELSA is a multi-stakeholder, and multi-sectoral public-private partnership composed of Ayala Foundation Inc. (AFI), Consuelo Foundation, Petron Foundation, Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), and International Youth Foundation (IYF). IYF acts as the lead and coordinating partner. PBSP and Ayala Foundation Inc. are in-charge of “increasing learning opportunities for children and youth through community support for education”; PBSP and Petron Foundation for “strengthening capacity for teaching English, science and math at the elementary level”; and Consuelo Foundation for “improving relevance of education and training for OSCY”.



PEACE EDUCATION

in Mindanao Schools and Communities

Assisted by the Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA)

under the USAID/EQuALLS2 Project





DISCLAIMER: This publication was made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA) and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.



Contents

List of Abbreviations iv

PART I — Introduction |

Summary of Lessons Learned and Insights Gained |

Peace Education Defined 3

Peace Education in the Philippine Setting with Focus on Mindanao 4

Peace Education Efforts in Mindanao 6

PART 2 — ELSA's Support to Peace Education in Mindanao ||

School Administrators as Peace Facilitators ||

Public Schools as Centers of Peace 12

- J. Marquez School of Peace 13
- Tuyan Elementary School of Peace 16

Models for Training Young People to Serve as Peace Facilitators 18

- Ayala Foundation's Model for Training Young People to be Peace Facilitators 18
- Nagdilaab Foundation's Model for Training Young People to Be Peace Facilitators 26

**ELSA's Lessons Learned on What Works in Implementing
Peace Education Programs in Mindanao 31**

End Notes 32

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Project ALIVE	Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
ALS	Alternative Learning System
A&E	Accreditation and Equivalency
AFI	Ayala Foundation, Incorpo
BALS	Bureau of Alternative Learning System
BE	Basic Education
BLGU	Barangay Local Government Unit
COP	Culture of Peace
DepED	Department of Education
DepED ARMM	Department of Education Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
EDC	Education Development Center
ELSA	Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance
EQuALLS2	Education Quality and Access to Learning and Livelihood Skills Project Phase 2
IM	Instructional Manager
IYF	International Youth Foundation
LIPs	Lead Implementing Partners of EQuALLS2
LGU	Local Government Unit
LSB	Local School Board
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NDMC	Notre Dame of Midsayap College
NDU	Notre Dame University
NFI	Nagdilaab Foundation, Inc.
OSCY	Out-of-school children and youth
OPAPP	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process
PBSP	Philippine Business for Social Progress
PTCA	Parent Teacher and Community Association
SFL	Skills for Life
SoP	School of Peace
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFD	Workforce Development





PART 1 — Introduction

THIS COMPENDIUM of write-ups, reports and studies on peace education initiatives has two parts: Part One consists of: definition of peace education, and; notes on peace education in the Philippine setting, with focus on Mindanao, and; Part Two presents initiatives of Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA) to support peace education in Mindanao, particularly the schools and communities it serves under the USAID/EQuALLS2 Project. Described are: the ELSA workshop on the features of peace education policy directions of DepED and DepED Region XII and the ELSA forum on best practices in peace education held for school heads for the ELSA project schools in DepED Region XII; two schools of peace which are served by ELSA, also in DepED Region XII, and the peace education components of youth camps held by Ayala Foundation, the ELSA Partner in charge of youth engagement and the Nagdilaab Foundation's model for training young people to be peace advocates. Nagdilaab Foundation is the ELSA/Consuelo field implementing partner in conducting training programs for out-of-school youth in Basilan. Part Two also describes lessons learned and insights gained by ELSA on what works in implementing peace education programs in Mindanao

It is envisioned that this compendium would serve as a resource document for institutions involved in peace education activities, particularly those focused on Mindanao.

Summary of Lessons Learned and Insights Gained

When EQuALLS2 was started in 2007, Executive Order 570: *Institutionalizing Peace Education in Basic Education Curriculum and Teacher Education*, was barely one year in existence. Peace education initiatives were being launched in various parts of the country. In Mindanao, there was a heightened effort in infusing peace concepts in education development projects implemented by international, national and local institutions.

The Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA), through its five Partners, implemented the following activities along peace education: developed peace education modules for their training programs under the alternative learning system (ALS) and youth camps; assisted two DepED schools of peace in its project sites; conducted an orientation workshop on peace education, held a series of dialogs with the Department of Education (DepED) Region XII in response to the latter's request for ELSA to include peace education in its project components, and; consequently, held a forum on best practices in peace education for school administrators in ELSA schools.

A number of lessons and insights were gained by ELSA from its three-year support to peace education in its project sites:¹

- Learners and beneficiaries of peace education programs highly appreciate the knowledge skills they have learned — from conflict management to building a culture of peace. They have become more aware of the roots of conflicts in their community — not just about the armed conflicts, but also the conflicts in cultural practices and perceptions, and biases against religions. A continuing review of the content points, strategies and approaches vis-à-vis the learning needs of the beneficiaries would help in crafting newer ones, in order to help maintain their interest and attention level.
- School heads, teachers and mentors have an important role in the process of learning peace concepts. In the classrooms, they serve as models for their students, with the responsibility of delivering appropriate learning strands on peace building. The camp mentors serve as the program's face to the campers and the communities. There is need for them to continuously acquire newer peace education strategies and approaches as well as sufficient teaching materials with peace concepts. They need to be empowered and trained to perform their responsibilities well.



- Planners/managers/implementors of peace education programs need to be peace advocates themselves. They must first be interested in learning and understanding other cultures, show respect towards people of other cultures, and display a strong sense of sensitivity and openness to others. These attributes should be in addition to their technical competencies as managers and implementors of peace education projects. Thus, the need for continuing capability-building on trends and updates on peace education.
- A solid direction-setting component from the national to local levels helps ensure an equally solid field implementation of peace education initiatives. A strong policy environment sparks activities on peace education, from the planning phase to the various stages of implementation.
- Multi-agency and multi-level partnerships which are present in the peace education initiatives supported by ELSA have likewise helped ensure the timely and efficient implementation of the program components: curriculum design, acquisition of learning materials, lesson planning, engaging the services of field implementing partners, resource mobilization, community orientation, monitoring and evaluation.

If we want to wage war against war, we must start with the children.

Mahatma Gandhi

Peace Education Defined

Educators the world over generally define **peace education** as an “interdisciplinary area of education whose goal is institutionalized and non-institutionalized teaching **about peace** and **for peace**. It aims to help learners acquire skills for nonviolent conflict resolution and to reinforce these skills for active and responsible action in society, for the promotion of the values of peace.”² Unlike the concept of conflict resolution, which can be considered to be reactive — trying to solve a conflict after it has already occurred -- peace education has a more proactive approach. Its end goal is to prevent a conflict in advance or rather to educate individuals and communities for a peaceful existence on the basis of non-violence, tolerance, equality, respect for differences, and social justice.

At present, peace education efforts are mainly along: “knowing and embodying the *values*, the knowledge and developing the *attitudes, skills, and behaviors* to live in harmony with oneself. It is the process of relating with others, and with the natural environment. It includes training, skills and information directed towards cultivating a culture of peace based on human rights principles.”³ This education not only provides knowledge about a culture of peace, but also imparts the skills and attitudes necessary to defuse and recognize potential conflicts, and those needed to actively promote and establish a culture of peace and non-violence. The learning objectives of peace education may include an understanding of the manifestations of violence, the development of capacities to respond constructively to that violence and specific knowledge of alternatives to violence. Two fundamental concepts of peace education are respect and skills. Respect refers to the development of respect for self and for others; skills refer to specific communication, cooperation and behavioral skills used in conflict situations.

Peace Education in the Philippine Setting with Focus on Mindanao

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines recognizes the need and importance of peace education, particularly in Mindanao. The efforts of the Government, through the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), has laid a strong foundation at the policy level for peace education. Through OPAPP's advocacy and assistance, policy instruments have been developed over the years.

The national leadership issued **Executive Order 570, Institutionalizing Peace Education in the Basic Education Curriculum and Teacher Education** in 2006 in order to strengthen peace education in the country. The response of the Department of Education was the conduct of a nationwide consultation on peace education and the subsequent issuance of DepED Memo 469 series of 2008, stating that all teacher education institutions (TEIs) and other educational institutions include peace education courses and activities in the Special Topics component of the Teacher Education Curriculum. The emerging focus is now on honing the teachers with the skills, values and perspectives needed to ensure that peace is learned in the classroom, integrated in student activities, and; on developing strong community awareness, knowledge and interest in peace education, particularly peace promotion and building a culture of peace.



Executive Order 570: Institutionalizing Peace Education in Basic Education Curriculum and Teacher Education issued by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo dated on September 26, 2006:

WHEREAS, the Philippines adheres to the policy of peace, equality, justice, and freedom, as enunciated in the 1987 Constitution;

WHEREAS, the attainment of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace is a paramount agenda of the Government as spelled out in Executive Order No. 3, series of 2001, and the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan 2004-2010, as well as in support of the United Nation's Declaration and Programme of Action to promote and strengthen a culture of peace in the new millennium;

WHEREAS, EO No. 3 calls for building and nurturing a climate conducive to peace through peace advocacy and peace education programs;

WHEREAS, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) has established partnership with public and private schools and non-government organizations in promoting and implementing peace education;

WHEREAS, OPAPP and the Department of Education (DepEd) have developed elementary and high school peace education exemplars, which were launched in September 2005;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

Section 1. The DepEd shall mainstream peace education in the basic formal and non-formal education curriculum, utilizing the existing peace education exemplars and other peace related modules, and enhance the knowledge and capability of supervisors, teachers and non-teaching personnel on peace-education through the conduct of in-service trainings.

Section 2. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall introduce and mainstream peace education in teacher education.

Section 3. The OPAPP, in collaboration with DepEd and CHED shall strengthen linkage with private schools in promoting peace education.

Section 4. The OPAPP, DepEd and CHED shall establish/enhance mechanisms and appropriate funds in their respective departments to ensure the sustained implementation of peace education in the educational system.

Section 5. All issuances, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with any provisions of this Executive Order are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Section 6. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Manila, this 26th day of September, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Six.

(Sgd.) **GLORIA M. ARROYO**
By the President:

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO R. ERMITA**
Executive Secretary

After the issuance of the E.O 570 dated September 26, 2006, the signing of the implementation guidelines of the E.O 570 took place on July 24, 2008 and it heralded the beginning of peace education activities all over the country. The Secretary of the Department of Education and the Commissioner of the CHED as well as the OPAPP expressed their commitment and concrete plans in 2008-2009 in order to give life to the guidelines. Some of the specific actions mentioned by the cabinet members were the issuance of memoranda to their constituencies to provide information and more concrete guidance, curriculum review and development, and capacity-building activities. The Center for Peace Education likewise committed to collaborate with the Department of Education, CHED and the OPAPP.

Peace Education Efforts in Mindanao

Mindanao is one of the three major islands located in the southern part of the Philippines. It is a very rich island, abundant in natural resources such as fertile soil, abounding flora and fauna, countless mineral and precious metal deposits, breathtaking landscapes and beautiful coastlines. It also prides itself of colorful, diverse yet harmonious cultures that tourists would find interesting and unique.

At present, it has a population of approximately 18 million Filipinos. It has been home to Muslims and indigenous people since the 14th century. Christians from the country's other islands started settling in the area in the 16th Century and migration peaked in the 1950s.

Cultural diversity primarily describes Mindanao, now a land of mixed faith, cultures and beliefs. The cultural differences in the island have caused complications and difficulties for various groups of people to know and relate with each other, or live together in a community. A cultural and social component like language spoken differently by two cultural groups, for example, could bar contact and communication between their people. The resulting situation tends to lend itself to misunderstanding, mistrust and mutual suspicion, or animosity.

The resulting situation is that although Mindanao is often called the land of promise in the Philippines, it is in reality, still very far from being the land of promise — there are wars and conflicts among various groups (including armed groups led by some politicians) in many parts of Mindanao. This problem has gone on for many decades. It is observed that this violence has led to abject poverty, social disability, and hatred among the people of Mindanao, especially in Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

The national government is doing its best to solve this conflict within the framework of the Philippine Constitution. Yet, the armed conflicts continue as the years go by.⁴ Many lives have been lost and substantial national resources are wasted. Mindanao is a sleeping economic giant sedated by ongoing armed conflict that affects the entire island, and the whole nation. Its people has the initiative, they have the will and desire to have a peaceful coexistence. Forty long years of armed struggle were proven ineffective in achieving peace. The economy is declining, the whole island hungers for peace, in Mindanao, and children in conflict-affected areas are growing with very little or no opportunities to have access to education. Schools are often caught in crossfires between Moro freedom fighters and the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The Mindanao peace education programs, particularly in DepED Region XII, are used as tools for conflict resolution and for promoting better Christian-Muslim relations. The overall framework of education for a culture of peace has six dimensions: 1) dismantling the culture of war; 2) living with justice and compassion; 3) building cultural respect, reconcilia-

tion and solidarity; 4) promoting human rights and responsibilities; 5) living in harmony with the earth; and 6) cultivating inner peace. The framework also adopts four pedagogical principles: holism where issues of peace and violence are considered dynamically interrelated; centrality of values formation, where justice, compassion, caring for life, spirituality, “one world orientation”, and active non-violence are promoted; dialogue through active teaching and learning strategies, and conscientious reflection, where the active and critical consciousness of learners is formed, empowering them in the process to be catalysts for change.⁵

Today, peace education is implemented not only in schools, colleges and universities but also in the grassroots, through community peace-building efforts. Post-conflict human resources development programs of international aid organizations in Mindanao have integrated peace education in one form or another in their training designs. There are Mindanao-wide activities organized by the network of peace educators namely: the observance of the week of peace; inter-religious dialogues; solidarity activities during Ramadan for the Muslims and the Christmas season for Christians; peace concerts, peace essay contests and other advocacy and social mobilization activities.

The signing of Executive order 570 in 2006, DepED Order No. 469 s. 2008 ushered the implementation of peace education in the country. For its part, DepED Region XII launched of EO 570 and DepED Order 469 in Cotabato City Central Pilot School on September 23, 2009. With the theme “*Una sa Lahat, KAPAYAPAAN*” (Putting the Peace Agenda at the Forefront), the following partners supported the whole day event: ACT for Peace Program, EQuALLS2/ELSA, Cotabato City LGU and DepED XII. This activity aimed at mainstreaming peace education in formal and non-formal education in all the schools divisions of DepED Region XII. Delegations from DepED XII, EQuALLS2/ELSA, Schools Division of Cotabato City, LGUs, and NGOs started the activity at 6:30 AM with a *Walk for Peace* in the major thoroughfares of Cotabato City.

A highlight of the event was the opening of the peace exhibits of peace modules, exemplar lessons, lesson plans and advocacy programs. Participating groups in the display of exhibits were *Kids for Peace* Program, J. Marquez Schools of Peace, *Peer Respect* Program, South Cotabato Division, Sultan Kudarat Division, and Indigenous Peoples. The *launch proper* where guests and representatives from LGU’s, NGO’s, military sector, and DepED XII graced the occasion, served as the centerpiece program where sharing of experiences on peace education were done by the participants.

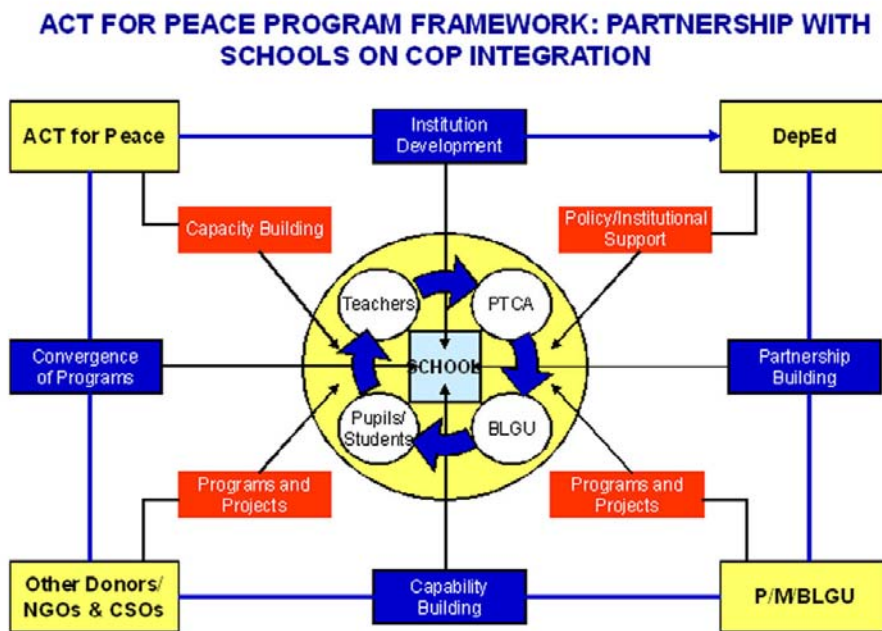
Executive Order 570 and DepED Order 469 at the national level sparked the issuance DepED RO XII Memo 72 (s. 2009). It articulates the regional context of the implementing guidelines of Executive Order 570 and DepED Order 469, as well as suggests strategies and approaches in peace education in the light of Region XII realities.

Peace education through the school of peace which was first introduced in the J. Marquez school of Peace Cotabato City is a concrete strategy of the Department of Education in fostering values and attitudes conducive to living harmoniously and peacefully amid cultural diversity. It seeks to achieve a state of oneness in the school, to be integrated in all learning materials inside the classroom and extends even to outside-the-classroom activities. Thus, it works to promote tolerance, goodwill, and respect for, and understanding of diversity among young people, through learning activities that encourage them to:

- share thoughts and feelings on peace and its elements in communities of mixed faith, cultures and beliefs;
- share stories that foster understanding, tolerance, and goodwill — and learn from them;

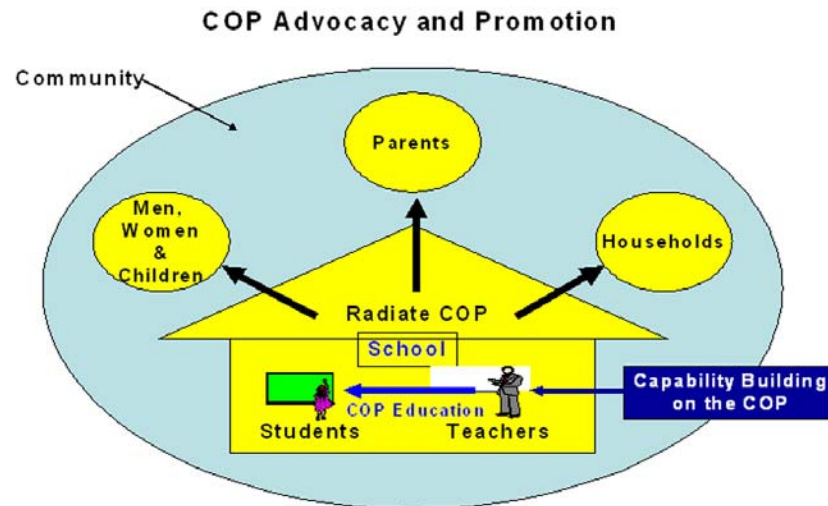
- celebrate similarities and diversities and experience the beauty of music, arts and crafts, dance and folk tales borne of different cultures; and
- inspire the community stakeholders to adopt the methods and concepts of peace education through school's of peace and use them in their own context.⁶

The *Act For Peace* is a major peace education program in DepED Region XII jointly implemented with the United Nations Development Program(UNDP). It is a peace promotion program supported by Australia, New Zealand, Spain, the European Union and the UNDP to further the aid and develop peace-based lessons plans in promoting peace education through school of peace in the Philippines.⁷ It works with formal and informal settings as well as with communities seeking to build peace in the midst of conflict. Since 2005, it has supported efforts to strengthen the enabling policy environment for peace education, and assisted in moving the peace education curriculum forward through its implementing partners: the OPAPP, the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) and the ARMM, in cooperation with the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). A key result of this partnership is the scaling up of the school of peace concept. Particularly, the *Act for Peace* Program has assisted the DepED in the development of enriched lesson plans that integrate peace concepts, teacher training, community orientation, advocacy and social mobilization. The enriched lesson plans are used in 27 of 60 Schools of Peace in Mindanao, particularly in the ARMM. UNDP's major advocacies have been the mainstreaming of peace education in the training curricula of the educators themselves. Further, the program has supported the strengthening of the policy environment for peace-building and peace education.⁸



The framework calls for the building of peace champions among the administrators, teachers, pupils/students, PTCAs and the LGU officials, and educators in the academe. The program identifies four key areas of assistance to the partner institutions comprising of: institution development; partnership building; capability-cuilding; and, convergence of programs.

The program envisages to facilitate the enlistment of institutional and policy support from DepEd to the partner schools in the integration of the COP and in operationalizing peace education. A major requisite is a strong partnership between the target schools and the local government units for possible complementation of programs and projects other than the COP initiatives. (e.g. support to physical facilities/logistics support). In addition, the program strives towards convergence and complementation of projects, with UNDP providing technical assistance to the target schools.



Operationally, the program starts with capacity-building interventions to target schools, their administrators and teachers in promoting and advocating COP concepts.⁹ A package of COP training is provided to administrators and teachers to enable them integrate its principles and values in their teachings and instill them to their students.

After the training, the administrators and teachers implement their entry plan for COP integration not only within the school but also in the community. A major activity is enriching teachers' lesson plans by integrating peace concepts in the classroom: COP cum functional literacy program, peace festivals; COP cum livelihood skills trainings and in ALS activities. The enriched lesson plans (ELPs) and peace lesson exemplars are teaching and learning tools developed by the partner schools of peace to aid in instilling the culture of peace principles, concepts and values to students.

The livelihood skills training and ALS peace education activities aim to enhance community members' participation as well as the PTA activities related to COP. This strategy helps provide COP awareness to community/PTA members, OSCY, unemployed community members while learning technical/vocational and other alternative livelihood skills (e.g. basic carpentry, masonry, electrical wiring, painting, food processing, dressmaking, etc.).

The main objective for this two-pronged approach to capacity building in the target school is to help achieve physical and behavioral transformation—for instance, through the skills training is the actual repair or rehabilitation of school facilities, and the project helps contribute to the establishment of a conducive environment for learning. The initiative likewise helps develop teamwork and unity among the community members.

The Schools of Peace follow a four-phased transformation process:¹⁰

PHASE 1 Awareness/Appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School beginning to appreciate the Culture of Peace and Peace Education principles (e.g. administrator and teachers with awareness on the Executive Order No. 570 and its IRR and with basic knowledge on the principles, concepts and values of the Culture of Peace)
PHASE 2 Strengthening Capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School developing its capacities on the Culture of Peace and Peace Education (e.g. teacher competencies, establishing peace education mechanisms like peace centers, developing peace modules and lesson plans)
PHASE 3 Application/Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School implementing and adjusting their systems, processes and policies towards mainstreaming COP and Peace Education (e.g. enriching lesson plans, advanced teacher formation programs, radiating COP outside the school environment involving the community stakeholders)
PHASE 4 Institutionalization Replication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School institutionalizing COP and Peace Education in its system, policies and processes (e.g. allocating regular budget for peace education initiatives, continue adjusting policies to effectively respond to school/community contexts and is extending technical assistance to other schools)

Monitoring and evaluation activities on the schools of peace include the continuing administration of the following M/E tools: survey questionnaire, focus group discussion (FGD) and key informant interview to determine the progress of the peace education efforts of the schools of peace.





PART 2 — ELSA’s Efforts to Support Peace Education in Mindanao

School Administrators as Peace Facilitators

IN RESPONSE to a request from DepED Region XII, ELSA conducted two activities on peace education for school administrators: (i) a peace education workshop in October 2009, and; (ii) a forum on peace education in February 2010.

Peace Education Workshop. This half-day workshop focused on the two national policy issuances related to peace education: Executive Order 570 and DepEd Order 469 (s. 2008). Also discussed was DepED RO XII Memo 72 (s. 2009) which articulates Region XII’s implementing guidelines on the implementation of Executive Order 570 and DepED Order 469. The workshop was held jointly by the Notre Dame University (NDMU), Petron Foundation, the ELSA Partners in charge of the EQuALLS2 Educators’ Professional Development Program, and the International Youth Foundation (IYF). It was attended by 128 school heads and education supervisors in the ELSA sites of DepED Region XII. The feedback on the workshop conducted by the NDMU was positive and the school heads requested for more sessions on peace education.

In particular, the school administrators felt that they still needed more orientation on:

- specifics of implementing peace education activities in their schools.
- best practices and models in classroom practices
- approaches in social mobilization in order to engage the interest, support and participation of the community towards the promotion of a culture of peace in the communities they serve

The foregoing training needs articulated by the ELSA school administrators was the basis for more dialogs conducted by the ELSA partners in charge of the EQuALLS2 educators’ professional development program on the possibility of including a peace education training program for school heads.

Peace Education Forum. This two-day forum held in February 2010 aimed at providing 74 school heads in ELSA schools in Region XI with an orientation on concepts and tools in implementing peace education at the classroom level and also a sharing of experiences on what works/best practices in peace education of DepED Region 12.

Just like the first ELSA workshop on peace education held in 2009, the forum was conducted jointly by NDMU, Petron Foundation and IYF. As a response to the DepED request by the school heads in ELSA schools that they be provided sessions on conflict management, the ELSA program Director shared notes on conflict management.¹¹ The first part of the sharing was a discussion of different levels of conflict — polarization; antagonism; eye for eye, triangle – talk with, not about; issues proliferation; some personal antagonism, and problem-solving – may disagree but share problem.

Also discussed during the sharing were the approaches which may be used to address conflict situations, including the characteristics and attributes of these approaches and when they are appropriate to use and when not appropriate to use, as follows: *competing, collaborating, avoiding, and accommodating*.

The participants held group discussions where they were asked to do the following:

1. Describe the outcome of your assigned conflict management approach in terms of “win/win,” “win/lose,” “win some/lose some” etc.
2. Describe the strategies that would be best used in the assigned approach.
3. Identify the optimum conflict management approach you would prefer the other side to exhibit in order to achieve your ends with your approach.
4. Describe the leadership style of the conflict management approach assigned to your group.
5. Describe the circumstances under which your assigned approach is most appropriate.
6. Describe the circumstances under which your assigned approach is most likely to be inappropriate

The Forum also revisited the Over-All Framework on *Peace Education: Executive Order 570 (s. 2006), DepEd Orders 469 (s.2008) and DepED RO 12 and Memo 72 (s. 2009)*. A major session was devoted to the session “Sharing of Experiences on What Works and Best Practices on Peace Education in DepED Region 12”, including the following paper presentations: “*Strengthening Peace building Efforts and Sustaining the Gains for Peace and Development*” by the Deputy Program Manager UNDP Act for Peace Program, “*The J. Marquez School of Peace: A Mindanao Experience*” by the Special Projects Coordinator, Schools Division of Cotabato City and “*A Youth-Based Initiative for Peace: Efforts on Peace Promotion in Mindanao*” by Kids for Peace Foundation of Cotabato City. The participants also held a session on “Way-forward Planning on Peace Education in DepEd Region 12” and their outputs were presented to the DepED Region XII Director. The outputs served as a resource material in the development of division-level plans on peace education.

Public Schools as Centers of Peace¹²

The “school of peace” concept was initiated by the former Director of DepED Region XII who was then the Schools Division Superintendent of Cotabato City in 1997. It was primarily DepED’s response to the peace-building efforts under the 1996 Peace Agree-

ment between Muslim freedom fighters and the Republic of the Philippines. The concept was later adopted by UNDP and made it the flagship strategy of the *Act for Peace* Program. As described in Part One of this report, a school of peace is a learning institution that adopts the following action points on peace education:

- Mainstream peace education in the basic curriculum;
- Strengthen the capabilities of administrators, teachers and stakeholders in peace advocacy;
- Model the promotion of the culture of peace (COP); and,
- Strengthen partnership among stakeholders in peace advocacy

The above features of the school of peace strategy are the major focus of two schools of peace in DepED Region XII, the J. Marquez School of Peace in Cotabato City and the Tuyan Elementary School in Malapatan, Sarangani.

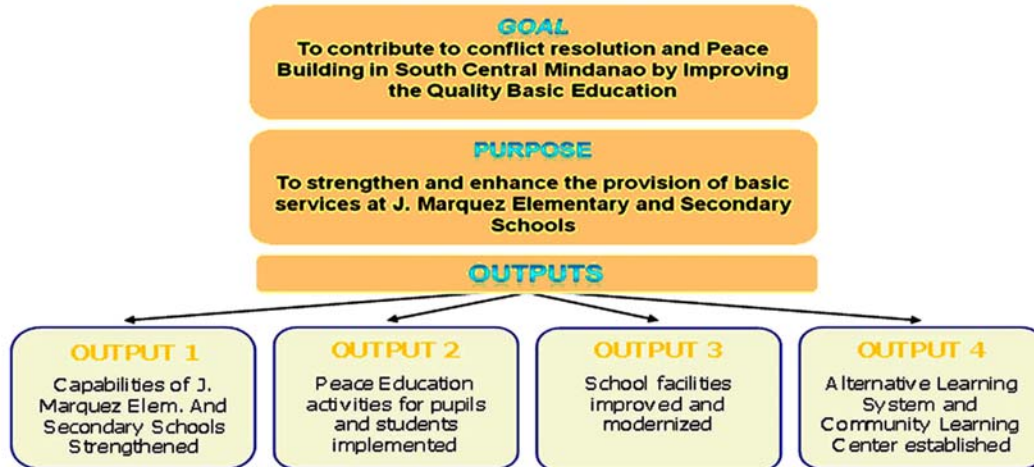
J. Marquez School of Peace (JMSP). The very first ‘School of Peace’ in Mindanao or probably in the world, is the J. Marquez Integrated School of Peace (JMSP) in Cotabato City, South Central Mindanao. The JMSP was founded in 1985 and the JMSP School of Peace was established in 1997 as part of the support of the Department of Education Region 12 to the 1996 Peace Agreement between Muslim freedom fighters and the Republic of the Philippines. Specifically, the JMSP is the education sector’s response to provide learning opportunities to children of ex-rebels who have decided to live as ordinary civilians after years of fighting, as well as to families of war-affected areas especially the school-aged children. A big majority of the student population (99.7%) are children of these ex-rebel returnees.

In the 90s, the school was observed to be plagued with lawlessness as some of the rebel returnees were engaged in crimes such as stealing, hold-ups, kidnapping and other organized crimes. The poor school was always the target of vandalism and robbery, while its teachers (who were mostly Christians at that time) were regularly threatened with bodily harm. The newly installed Schools Division Superintendent saw the need for integration of peace education in all subjects at all levels in curriculum.¹³ She trained the then school principal of JMSP to work with her in realizing her visions and explore the possibilities of the school to be a sanctuary of peace. It was a long and daunting task, but she pursued it with passion, reinforced by her strong belief of goodness amidst chaos. Through her support and partnership with the stakeholders, the school was able to establish various intervention programs like yearly renovations of the school involving the parents and the locals, peace education for parents, livelihood education, etc. They witnessed the gradual and transformation of the entire community which has become the “owners” of the school. Vandalism, robberies, and grave threats stopped without police intervention. Most importantly, Muslim and Christians co-exist peacefully in a level deeper than anyone can perceive. J. Marquez became the first School of Peace in 1997 that caters to Tri-People: the Bangsamoro, the Lumads and the Indanans (Muslims, Christians and Indigenous People).

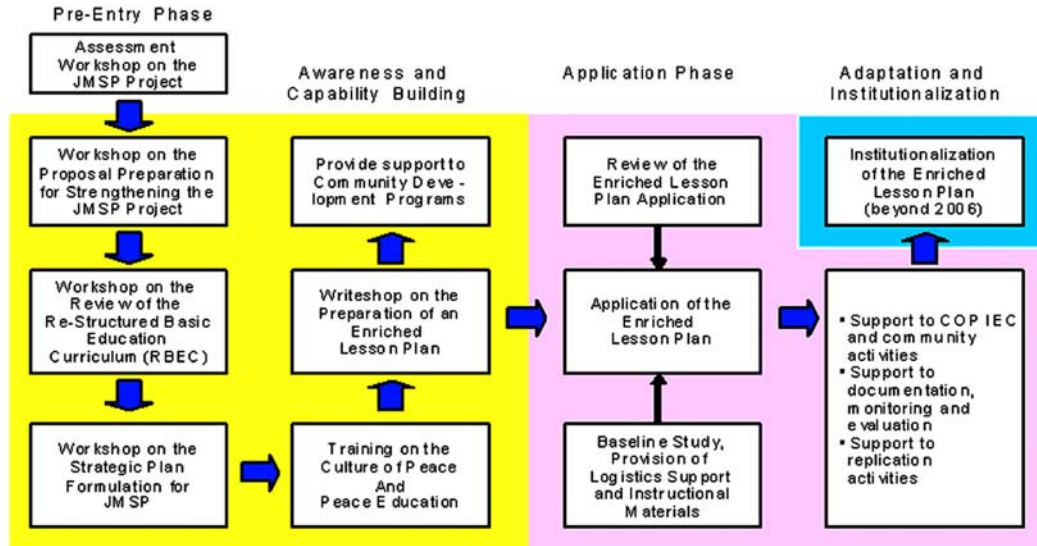
“Peace is a process. It is dynamic and holistic. We cannot just put it on paper and forget about it. It must be nurtured and taught to the pupils and to the teachers as well. Education is the permanent solution to our situation!”

by Estrella Abid-Babano, former Director, DepED Region XII

SCHOOL OF PEACE LOGFRAME



DEVELOPMENT PHASES AND FLOW OF ACTIVITIES



Following the four phases of transformation as guided by the UNDP Act for Peace and the model for the development of school of peace, the J. Marquez Elementary School is now on its 5th year of implementation. The school head reported the following accomplishments at the end of School Year 2009-2010:¹⁴

- Completed the trainings of administrators, teachers, pupils and community members on COP and peace education'
- Completed the monitoring and review of its 5-year strategic plan for 2006-2010;
- Adopted, developed and utilized the lesson plans which were developed at the JMSP school grounds where thousands of separatist rebels were billeted after signing a peace agreement with the government in 1997. It was then that the school was declared the flagship school of peace. The elementary lesson plans took three years to develop. They were written by 36 teachers, reviewed by 18 of their peers and 12 consultants and a 10-member technical working group from North Cotabato, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao and Sultan

Kudarat. Science, mathematics and Filipino and English communication arts integrate peace and Islamic values in the belief that children exposed to an environment of peace stand a better chance than those marred by violence and abuses;

- Established the school *Speakers Bureau* to facilitate the replication of schools of peace in other schools of Region XII and also other DepED regions;
- JMSP teachers provided technical assistance to 12 newly created schools of peace in DepED Region XII;
- Completed COP cum Skills training to OSCY, both men and women (*masonry, plumbing, painting, basic electrical wiring, dressmaking, food processing, cosmetology, corsage-making*);
- Increased participation rate and performance in the National Achievement Test (NAT), and;
- For its part, EQuALLS2 provided reference books with peace promotion concepts in its book fairs in Cotabato City. ELSA reproduced video lessons on peace education and gave copies to JMSP teachers, for their classroom use in English 5 and 6. These learning materials with peace promotion concepts have been found to be highly acceptable among teachers and students alike.

Teachers, students, administrators and the entire community of the J. Marquez School of Peace feel that have enjoyed the blessings brought by peace education in their area. They note that theft and vandalism have been substantially minimized in the school and in the whole community surrounding the school grounds. In the classrooms, corporal punishments have been eliminated in disciplining the students and pupils; instead, peaceful dialogue is used to resolve conflicts inside and outside the classrooms.

It has also been observed that the students' performance in both academic and non-academic activities have improved and the school has been gaining awards in sports and literary competitions and journalism contests. In March 2011, a JMSP English teacher/learning facilitator of EQuALLS2 was awarded as one of the three grand winners in the search for outstanding ESM teachers in the ELSA project sites.

The school head also reported that numerous school leavers have returned to the school and there is a significant increase in community participation in school activities such as the *Brigada Eskwela*, Culture of Peace Orientation and Skills training. Much more, the JMSP Administrators and faculty are now part of the Speaker Bureau and are now mentoring faculty members of other schools interested to establish schools of peace in Region XII. Indeed, JMSP has become a model school of peace.

Over-all, the JMSP community has been able to resolve the challenges it has encountered in the last five years. The school head observes that every day is a struggle to maintain the culture of peace they have built through the years. "It is not forever that the administrators will stay in that school. That is why a sustaining effort must be strengthened. It is important for the DepED Schools Division of Cotabato City to institutionalize the efforts of the present school of peace and all the phases and trainings and processes it undertook to ensure that the future leaders, managers and administrators of the school will practice and implement the same, if not, better."¹⁵

Again, as observed by the school head, "implementing the school of peace is an everyday challenge. The presence of armed-conflicts on the way to school is a cause of daily worry among parents. Most of our stakeholders have transferred to other places because of the

rampant armed-confrontations within the city. Our school perimeter may be peaceful but the city is not. The peace and order situation outside our community is still a threatening scenario. Therefore the challenge here is to make the city of Cotabato a city of peace — not just the JMSP, but the whole city as a community of peace.”¹⁶

Another challenge cited is the need for continuing teacher training to “keep the spark in their hearts to integrate peace promotion concepts in their classrooms.”¹⁷ The JMSP community feels that there must be a continuous process of exploring new approaches and peace programs to provide more variety in the day-to-day growth of the students and to ensure the appropriateness and cultural sensitivity to the context of the learners. Moreover, the partnership with the community leaders and members of the community needs to be maintained and strengthened, in order to further the gains of the school in its peace education efforts.

Tuyan Elementary School of Peace, Malapatan, Sarangani. Barangay Tuyan is under the Municipality of Malapatan, Sarangani. It is a coastal barangay and is about three kilometers away from the central town of the municipality. It is bounded by Bgy. Poblacion of Malapatan on the south, on the west by Sarangani Bay, on the east by barangay Kinam, and on the north by Bgy. Lun Masla. Tuyan is composed of a flatland and rolling hills suited for agricultural livelihoods and is one of the leading producers of rice and corn products for the entire province.

In 2010, Tuyan registered a total population of 4,563 comprising 780 households. Majority of the ethnic groups comprising the Tuyan populace are Visayans, Ilocanos, Maguindanaons and B'laans. Common dialects are both Cebuano's and Maguindanaons with some areas still speaking the B'laan dialect. Islam is the dominant religious practice. The socio-cultural background of the community is very rich, considering its diverse populace and tribal affiliation. Like any other Filipino families, Tuyan families have strong family ties. Parents regard their children as gifts and investments for economic stability.

Tuyan Elementary School started as a Primary School in 1988, with only a small nipa classroom and with only two teachers. The school population increased since the families from nearby *barangays* such as the PH Millona and Libi transferred to the area and their children enrolled in the school as well. The school became a complete elementary school in 1999 through the efforts of the school head.¹⁸ At present, the school population is 824, and there are 18 classrooms and 18 teachers who are now holding plantilla positions, one teacher under the Local School Board and two other teachers under DepEd-ALIVE subsidized allotment.

Tuyan as a diverse community has not been spared of discriminations and biases. Until 2008 when the Tuyan School of Peace was launched, pupils had frequent petty fights because of cultural misunderstandings. The teachers as well had difficulty in dealing with these problems since some of them were not quite familiar with the socio-cultural background of the children. The values education strands in the classroom did not seem relevant since they did not address the root cause of the conflict and did not respond to the cultural needs and background of the children.

In 2008, the school head attended the DepEd-Region XII's launch of E.O 570 at Cotabato City and was also invited to participate in a Peace Education Forum held at Estosan Garden, Hotel sponsored by UNDP *Act for Peace* Program, in partnership with the Department of Education-Region XII. The presentation on JMSP made the school head express interest in transforming Tuyan ES to a school of peace. After this forum, the school head participated in another seminar on SoP enriched lesson plans on peace education. This was followed by the conduct of orientation workshops, trainings and echo seminars on SoP for

the Tuyan ES school head, management team and teachers. They were also provided trainings on how to make enriched lesson plans, integrating peace promotion concepts in all subject areas.

With the completion of these capability-building activities, the school officers and teachers dialogued with the community leaders and members on the launching of the school as a school of peace. At first, it was difficult to convene the community leaders, parents and stakeholders because of time constraints. Most of the parents were at work or busy with their livelihood activities. The school's persistence in their advocacy and community mobilization eventually paid off when the community finally made its commitment to support the Tuyan Elementary School as a school of peace. The launching program of the Tuyan School of Peace was subsequently approved by the DepED Schools Division of Sarangani in the latter part of 2008.

Since 2008, the Tuyan School of Peace has accomplished the following :¹⁹

- Training of school officers and teachers on the SoP concept. With the assistance of JMSP, the training was conducted by DepED for Tuyan an Elementary School of Peace in 2008-09.
- Development of enriched lesson plans. The school coordinated with the DepEd Schools Division of Sarangani and the UNDP *Act for Peace* to help them with the development enriched lesson plans (ELP) wherein peace concepts were integrated into all learning areas, taking into account the context and cultural situations in their community. The school faculty and community stakeholders such as the PTCA officers/members and barangay officials underwent a seminar on peace education. The teachers made their very own enriched lesson plans responsive to the cultural contexts, including the utilization of the mother-tongue of the community to make it more understandable and easily comprehensible among the school children. The teachers were given seminars on the cultural backgrounds and culturally sensitive classroom strategies.
- Actual Implementation. This was the third stage or the of the SoP implementation phase. The classroom teacher, now equipped with the enriched lesson plans and who also underwent seminars and training on the COP conducted their classes with content points on peace building. The school head observed classes to determine whether or not they had truly internalized what they learned from their trainings. This was also the project stage when the children were exposed to the differences between the conventional lessons and the peace education lesson plans.
- Implementation of EDGAR (*Enrichment Activities Designed for Graders to Appreciate Reading*) Reading Program. This program aims to provide the school children with quality education through reading programs utilizing peace modules and values-oriented reading books that serve two purposes; one is to enhance their reading skills and comprehension and two, is while reading and learning, they will be able to grasp values from the stories and paragraphs being read that are culturally-sensitive and with peace concepts . This program is implemented in all grade levels and is part of their remedial classes.
- Additional programs in support to the Peace Education are as follows: Adopt-a-School Program; *Quality Education for Sarangani Today*, and; *As A Filipino Program*.
- EQuALLS2 provision of learning materials with peace promotion themes/ concepts. During book fairs, EQuALLS2 provided Malapatan teachers, including teachers of Tuyan Elementary School of Peace, reference books with peace

promotion concepts. ELSA reproduced video lessons on peace education and gave copies to Tuyan ESoP teachers, for their classroom use in English 5 and 6. Just like in JMSP, these learning materials with peace promotion concepts have been found to be highly acceptable among teachers and students alike.

The Tuyan Elementary School of Peace has shown the following immediate results of the implementation of its peace education program:²⁰

- Enrollment rate has increased from 601 (SY 2007-2008) to 627 (SY 2008-2009) to 824 (SY 2009-2010)
- Graduation rate has increased from 92% (SY 2007-2008) to 100% (SY 2008-2009)
- It ranked Number 1 in the district, as shown in the National Achievement Test for SY 2008-2009, for Grade VI Level.
- A much friendlier environment and less petty fights in the classroom, with: less disciplinary complaints in the guidance office; teachers now display more understanding of their colleagues and pupils; pupils are more polite and exhibit unity — may they be Maguindanaon or Bla'an or Cebuano — they now mingle with each other like brothers and sisters.
- The community stakeholders now show involvement, participative attitude, regardless of religious affiliation. The whole community helps and works in planning and implementing school programs and activities.

Tuyan Elementary School of Peace, is relatively new as compared to JMSP. The school head feels that there is still need for stronger advocacy and social engineering to enrich community participation in the school's initiatives on peace education. Another challenge is the need for more teacher training on the development of enriched lesson plans. These teachers need to be given more trainings on innovative approaches in teaching peace concepts and also to showcase peace education in the context of the Tuyan community.

Further, the school officers and teachers feel that pupils must also be given a wider outside-the-classroom experience on peace promotion for them to really feel the pulse of the community and be the ones to discover the ways and means of finding solutions to conflict.²¹ Furthermore, community stakeholders in education need to be given more orientation and to be motivated some more, in order to enrich their participation in peace education initiatives of Tuyan Elementary School of Peace.

Models for Training Young People to Serve as Peace Facilitators

Throughout the project life of EQuALLS2, the ELSA Partners gave substantial attention to peace education. Peace building strategies were integrated in the training curricula of the youth camps for in-school and out-of-school-youth.

Ayala Foundation's Model for Training Young People to be Peace Facilitators.²²

Peace-building is a key element in the conceptualization and implementation of Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance-Youth Civic Engagement Program (ELSA-YCEP). In the youth engagement processes, youth leaders are chosen in areas in Mindanao, usually those under most conflict, and are trained to think in terms of building peace in pursuit of development for their communities with focus on education issues.

The peace-building component is most observed in the ELSA-YCEP camp, which is the initial input given to the youth leaders in the YCEP framework. In addition, the program implementers have singled out the “Cultures Across Mindanao” project which was developed by the campers as an offshoot output from the camp. These two areas wherein peace-building becomes prominent in ELSA-YCEP are discussed in this paper.

Peace-building elements in the ELSA-YCEP Camp

The following table identifies the components/activities within the ELSA-YCEP camp that highlights peace-building:

Activities	Objectives	Concepts Highlighted
<p>Islamic Leadership Talk</p> <p>A resource person who has extensive experience on Islamic Leadership shares about service and leadership in the context of the Islamic faith and relating to other cultures. (An example of the Islamic Leadership talk is Bai Rohaniza Sumndad-Usman’s sharing of her experience as a Filipina Muslim youth leader. The article was submitted in the first batch of write-ups.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire insights on Islamic Leadership from a Muslim Leader’s experiences on governance and service • Appreciate one’s religious belief in the context of leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-affirming one’s identity as Filipino and Muslim • Similarity on Leadership concept between Islam and other religions
<p>Servant Leadership Talk</p> <p>A resource person is invites to discuss the principles of Robert Greenleaf’s Servant Leadership as a paradigm for personal leadership focused on service and community-building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire knowledge on Servant Leadership as a leadership paradigm, as well as its principles • Reflect on how different religious belief can apply this leadership paradigm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To lead is to serve • Servant Leadership is a process of becoming
<p>Film Viewing: “Dear Peace”</p> <p>Description: A documentary video of the Peace Camp conducted by Communications Foundation for Asia (CFA) in May 2006, which brought together Christian and Muslim students of Ramon Avanceña High School. The video showcases the artwork, stories and photos of the kids during the camp. Christian-Muslim issues and other peace issues confronted by young Muslim and Christians</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciate the ongoing peace efforts done by local and international groups, NGO’s and government, and Muslim and non-Muslim groups to improve the quality of life of people in ARMM • Attain a level of awareness and a “reasonably” disturbed state that would move them to make their own contributions to community building efforts in ARMM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity in diversity • Community building does not discriminate • Focus on commonalities and not differences • Becoming reasonably disturbed

Activities	Objectives	Concepts Highlighted
<p>Visioning and Group values</p> <p>Description: The activity is a time for the campers to create their personal and community vision. The values they will live by even after the camp and regardless of religion and tradition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realize the importance of putting other people before one's own benefit • Establish a consensus on their group values, which will guide them in implementing activities when they go back to their respective communities • Recognize principles of servant leadership as applied to the camper's personal leadership journey in light of the conditions that their communities face 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus Building • Empathy, Listening • Foresight • Peace building

Aside from these activities, the camp becomes an opportunity for the campers to meet other youth leaders who belong to other ethnic groupings (e.g., being Maranao, Maguindanaoan, Tausug, among others) and religious beliefs.

Ethnic groupings have had influences in the conflicts in Mindanao – in the past and latently in present conflicts – as Mindanaoans have a sense of ethnic identity prevalent among them. These ethnic groupings, combined with strong kinship ties, have great influence in the prevalence of “rido” or clan wars in Mindanao. Some camp facilitators expressed that the campers would share how they were taught to view other ethnic groups as they were growing up. They often incorporate the biases against other ethnic groups without actual experiences of conflict. However, the camp gives opportunity to the campers to meet and befriend each other, no matter what ethnic affiliation (and/or religious beliefs) they have.

1. Cultures Across Mindanao Program (CAMP): Offshoot Peace-building Project

Getting the youth involved in peace work and dialogue is a key element for the long-term work of peace in Mindanao. Young people stand to inherit the shortcomings as much as the successes of those that came before them. As such, working closely with youth groups and individuals interested in pursuing peace in the region helps in sustaining development programs in some of the Philippines' most war-torn areas. The Cultures Across Mindanao Program (CAMP) has shown that by working closely with young leaders and by providing adequate avenues for genuine conversation and collaboration, making real the promise of lasting peace and development in Mindanao is entirely possible.

A Vision of Peace for the Tri-People of Mindanao

The Cultures Across Mindanao Program (CAMP) is an offshoot project of the EYLC. The Program was envisioned to reach out to more young people from Mindanao and ARMM

and to engage them in the tri-people dialogue to foster brotherhood and peace across the many different communities in the region.

To get a more representative and diverse group of participants, CAMP was divided into two locations. The first CAMP was set up in Koronadal, South Cotabato – which covered participants from North and South Cotabato, Cotabato City, Maguindanao, Kidapawan, Bukidnon, Cagayan de Oro, Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur. The program’s second installment was set up in Zamboanga – this camp catered to the areas of Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga Sibugay, Dipolog, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. Thirty to thirty-five participants from each of the three major groups in Mindanao – Christians, Muslims and the Indigenous Peoples – were selected based on their leadership characteristics and proven track records. In other words, the participants should be able to demonstrate that they are in a position to share and re-echo the learnings they would gain from the CAMP.

With no participant more than 25 years old during the program, CAMP was a mix of in-school and out-of-school youth that “believed and were hopeful that peace can happen if continuous dialogue, appreciation of cultures and bonds among the three groups is constantly pursued.”

It is this passion for peace that CAMP hopes to keep burning.

CAMP Topics and Curriculum

Essentially a peace camp, the Cultures Across Mindanao Program engages the youth to foster brotherhood and build lasting friendships among the tri-people of Mindanao. CAMP’s curriculum is the output of Ayala Foundation’s (AFI), harnessing 10 years of experience through its extensive work with youth leaders and innovators of the Ayala Young Leaders Congress (AYLC). Also, AFI has had 3 years of experience running the EYLC in Mindanao and has used its consultative process with different organizations representing the tri-people.

Local partners were likewise involved in the implementation of the program: these are Tuklas Katutubo for inputs on the Indigenous Peoples and the Asia-America Initiative for inputs on Islam and the Muslims.

The participants were taught the following: self awareness, culture awareness, faith appreciation, leadership, friendship, teamwork, trust, and vision. These topics were strengthened through experiential learning with the participants undertaking the CAMP’s different activities such as workshops, prayer time, dialogues, problem initiatives, outdoor activities, panel discussions, testimonials situationers (see boxed article by Bae Rohaniza Sumndad), World Café and service learning.

A Way Forward

One of the many victories the CAMP gained was that it allowed the participants to understand the biases that existed among the tri-people. One participant remarked, “After the camp, I was able to better understand where the biases came from. More importantly, I was able to correct the erroneous notions about my people and explain to my fellow participants our side of the story. To be able to tell my story without fear of judgment or discrimination was a good feeling.”

The CAMP was truly an eye-opening experience for young participants. Common experiences of war, conflict and discrimination brought about the participants’ determination

to work and band together for better understanding of cultural differences and, ultimately, service. This became the common vision surfaced by the participants during CAMP's two part run.

For the IP's in the group, CAMP was a "once in a lifetime experience where they felt appreciated and accepted" by their peers. A CAMP facilitator echoed that statement, "Hearing that was particularly moving for me. It is not every day that you are able to share that moment with a group of promising young people."²³

The CAMP also created friendships among participants. Another facilitator was surprised to learn that participants from the program communicated with each other regularly even after the CAMP wrapped up. "Personally I was surprised. It is amazing how a simple activity – like CAMP – could impact the lives, relationships and the psyches of our participants. If the experiences gained from the camp were strong enough to change and impact young leaders, then we have done our part in contributing to lasting peace that every Mindanaoan deserves,"²⁴

“Peace: A Responsibility of Every Mindanaoan.” A Journey of Peace-building and Youth Leadership Development in Mindanao

Peace-building is one of the key strategies to sustain long-term growth and development in the Philippines, most especially in the war-torn areas of Mindanao. Various groups and organizations work closely with the communities and leaders in these areas to continuously educate, empower and improve the lives of an already embattled people.

This article is lifted from the testimonial given by Bae Rohaniza Sumndad of the Asia-America Initiative on the topic of peace and development work in Mindanao. Her speech provided the participants with a live case grounding on the reality of peace and the effort and commitment it demands.

The Asia America Initiative is a non-profit organization dedicated to being a catalyst for social and economic development inspiring in communities on the frontlines of conflict and terror.

The stepping stones of peace

It is no coincidence that the staunchest advocates for peace are those who have lived through their own experience of cruel, violent and painful war. Bae Rohaniza was seven when she had her first brush with conflict. "I can still recall when I was still staying with my family in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. I was just seven years old during the Gulf War. I remember my dad plastering all our doors and windows just in case a chemical explosion would occur. I remember carrying gas masks everywhere we went, and staying in one room inside the house once we hear the siren that warns us whenever there's a missile coming. I remember feeling our room shaking whenever the bombs were dropped," she shares.

Her most vivid memories of that time include the crowds of Filipino workers seeking shelter in the school she went to, a stone's throw from the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh. She would never forget the faces of her fellow Filipinos, suffering and afraid of the war. "Looking back, I realize how the conditions of that time are pain-

fully similar to what the children in Mindanao experience in their own schools today [during times of conflict],” says Bae Rohaniza.

It was inevitable for her to return to the Philippines and Mindanao to continue working for peace. “I am simply doing my share in giving Mindanao a peaceful life and a greater future,” submits Bae Rohaniza.

She believes Allah, through her early experience with war and conflict, has prepared her well for the life that she has chosen – “As a peace advocate, I have devoted myself and my time to doing peace and development work with special interest on building hope and empowering communities in the different conflict areas in Mindanao and some Muslim communities in Metro Manila through an organization called The Asia-America Initiative (AAI),” she shares. Through peace-building programs centered on the youth in the areas of education, livelihood, health, community-building and empowerment, she hopes to influence as many young people to be the prime-movers of peace in the country.

Peace takes work

However, the journey towards peace has been long and often times tenuous. “I have travelled a long way on the path towards peace. If I were to literally put it: I took helicopters, Air Force planes like the C130, a slow boat, a van traveling through a very rough road where I almost got ambushed and an open truck just to reach the communities that need our help. It is still a long way to go, but I will never stop driving the road to peace,” she says.

Spanning five centuries the Mindanao conflict is the second-oldest running conflict on Earth and the second-oldest internal conflict in the world, second only to the conflict between North and South Sudan. Since 1970, an estimated 120,000 deaths can be directly attributed to the conflict and the incidence of internally displaced people is not uncommon. Generations of Mindanaons have lived each day of their lives with problems, issues and challenges all rooted in the issue of peace and stability in the region. “Every day we ask ourselves, what will happen to us? What future awaits the next generation? What kind of life will our children and families have?” she asks, voicing out the fears that run through the minds of many Mindanaons especially the youth who stand to inherit the mistakes and successes made by those who came before them.

According to Bae Rohaniza, this is precisely why doing peace and development work in Mindanao is important. She believes that the youth have a large part to play in sustaining the gains of their predecessors and at the same time be the very catalysts of peace through new and innovative strategies and advocacies for peace studies and long-term development in the Philippines and most especially, in Mindanao. Organizations such as Bae Rohaniza’s AAI initiate social and economic development programs in communities at the frontline of conflict and terror activities. Their key strategy to ensuring the sustainability of peace and progress in these areas is to employ an “inter-generational approach” that seeks to involve more children and youth in communities as these sectors have always been targeted as potential recruits for terror groups in the region.

She shares, “I believe that if we want to positively change a generation and be able to reinforce action towards a peace movement, then we should already change the

mindset in the early years of a child up to his or her maturity.” She notes that the younger generation of today has been very expressive of their sentiments, their advocacies and is quick to air objection towards the anomalies they are able to observe in their surroundings. Bae Rohaniza introduces the BRAVO Scheme that she hopes the campers would reflect on and replicate in their respective communities: “**B**reaking the barriers between different religions and cultures especially between Muslims and Christians, be the **V**oice of the people of Mindanao and help them create **O**pportunities to develop their resources and to give them a better life that they deserve.”

Peace is personal

The universal longing for peace is somewhat undermined by the tumult and unrest in many parts of the world, many parts of Mindanao included. Bae Rohaniza stresses that the work of peace must not be shortsighted, instead it has to ensure that succeeding generations will likewise inherit and sustain peace. It is a common fear for the youth to feel voiceless in the face of conflict, resulting in them leaving it up to the government or intergovernmental organizations such as the UN to “do the job” of attaining peace.

“We talk about peace and we learn about it in school but we don’t realize that we must have a personal stake in achieving it if we want it. It is not enough that we talk about peace, we should believe in it and of course – work at it,” implores Bae Rohaniza. She quotes Lyndon Johnson saying, “Peace is a journey of a thousand miles and it must be taken one step at a time.”

“Many have put forward solutions to the conflict in Mindanao, but actually the answer is found deep within us Mindanaons. Ultimately, peace is our responsibility. The culture of peace should start from and within you and me,” she shares.

Perceptions on the Impact of the Peace Building of the Youth Camps

1.1 Campers and Facilitators. The campers felt that they were able to personally experience peace-building towards development through the community scanning and project implementation activities that they had to undergo under the YCEP framework. From the feedback given by program managers and mentors in the field, the campers frequently talked about how they became more aware about the conflicts in their community. These conflicts are not just about the armed conflicts that happen in Mindanao, but also the conflicts in cultural practices and perceptions, and biases against religions. The campers also pinpointed that conflicts arise as a result of issues on systems for service delivery and representation of the minority. The social consciousness that the ELSA-YCEP experience brings is met with the capacity-building in order for the campers to address pertinent issues to them within the boundaries of their current capabilities.

All projects implemented by the campers involved engagement with a variety of groups, and this was the primary skill-training focus of the ELSA-YCEP training engagement phase. Many of the campers have shown promise in their multi-cultural and multi-religious engagements. One camper expressed that when faced with initial resistance from the community on the proposed project, his personal values and faith in God were able to empower him to continue pursuing the project. A leadership camp (modeled after the

ELSA-YCEP camp) allowed its participants to be conscious of the conflicts in Mindanao and the country. The campers said that they are now more prepared to listen and respect the people in their communities regardless of religious affiliation or ethnic roots.

The facilitators also expressed their personal learning points in being engaged in the YCEP project, particularly with the diversity of the youth leaders they interacted with in the process. Some of the comments are:

“Bilang facilitator, nalaman ko na given an opportunity, kaya ng mga kabataan ng Mindanao na mangarap para sa kanilang sarili at komunidad. Hindi hadlang ang pagkakaiba ng relihiyon para sa kaunlaran. [As facilitator I learned that given an opportunity, the youth of Mindanao have the capacity to dream for themselves and their communities. Religious difference is not a hindrance to development.”

Joseph Navarro

“I learned how to adapt in groups with diverse cultures and backgrounds. I learned to be more culture-sensitive.”

Cash Maghirang

The facilitators also highlighted how their experience of tri-people training helps them in making the approach to their other trainings more inclusive and more open to diversity.

1.2 AFI on implementing youth-centered peace-building programs. In a *Lessons Learned* session of the camp, the AFI Senior Manager noted that ELSA-YCEP has been a breakthrough in the youth development engagement experience because of its tri-people and peace-building element.²⁵ The inclusiveness and openness that must be taken into account in every step of the conceptualization, planning, and implementing process has been felt in the other AFI programs as well.

In the same session and through consultations with program managers and implementers, the following are other lessons identified on implementing youth-centered peace-building programs:

- The people running the program must be peace advocates themselves, as their priorities and passion for the cause resonates in all stages and activities of the project. This means that the managers and staff must have high interest in learning and understanding other cultures, show respect towards people of other cultures, and display a strong sense of sensitivity and openness to others. These should be present on top of their technical competencies as staff.
- The people in the program should also be pro-youth. Management of youth-centered programs demand heavily on how the managers and staff personally believe in the capacity of the youth. This need is intensified by the peace-building element in the ELSA-YCEP implementation, because the youth are taught how to approach peace issues in a strategic way. As one manager shared:

“You have to balance their belief in a vision with the realities of the capacities and resources available to them. You have to let them set a vision, that dream that they will pursue throughout their lives as leaders. But you also have to guide them into planning their action based on their capacities, and not on illusions of grandeur. A youth leader cannot put an end to rido, for example, but you must guide the camper to identify gaps he can fill so he can contribute to a systematic solution.”

- Mentors have a very important role in the process. They serve as the program’s face to the campers and the communities due to the geographical distance of AFI’s program implementers. The mentors mean access. They function as help and support to the campers in their day-to-day decisions and project implementation steps. Hence, the mentors must be empowered and trained to perform their responsibilities well. Effective communication must be secured. Mentors must also be recognized for the work they are doing.

The program must not only stop in a tri-people approach, but further the engagement to include the groups within the tri-people and other institutions like the schools and even out-of-school youth groups. The program is in a position to systematically strategize the roles and contributions of each stakeholder in the process. The program must be aware of the presence of different stakeholder in each program level – from the national program secretariat, to the regional areas with the schools, to local leaders, community groups, among others. Peace-building’s elements of inclusiveness must account for stakeholder engagement as precedence to the campers on what they can do. The program is a ‘project model’ in itself.

Nagdilaab Foundation’s Model for Training Young People to be Peace Facilitators. Nagdilaab Foundation is ELSA/Consuelo’s field implementing partner in Basilan in charge of the EQuALLS2 ALS project component aimed at improving relevance of education and training for out-of-school youth. Just like the other ELSA/Consuelo field implementing partners in charge of this project component, Nagdilaab has integrated peace education modules in all its training programs in basic education and workforce development.

The following is a three-day peace education module, Culture of Peace (COP) , which is part of Nagdilaab’s training program for its basic education and workforce development program learners:

DAY I

Objectives:

1. To build an ambiance of unity and acceptance despite of differences in religions and beliefs.
2. To enable the participants feel the warmly welcome and sense of belongingness.

The list of participants/ attendance sheet is major reference material which enables the facilitator to

1. Check the composition of the participants (Christian and Muslim). Request a representative from each group to lead a ecumenical prayer one at a time.
2. Thank the representatives and allow the participants to sit comfortably first before the welcome remarks.
3. Brief the one who will give the welcome remarks about the nature of the training as well as the composition of the participants for him or her to be able to give remarks that would not alienate the participants. If possible the School Head or President of the school will do this task.
4. Say thank you to your guest immediately after his/her remarks.

Getting To Know You (Personal ID) is an opening session which aims to :

1. To introduce the process of the activity
2. To create a friendly environment

The procedure is as follows:

1. Ask the participants to pick a meta card, then they will divide it into four spaces.
2. On the left upper side of the meta card, write your personal information (name, nickname, position).
3. On the left lower side of the meta card, write your interest and hobbies
4. On the right upper side of the meta card, write the symbol of yourself. (Draw or write the word)
5. On the right lower side of the meta card, write the other info about yourself that you want to share
6. They have an option to color their work using crayons. Give them 5 minutes to complete their task.

Juan dela Cruz	Tree
Juan	
Teacher	
Reading books	Singing and dancing
Writing Poems	
Meeting people	

7. After the suggested time, ask them to form a circle.
8. Those *in the inner circle face those in the outer circle*.
9. The inner circle will turn clockwise and the outer circles turn counter clockwise.
10. Ask your partner what is written in the personal ID.
11. Do the same process until they will interview everybody else in the room.
12. Make sure that everybody understands the instructions before starting the activity.

Session 1 is “Symbol of Peace” which aims to draw out from each participant their personal view on peace

Procedure:

1. Ask each participant to draw their own symbol of peace
2. Ask them to form a circle and share their output to the group
3. Divide them into small groups and consolidate their own work
4. Followed by the group presentation

Processing revolves on:

1. How did they feel about the activity?
2. What did they learn from the sharing?

Session 2 is *Understanding CoP in the Context of Peace Education: Orientation*, with the following inputs:

1. What is Culture of Peace?
2. What is Peace Education
3. Educating Towards a Culture of Peace

A corollary session is “Understanding Self” aimed at cultivating inner peace, with the following inputs:

1. Need for Personal Peace
2. Components of Personal Peace
3. Peace Education can foster Personal Peace

A suggested reflection exercise: The story of the King who offered a prize to the artist who could paint the best picture of peace

A session on “Understanding Conflict” covers:

1. Definition of Conflict
2. Causes of Conflict
3. Peaceful Ways in Resolving Conflict
4. Anger Management

Workshop 1 seeks to delve on: What are the usual causes of conflict in your own relationship? What prevents you from solving these conflicts?

Workshop 2: What are obstacles to conflict resolution?

Workshop 3: Paper Activity is on “Mediation”

1. What is mediation?
2. Characteristics of a good mediator
3. Mediating Skills
4. Conflict Mapping

A Role Playing Exercise is included in Workshops 3 :

DAY 2

Session 4 is Dismantling the Culture of War, specifically on peace concept integration by understanding the proliferation of gun culture. At the end of the session, a participant is expected to: state what is gun culture, and to identify its manifestations and threats to society

The process includes the following activities:

1. Introduction
2. Preparatory activity (Brainstorming). Ask participants to share what they already know about the gun culture
3. Input/Discussion: participants are divided into small groups; each group is given materials: manila paper, pilot pen, and handouts on gun culture; a participant reads and discusses the content of the handouts and the guide question that follow; a small group sharing plenary ensues.
4. Reflection questions include: What is my view and understanding of a gun culture? Is it possible to create a gunless society? Why?

Session 5 is “Living in Compassion and Justice” and the main topic is *Peace Concept Integration: Social Justice*. Participants are expected to define social justice and identify primary indicators of social justice.

The process includes:

1. Introduction
2. Preparatory activity (film viewing: Tayo na sa Talipapa)
3. Inputs/discussion points:
 - social injustice (SI) is related to the issue of poverty
 - absence of justice and means not conforming to the principle of righteousness and rectitude of all things
 - the non-performance of “moral obligations”
 - the absence of integrity in the dealings of men with each other
 - ACTS that violate the rights of people are example of SOCIAL INJUSTICE

Reflection Questions: Is it God’s will that there are those who live in poverty and that there are those who live in abundance? Have you ever experienced injustice? How?

Session 6 is “Building Intercultural Respect, Reconciliation and Solidarity” and the main topic is: *Peace Integration Concept: Different People in Mindanao*. The participants are expected to: identify social and cultural characteristics of people in Mindanao; develop a sense of empathy and solidarity, and; respect for cultural differences

The concept development session activities are:

1. Introduction
2. Preparatory Activity
 - Present different pictures of people in Mindanao
 - Let the participants identify/guess which ethno-linguistic groups the people belong as shown in the picture
 - Ask the participant where they can be found
3. Input/Discussion (Group Activity)
 - Divide the participants into small groups
 - Give each group an article about a certain group of people in Mindanao
 - Give them 10 minutes to read the article and answer the question assigned to them

Group 1: At present how many ethnic group are there in Mindanao?

Group 2: Name some ethnic group and where they can be found

Group 3: How do they view the land of Mindanao?

Group 4: The facilitators may include other topics.

Suggested reflection questions are: What are my values as a human being? (as Tausug, Yakan, Bisaya? Do all people have potentials? If so, why do some societies develop structures undermining the dignity of some groups of people?

Session 7 is “Promoting Human Rights and Living in Harmony with the Earth”, focusing on Peace Concept Integration: Living Peaceably with the Earth (Environmental Activism)

The concept development activities are:

1. Introduction (people making conscious decision about the environment)
2. Preparatory Activity (team building activities)
3. Input/Discussion
 - Action planning for possible projects that advocate conservation and preservation of the environment
 - Surrounding’s Check:
 - divide the participants into small groups
 - give each group a copy of the Assessment Checklist “My School, My Environment”, and ask them to answer based on the situation they see in their school and in the larger community

Reflection Questions include :What will happen to us in the future if we continue to ignore such environmental issues as pollution, deforestation and illegal fishing? What can we do to solve the problem? Another major topic in Day II is “Peace Concept Integration: Human Rights Advocacy” and the main handout is the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights

Concept development activities are:

1. Introductory Activity: Read a case study
 - identify issues
 - problems and rights violated
 - suggests possible solution to the problem
2. Input/Discussion points are:
 - Defining issues and concerns
 - Divide participants into small groups
 - Ask participants to identify local problems and issues that concern them. List them down and determine which specific provision/article in the UDHR guarantee this right. Example: Hunger and Poverty: Article 25. Everyone has the right to a quality standard of living

Reflection Questions are: Why is there a need to demand respect for human dignity? Are you motivated to get involved with some community work/affairs? Which of these, would you like your group to be involved in?

DAY 3

Session 8 is “Peace Education Pedagogy and Total School Approach” covering the topic “The HOW of Education for Peace

1. Input/Discussion items are
 - a. Four Pedagogical Principles
 - b. What is Total School Approach?
2. Reflection questions are: Would it be possible for us to do this total school approach? What are some of the challenges?

Session 9 is “Subject Integration Ideas

1. Input/Discussion:
 - Presentation of subject and possible explorations

Session 10 is “Visioning and Planning”

1. Introduction: What is visioning
2. Activity: Divide participants according to the school they belong to
 - Ask participants to write their present conditions at school and what will be their desired future
 - Using the theory of change
3. Presentation of each group
4. Commitment Building
5. Processing

CLOSING PROGRAM

In addition to the COP module which are built into the basic education and workforce development training programs, Nagdilaab also holds a trainors' training on trauma healing wherein the participants gain skills in handling trauma healing and stress debriefing sessions among the learners with traumatic experiences.

“An uncle of mine is a freedom fighter and he encourages me to join him in the mountains. Since the time I participated in the “Culture of Peace” module in my course in automotive repair, I have decided not to join him. Now, I am able to share my learnings with my neighbors and other community members. At the same time, I am able to help my father in earning some income for my family.”

WFD completer

Nagdilaab has been tapped by various groups—government agencies, other NGOs and people's groups to conduct the COP training programs and the trainors' training on trauma healing. These requesting agencies recognize the value of these peace education initiatives in helping promote peace and understanding at the community level in Basilan



ELSA's Learnings on What Works in Implementing Peace Education Programs in Mindanao

IN THE IMPLEMENTATION of peace education initiatives in ELSA project sites, several lessons have been expressed by beneficiaries, project implementors, managers and leaders:

The beneficiaries of peace education initiatives show substantial appreciation for the classroom and out-of-school activities on peace building. They appreciate the learning materials provided to them and they use these materials several times during the school year or during the BE and WFD training programs. In the AFI youth camps, the campers became more aware about the conflicts in their community – not just about the armed conflicts, but also the conflicts in cultural practices and perceptions, and biases against religions. The campers also noted that conflicts are often caused by issues on systems for service delivery and representation of the minority. It is therefore an imperative for peace education planners, managers and implementors to provide the necessary capability-building programs that include these issues in order to adequately capacitate the learners both in the formal and non-formal settings. Further, adequate relevant and culturally-sensitive learning materials need to be provided on a continuing basis in order to sustain the interest of learners on peace promotion in their school, in other places of learning and in the community.

As underscored by the planners/managers of the schools of peace and as noted by AFI, the people implementing peace education programs must be peace advocates themselves, as their priorities and passion for the cause resonate in all stages and activities of the project. They must first be interested in learning and understanding other cultures, show respect towards people of other cultures, and display a strong sense of sensitivity and openness to others. These attributes should be in addition to their technical competencies as managers and implementors of peace education projects.

At the management level, a major perception is that school heads, managers of training programs with peace education components, teachers and mentors have an important role in the process of learning peace concepts. In the classrooms, they serve as models for their students – in their hands lie the burden of delivering appropriate learning strands on peace building. In the youth camps, they serve as the program's face to the campers and the communities. The teachers and mentors mean learners' access to peace education. There is therefore a need for them to continuously acquire newer peace education strategies and approaches as well as sufficient teaching materials with peace concepts. The youth camp mentors need to be empowered and trained to perform their responsibilities well. Effective communication must be secured. Mentors must also be recognized for the work they are doing.

At the direction-setting level, a main ELSA learning is that the presence of a solid commitment from the education leaders from the national to the local levels helps ensure an equally solid field implementation of peace education initiatives. In the Philippines, this is reflected in the succession of activities from the national to the local levels after Executive Order No. 570 was issued in 2006. National agencies and their regional offices, as well as NGOs and people's organizations responded with the infusion of various strategies in the following project components: curriculum work, lesson development, community mobilization, peace camps and other capability-building strategies.

Just like in other development initiatives, a multi-agency and multi-level partnership is present in the peace education initiatives supported by ELSA. This has helped ensure the programs address the different tasks called for in project planning and implementation – instructional design, acquisition of learning materials, lesson planning, engaging the services of field implementing partners, resource mobilization, community orientation, monitoring and evaluation.

END NOTES

- 1 The full description of the lessons learned and insights gained by ELSA in its effort to support peace education in its project sites under USAID/EQuALLS2 is in the last section of Part Two of the Report.
- 2 Clarke-Habibi, Sara. "Transforming Worldviews: The Case of Education for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Journal of Transformative Education*. Vol. 3:1. (Jan. 2005): 35-56. CSA Illumina. Auraria Library. 10 Nov. 2006.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Interview with Estrella A. Babano, former DepED Region XII Director
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 *Ibid.*
- 7 *Act for Peace* Programme, UNDP, Project Brief.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 Jack K Boyson, session on **Approaches to Conflict Management** during the ELSA Peace Education Forum, Notre Dame of Marbel, Koronadal City, Philippines, February 9, 2010
- 12 The description of J. Marquez School of Peace and Tuyan Elementary School of Peace was derived from interviews with the school administrators, faculty and community stakeholders of the two schools. Visits to these schools also afforded the ELSA M/E team to observe the development of enriched lesson plans to integrate peace-building concepts and to review documents and reports on the planning and implementation of activities on peace education, namely teacher training, community orientation and advocacy/promotions work.
- 13 Interview with Peter Van Ang-ug, School Head, JMSP, April 14-15, 2011
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 Interview with Edgar Egano, School Head, Tuyan Elementary School of Peace, April 20, 2011
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 *Ibid.*
- 21 *Ibid.*
- 22 Written Marcia Czarina Corazon Medina, Maria Meliza Tuba, and Ireneo Demecais, Jr. for AFI's evaluation report on the ELSA-YCEP implementation
- 23 CAMP facilitator Bayani Alonto
- 24 CAMP facilitator Ireneo Demecais
- 25 **CAMP Lessons Learned Session** facilitated by Mario A. Deriquito, AFI Senior Manager





RESEARCH TEAM

Jack Boyson

ELSA Program Director

Gutierrez A. Mangansakan

*ELSA Monitoring and
Evaluation Specialist*

Pancho Balawag

*DepED Region XII Supervisor
EQuALLS2 Regional Coordinator*

Agney Taruc

DepED Region XII Supervisor

Sara Spears

ELSA / IYF Program Operations Manager

Miriam Suacito

NFI Executive Director

Gonzalo Rivera

Ayala Foundation Inc., Manager

Noemi B. Silva, Ph.D

Notre Dame University of Marbel, Professor

Maria Meliza Tuba

Ayala Foundation, Inc., Researcher

Sajid Lim-Peuto

IYF Researcher

Zenaida T. Domingo, Ph.D.

ELSA Project Director

Niño Rocamora

ELSA Program Specialist

Concepcion Balawag

*Schools Division of Cotabato City
Assistant Schools Division Superintendent*

Danilo Camerino

ELSA Administrative and Finance Officer

Luis Morales

ELSA Resource Person

Eileen Dizon

Consuelo Foundation, Program Officer

Ireneo Demecais, Jr.

Ayala Foundation, Inc., Camp Facilitator

Marcia Czarina Corazon Medina

Ayala Foundation, Researcher

Casandra Balawag

IYF Researcher

Ritchie Luzong

ELSA Administrative Assistant



PEACE EDUCATION in Mindanao Schools and Communities Assisted by the Education and Livelihood Skills Alliance (ELSA) under the USAID/EQuALLS2 Project

