

Conference Proceedings



2ND SOUTHEAST ASIAN
CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVES

BUILDING PEOPLES' MOVEMENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE
MODEL OF REGIONALISM



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TAIWAN FOUNDATION
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DAY ONE

October 23, 2019

Opening Remarks

Maria Cynthia Rose B. Bautista, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of the Philippines System

(Delivered by Alyssa M. Peleo-Alampay, Ph.D.,
Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs (Curriculum),
University of the Philippines System)

My apologies for not being able to deliver my opening remarks personally due to a previous commitment in another part of the metropolis.

It is my pleasure and honor to open the second in a series of conferences on alternatives in Southeast Asia. I thank and congratulate my colleagues in the Program on Alternative Development of the Center for Integrative and Development Studies for organizing this conference around the theme “Building People’s Movements in Southeast Asia: Towards an Alternative Model of Regionalism.”



▼ The conference was opened with a cultural performance by the Kontemporaryong Gamelan Pilipino (Kontra-GaPi)



Last year's conference shared grassroots initiatives that have enabled peoples' access to justice, ecology and food sovereignty, and gender justice and governance. It tackled alternative development 'experiments' in the thematic areas of solidarity economy, culture as alternative, alternative health care, and right to housing and social protection. As I expressed in my opening remarks then, the first conference reminded me of my late professor Erik Wright's concept of "real utopias"—alternatives to mainstream development that cynical pragmatists have dismissed as mere fantasies. Accordingly, such alternative visions sometimes remain in the realm of fantasy that encourage its adherents "to embark on trips that have no real destinations at all or worse still, which lead...towards some unforeseen abyss."¹ For Wright, it is necessary for the deepest aspirations for a just and humane society of our community of development workers to be reconciled with practical realities. Their engagement in addressing the contradiction between dreams and practice—by grounding dreams in initiatives and experiments such as those presented in the last conference—substantiates Wright's concept of "real utopias."

In my opening remarks last year, I noted that the diverse undertakings in Southeast Asia, which have thrived for years and on their own, indicate that empowering local communities is critically important to development, particularly to development based on social justice, inclusivity, and sustainability. What this points to is the appreciation that local people are not only potential beneficiaries or recipients of development efforts, but are themselves primary sources of knowledge and experience that should be significantly define—using Wright's term—the destination, as well as the process towards that destination.

I am especially heartened that this year's conference takes off from the premise that intensified participation can effectively generate multiple pathways to development. What inspires me this year is that thought that while our community of development workers recognize a latent function of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in highlighting the role of localized initiatives in bringing "out of obscurity numerous marginalized people-centered practices to give them more space and a louder voice in development discourse," the participants in the conference, as members of a larger community of alternative society builders, are critiquing the SDGs not by dismissing the value of the framework, but by showing the conditions under which it is valid and its limits as a framework. For instance, the framework does not pay attention to the issue of increasing social inequality.

I am also heartened because this conference envisions a peoples' regional integration based on the alternative practices of communities and networks. More than two decades ago, colleagues in the University who were actively engaged with the ASEAN as a network of strategic think tanks have ventured into laying down the second track of diplomacy, what they referred to as "people-to-people diplomacy." On hindsight, they may have been imagining networks of development NGOs in the region, but perhaps the vision may not have encompassed networks of such organizations at the grassroots, some of whom experience adversities due to their critical stance towards governments

1 Erik Olin Wright, *Envisioning Real Utopias* (London/ New York: Verso, 2010), 4.



in ASEAN. Many alternative initiatives and models on the ground may be anathema to those in power, precisely because they give the powerless voice and the courage to stand against inhumane and unjust structures at the local level.

In the last six years, I have been working with the ASEAN Secretariat in establishing the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework and with the ASEAN University Network as it increasingly tackles the political economy of ASEAN. I have come to realize the role of ASEAN. For instance, its fifty-year existence as an organization and vision of a vibrant ASEAN economy are only possible if it takes a concerted stance for neutrality vis-à-vis the US and China. It will splinter the moment these superpowers demand loyalty from each member state. On the other hand, the ongoing effort of university-industry alliances to contribute to the linking of technology innovation hubs and segmentation of the market has its role in improving the quality of life of ASEAN citizens.

▲ UP Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs (Curriculum) Dr. Alyssa M. Peleo-Alampay delivers the opening remarks of UP Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Maria Cynthia Rose B. Bautista



▲ UP CIDS Executive Director
Dr. Teresa S. Encarnacion
Tadem delivers her welcome
remarks

Welcome Remarks

Teresa S. Encarnacion Tadem, Ph.D.
Executive Director
UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies

Distinguished guests, colleagues and friends, good morning.

On behalf of the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS), I wish to welcome you all to the second Southeast Asian Conference on Alternatives of the UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development. The theme for this year's conference is "Building People's Movements in Southeast Asia: Towards an Alternative Model of Regionalism."

This forum is part of the 2019 activities of the UP CIDS, which is the policy research unit of the UP System. Founded in 1985 by then UP President Edgardo Angara, the UP CIDS is currently under the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Since its inception, the UP CIDS has sought to encompass various perspectives, methodologies, and ideologies in its conduct of basic and policy-oriented research. Under the current UP administration's strategic trajectory, the UP CIDS aims to contribute to national development and knowledge creation through enhancing research, publications, and creative work. Its channels to implement this vision include lectures, forums, conferences—as we have for these next two days—as well as publications, which include discussion papers, policy briefs, monographs, and the *Philippine Journal of Public Policy: Interdisciplinary Development Perspectives*. These are all available in the UP CIDS website, as well as in print copies.

To attain this, the UP CIDS presently has re-established, as well as established, twelve programs since August 2017 and its Local-Regional Studies Network. The programs constitute the following clusters: on

Education and Capacity Building, we have the Education Research Program which focuses on education governance from the primary to the secondary levels; Higher Education Research and Policy Reform Program, which specifically looks at issues and concerns in the country's universities and technical schools, among others; the Assessment Curriculum, and Technology Research Program, which feeds into the Department of Education's curriculum needs; and the Data Science for Public Policy, which focuses on big data.

Our conference host and organizer, the UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development, is in the Cluster on Development, which also includes the Program on Escaping the Middle Income Trap: Chains for Change, which documents the best practices of value chain models which involve linking small agricultural farmers to small and medium enterprises and big plantations in Mindanao; the Political Economy Program, which engages government on its manufacturing and industrial policies; and the Program on Health Systems Development, which is involved in instituting a primary health care system all over the country.

And lastly, we have the Cluster on the Social Sciences, which includes the Islamic Studies Program, which is presently looking into the problems confronted by the transition of the ARMM to the BARMM and the institutionalization of cultural practices on the ground in the Muslim areas. The other programs in this cluster include the Program on Social and Political Change, which focuses on research involving the impact of constitutional change and electoral politics, among others; and the Strategic Studies Program, which looks at the country's foreign relations in general and regional security aspects which impact on the Philippines, particularly its relationship with China.

Of these programs, it is the Program on Alternative Development which looks into grassroots initiatives that may be transformed into public policy at the local and regional levels. As noted in its program rationale, "[t]he perceived failure of mainstream and dominant paradigms to meaningfully address the issues and concerns of Southeast Asia is viewed by civil society organization and social movements as rooted in a market-centered and state-supported process. These are said to be accountable to only the narrow-vested interests of economic elites and political oligarchies which further widens the gap between the rich and poor within countries causing unparalleled debasement of the environment." Thus, the need to search for an alternative model of development—one that is based on what Southeast Asian peoples are already doing on the ground, guided by cooperation, solidarity, mutual benefit, the commons principle, and joint development.

This conference, with its theme "Building Peoples' Movements in Southeast Asia: Towards an Alternative Model of Regionalism," is the second installment of this effort, the first conference of which was held last year. It is most welcomed that for the second conference, there are additional case studies of alternative practices in the region, particularly on Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Northeast India, Philippines, and the Thai-Myanmar border.

I have no doubt that there will be an interesting and relevant dialogue with regards to these experiments and practices from the ground, as well as a fruitful exchange of ideas on how to institutionalize this framework of development in the region.

Opening Address

Professor Maureen C. Pagaduan

UP College of Social Work and Community Development •

Co-founder, UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development

Good morning. I would like to express that I am very happy to see all of you. So, I would like you to share that happiness by shaking hands with your seatmate. Please greet them good morning.

I would like to still address this conference concern by starting discussion points with you. Another alternative is I would like to sit down with you.

I am very fortunate to be here. I've been through some tough times last year, so I am very happy to be with you. I am also very appreciative of the Alternative Development Program of CIDS for inviting me to address you on this first day of opening. The invitation came as a surprise because this is some kind of coming out for me again, after not being out for some time. I'm glad, lucky, and happy to see you all here.

For many of us, this is our 2nd regional conference which tells us about opportunities, spells potentials in all of our countries and our region for a people's movement on alternative regionalism in Asia. It's a very interesting word—alternative. I mentioned to the AltDev Program this morning that I am happy and not so happy with that word. Because don't you think alternative is a very inclusive word? It could possibly include a whole group of development workers, NGOs, development activists, advocates, grassroots leaders, people's organizations—a whole lot! Which spells like a big people's social movement. It speaks of variety, multiplicity, difference. It spells more of vibrancy, dynamism, loudness of voice, especially numbers. And these should be enough, right? But is this all we want? Is this all we can achieve? What are our goals? And how can we be more strategic?

These questions beg us to go for more, to rise higher to the challenges. For these times, in the Philippines, as well as in our countries, and globally, we see the rise of many threats. The installation, the growing strength of the alternative right that are threats to democracies, to liberal democracy in particular. We have, around the world, a lot of cursing going on. Officials, presidents are cursing the world, cursing God, cursing women. Then, we see a lot of human rights violations, a lot of violence, cause to kill. So, these threats are very aggressive. They are, unfortunately, very attractive, very enticing, especially in social media, the press, not only to the younger generation, but across generations, especially including the disappointed, the frustrated, the angry, the cynical crossing all social classes—from the poor to the elite. So, you may feel or hear, in the Philippines, taxi drivers or just people around, saying that the times are better now, because they don't fear. They don't fear drug lords, they don't fear drug addicts. But the system and the person that they should really fear has gone from their minds. It is the immediate that they see, so it is very attractive.

Thus, I think, these times call for us to consolidate, to synthesize our experiences, because in the last conference we shared practices. But we also have to look at these faults increasingly. The guidelines



and principles, to clarify, and to identify what sets us apart. What is aggressive when it comes to our point of view? What is attractive? What entices? What could animate the communities to come together and sustain a people's social movement? We have to be assessing, as the threats in the system is animating. We have to start debates, not fear our difference. We have to continue the theoretical discourses to expose, to root out, to discover the undiscovered, unexplored meanings and challenges of the new times, the new technologies, the new movements. From there, maybe we can also come out with new names, new labels, brands. Yes, maybe an alternative to the alternative. It's such a challenge—what is the word? Even in Filipino, I don't know because alternative is *alternatibo*—another coinage from a Western word. What do you think? A new democracy—a radical democracy? A new regionalism? But what is its name? What is also the concept of development to the two words? What is alternative development?

We have to clarify. I think the pursuit for meaning brings us into clearer ideas, clearer directions, clearer basis for unities. Only with this can we make ourselves stronger and more strategic. I think this conference is a continuing contribution to that clarity. In the coming activities that we'll have, I hope, especially with the propensity for these new times, coin new words. I hope we will chance upon our new word and our new meaning.

My other and last point is the more practical challenge of networking. Networking is not really such a new word. It has become an attractive, enticing word, but it has its challenges. What is networking guided by principles of democratic decision-making? How do we do that? And principles of self-reliance in resource mobilization—how can we accomplish that? We may find answers, questions arising from our concerns over leadership, sustainability, and authenticity of our people's movement.

For a network of people's social movement, one has to capacitate and build leadership. The young must take their seats as leaders and

▲ Professor Maureen Pagaduan of the UP College of Social Work and Community Development delivers the opening address for the first day of the conference

seniors must continue to enlighten, lend a hand, hold each other's hand, but otherwise step aside. Communities of the poor, marginalized, and oppressed must be enabled to equally take their leading positions.

In many a network, a network of social movements, the question is always how do we continue sharing? What are most accessible, most affordable, most effective structures and strategies? How do we keep the fire burning—as in fossil fuels, which are not renewable—what sort of renewable energy can sustain us, keep us in touch, contribute and grow stronger together? I'm leaving the next two days for the answers and the many years to come.

And then authenticity—our principles must show that our beliefs are consistent with our practices. How do we live our democracies in our networks, our people's movements? How are we transparent and accountable? What are our structures in decision-making? Do we have better alternatives to better consensus-building, approaches to a better “majority rules” principle, to better de-centered structures, to a better democracy in our practices?

I'd like to end in what I refer to as the power of two: imagination and belief. In my past year of challenges, I drew upon strengths in this power of two. Often than not, our practices are driven and inspired by a collective imagination—what Cynthia refers to as a utopia—collective imagination of a future for all. It is as well energized and sustained by a belief—*paniniwala*—a belief in people, basically, a belief in opportunities to come, a belief in the potential that we will all live in dignity, equality, justice, and peace. The future is beautiful. *Maganda po ang kinabukasan. Maraming salamat po!*

Objective Setting

Assistant Professor Karl Arvin F. Hapal

UP College of Social Work and Community Development •

Co-convenor, UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development

The conference aims to highlight diversity in Southeast Asia, which started the previous year, when different cases from different organizations were presented to showcase alternative grassroots practices all over Southeast Asia. Building on the previous conference and subsequent activities, the second conference features more interactions among different groups of people through discussion-workshops where participants can discuss common issues, challenges, approaches, and strategies. In addition, the conference also includes planning sessions geared towards creating networks to find areas of collaboration, partnerships, and solidarity between and among groups and organizations.

Day 1 includes opening addresses, objective setting, and two sets of parallel sessions. In the first set of parallel presentations (Cluster 1 and Cluster 2), partners from different countries in the Southeast Asian region present their cases on social enterprise and solidarity economy, agricultural production and food sovereignty, alternative artmaking, and alternative development frameworks. The second set of parallel presentations (Cluster 3 and Cluster 4) features presentations on alternative development frameworks and sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sexual characteristics (SOGIESC) justice. For each cluster, selected participants from the previous year's conference are then asked to provide brief statements on their reactions, comments, and insights in response to the presentations, followed by an open forum.

The morning of Day 2 is dedicated to plenary presentations on land, water, and resource struggles, followed by reactions from certain

▼ UP CIDS Program on
Alternative Development
Co-convenor Assistant
Professor Karl Alvin Hapal
leads the objective setting
session





▲ The participants of the conference during the objective setting session

participants. In the afternoon, the discussion-workshops commence revolving around three major themes: reclaiming the commons; economic alternatives and social protections; and sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sexual characteristics justice. In the three separate workshop sessions, common issues, approaches, and strategies are discussed.

Day 3 begins with a review of the previous year's conference, "Rethinking Cross-Border Regionalism," and subsequent activities conducted as recommended. The rest of the day is dedicated for the planning workshop sessions, aimed at: network building; technology and knowledge transfer; and organizing strategies and governance frameworks. Output of the planning sessions are then presented with the object of informing the direction of the initiative for the following year.

Cluster 1 Case Presentations

Social Enterprise, Alternative Trade, and People's Solidarity Economy

Building Sustainable Social and Solidarity Economy in Southeast Asia: Towards More and Better Jobs for Women in the Informal Economy

Rosalinda Pineda Ofreneo, Ph.D.
HomeNet Philippines

According to Ethan Miller's essay "Solidarity Economics: Strategies for Building New Economies from the Bottom-Up and the Inside-Out" (2004), the solidarity economy is comprised of "interconnected and diverse ways of generating livelihoods that encourage and embody practices of solidarity."¹ Likewise, it is "an 'economy of economies' that resists the colonizing power of the individualistic, competitive, and exploitative [e]conomy of Empire."² It is mainly an alternative in the sense that it resists the dominant economic framework. The solidarity economy movement emerged in Latin America, but grew elsewhere in the Global South.

The idea of the social solidarity economy (SSE) was brought up during the World Social Forum movement for two reasons: (1) the desire to synthesize the experiences, values, and visions of progressive social movements while at the same time respecting their diversity; and (2) the search for a plurality of answers to neoliberal globalization through participatory learning and reflection on our organizing and goals.³

The SSE global movement has begun expanding throughout the world. At present, it has a billion members, including three million

1 Ethan Miller, "Solidarity Economics: Strategies for Building New Economies from the Bottom-Up and the Inside-Out," Grassroots Economic Organizing Collective, February 2004, <https://geo.coop/archives/SolidarityEconomicsEthanMiller.htm>.

2 Ibid.

3 Jenna Allard, Carl Davidson, and Julie Matthaei (eds.), *Solidarity Economy: Building Alternatives for People and Planet* (Chicago, IL: ChangeMaker Publications, 2008), 4.

▼ Dr. Rosalinda Pineda Ofreneo discusses the case of HomeNet Southeast Asia



cooperatives, and at the same time, it has employed 280 million individuals. With the expansion of the SSE, it revived cooperatives in Africa and Latin America and gave rise to social enterprise in Europe and Asia. Fair-trade producers and markets have also been expanding because of the SSE. Schools and universities have even been a part of the global campaign for the SSE.

The Réseau Intercontinental de Promotion de l'Economie Sociale et Solidaire (RIPESS; Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of SSE), a global network committed to the promotion of the SSE, was established. Its goal is to advance the idea of the social solidarity economy, foster intercontinental cooperation, and advocate the SSE at different levels. In terms of mainstreaming, ministries and national secretariats in Brazil, France, Luxembourg, Colombia, and Nicaragua have started to incorporate SSE in their state structures.

The United Nations system had also established the SSE Academy at the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UN Inter-agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSSE) to raise awareness about the growth of SSE in international platforms and policymaking bodies.

According to the UNTFSSSE,

SSE refers to the production of goods and services by a broad range of organizations and enterprises that have explicit social and often environmental objectives and are guided by principles of cooperation, solidarity, equity and democratic self-management.⁴

An attempt to reassert social control over the economy by prioritizing social objectives above profit maximization, recognizing key role of collective action and active citizenship for both economic and political empowerment of disadvantaged groups in society, and reintroducing notions of ethics, sharing, equality and democracy in economic activity.⁵

In simple terms, Dr. Ofreneo defines the social solidarity economy as a form of economic democracy where people actually learn how to manage the production of goods and one that is not controlled by the state—or, to use another term, autonomous. It is an attempt to reassert social control over the economy.

Overlapping crises as context

Dr. Ofreneo recognized the overlapping crises that the current development model (i.e., neoliberal globalization) has generated. It has miserably failed in addressing the goals of sustainable human development as 45% of the world's population is still in poverty. The existence of extreme inequality is evident as 26 super-rich people own wealth that is equivalent to that of the poorest half of humanity. Also, about 150 million children are stunted because of malnutrition and hunger. There is also an imminent threat caused by climate change, which leaves humanity only 11 years in order to avert a global catastrophe.

Dr. Ofreneo proceeds to ask why these problems are affecting women in particular. She noted that globally, only 48% of women are

4 United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (TFSSE), *Social and Solidarity Economy and the Challenge of Sustainable Development* (Geneva: UN TFSSE, 2014), iv.

5 Peter Utting, "Introduction: The Challenge of Scaling Up Social and Solidarity Economy," in *Social and Solidarity Economy: Beyond the Fringe*, ed. Peter Utting (London: Zed Books, 2015).

in the labor force. Also, women do 4.1 times more unpaid care work than men in Asia and the Pacific.⁶ (ILO 2018). In the Philippines, women spend ten hours doing unpaid work, while men spend 3.6 hours only. Women are also particularly involved in informal employment, which is more compatible with reproductive work like childcare and household chores. Mainly, more than 95% of women in South Asia are in informal employment, exposing them to hazards and risks that make them more vulnerable.

Informal workers push for fair trade and solidarity economy

In the face of all these challenges, informal workers—through HomeNet Philippines, HomeNet Southeast Asia, and other networks—have managed to push for fair trade and solidarity economy in their respective regions as an alternative. HomeNet is active in various forms of fair-trade advocacy in collaboration with trade unions, business groups, and civil society organizations. The advocacies of HomeNet include ensuring workers' rights to just remuneration, job security, social protection, occupational safety and health (OSH), and safe working conditions, as well as promoting gender equity.

HomeNet is currently working in different regions in Southeast Asia. In Cambodia, HomeNet's focus is organizing people with disability and persons living with HIV/AIDS as actors in development. In Thailand, HomeNet established the HomeNet Thailand Association, a membership organization with about 4,000 members from small producers' groups. Eighty percent of its members are women. In 2016, 25 producers' groups planned together to establish the "HomeNet Thailand Brand" as a social enterprise using the SSE framework.

Meanwhile in the Philippines, the Pambansang Tagapag-ugnay ng mga Manggagawa sa Bahay (PATAMABA) in Region VI, with its 1,200 members, embarked on a homegrown microfinance system which they run on their own. The PATAMABA manages microfinancing and other business initiatives in a regular basis. From a revolving fund of Php 250,000, it has now increased to five million pesos. They also have 540 borrowers who are lent Php 5,000 to 150,000 from their microfinance system. Their other business initiatives include production of *molo* balls, recycled juice bags, bakery management, organic gardening, and food processing and preservation.

6 International Labour Organization, "ILO: Women Do 4 Times More Unpaid Care Work than Men in Asia and the Pacific" (press release), June 27, 2018, https://www.ilo.org/asia/media-centre/news/WCMS_633284/lang--en/index.htm.

Towards Building a Community-Based SSE Model with Bottom-Up-Budgeting (BUB) Support

Olive Parilla
Angono BUB Project

Bottom-up-budgeting (BUB) is a program under the Aquino III administration which allows local groups and civil society organizations to consult with communities in the Philippines on project proposals that can be funded by local government units and national/regional agencies. It aims to make the government's budgeting process more responsive to local needs. Through the BUB program, the Pambansang Tagapag-ugnay ng mga Manggagawa sa Bahay (PATAMABA) in the province of Rizal managed to access support and funding from the government for their livelihood programs in Angono, Rizal.

PATAMABA chapters in the municipality of Angono, Rizal are found in two coastal barangays, namely San Vicente and Kalayaan. These areas are highly susceptible to flooding, as experienced from strong typhoons like Milenyo, Ondoy, and Habagat (from 2006 to 2009). PATAMABA Rizal focused their efforts in organizing the residents of Angono to improve their access to basic social services.

The PATAMABA Angono participated in the municipality's Zero Squatter Program and organized the PATAMABA Homeowners Association, where 218 households were selected to be included in an onsite development program that entails direct buying from its owner. From having rationed water and buying electricity through submeters, the households of the PATAMABA Homeowners Association now enjoy water supply and electricity directly from service providers.

Angono producers were also organized under PATAMABA-WISE (Workers in the Informal Sector Enterprise), the livelihood arm of PATAMABA Rizal. It started with the vision that their efforts can exceed organizing and advocacy. The enterprise was registered in the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and in the municipal government of Angono. They started in 2009 with 29 members contributing Php 200 each for the initial production of homecare products. Since then, it expanded to more than 500 members (overwhelmingly women, with less than ten men). The strategy of PATAMABA-WISE for its expansion was done through engagement in the BUB project of the government.

The PATAMABA Rizal governance and advocacy framework (SHAPE)

The following comprises the PATAMABA framework:

- *Social Protection:* The organization campaigns for social security, health insurance, and security in the workplace.
- *Human Development:* Capacity and capability building is conducted for their members.
- *Asset Reforms:* These focus on issues on workplace security, such as land, housing, and common areas for production.



- *Participation and Recognition:* The voice and representation of informal workers are developed.
- *Employment and Enterprise Building.*

▲ Olive Parilla discussed the PATAMABA's BUB-supported activities in Angono, Rizal

PATAMABA-WISE managed to produce rags, doormats, homecare products, picture frames (from water lilies), *higantitos*, accessories, and ready-to-wear clothes. They conceptualized a tag line—"buying a piece helps a lot of women" and managed to access funds from DOLE which further improved their capabilities and access to resources. As soon as the BUB was adopted by the LGU of Angono in 2013, PATAMABA-WISE became the leading development organization that works in partnership with the LGU of Angono. They facilitated the formulation of conduits towards the spearheading of the municipality's economic activities. The PATAMABA-WISE is in charge of the local economy and livelihood activities for the vulnerable and marginalized sectors in the municipality. They teamed up with the municipality's community training and livelihood offices for training and capacity building activities. They also linked with the municipality cooperative and HomeNet Philippines for the marketing of their products.

Triple bottom line

The social solidarity economy of the PATAMABA-WISE is anchored in three main principles: People/Gender, Planet/Environment, and Profit Impact on Poverty Reduction.

People/Gender

PATAMABA-WISE facilitates income augmentation for women which, in turn, helps increase family income. They also provide economic as well as leadership and management opportunities for women as a form of empowerment. Women are also able to make decisions because they earn for their families and they now have decision making power on household expenses and personal effects.

Aside from economic development, women also developed greater awareness about their rights. The PATAMABA facilitates gender and development trainings and raises awareness on violence against women and children (VAWC) for their members. The PATAMABA also recognizes the inclusion of poor and socially disadvantaged sectors, such as the youth and elderly.

Planet: Environment

Homecare products of the PATAMABA-WISE are environment-friendly. As they recognize the need to advocate for environmental protection, conservation, and preservation, they produce products that are biodegradable and without hazardous chemical content. Rags and doormats are made using recycled waste materials from nearby factories. Water lily that grows on the lake is made into picture frames and bags, while waste from aggregates—locally known as *banlik*—are produced into *higantitos* and keychains.

Profit: Impact on Poverty Reduction

Through the efforts of the PATAMABA-WISE, women and men are able to generate income for their families. Members also learn to develop livelihood skills and to work in teams. The livelihood projects available for their members offer an alternative productive work and income for the unemployed. These allow different vulnerable sectors to participate in livelihood activities.

The spending capacity of their members also increased. They can now send their children to school, secure daily meals, and provide basic needs for their family. For the elderly, income generated from livelihood activities has discouraged dependency from other members of the family.

The PATAMABA-WISE also advocates for the recognition of informal workers in the Philippines, who are not recognized or included in the country's development agenda. It is pushing towards transforming informal workers into formal workers.

Key elements of the PATAMABA SSE supply chain model

The following are the key elements in the SSE supply chain model of the PATAMABA-WISE:

- Primacy of democratic and inclusive membership-based organizations (in this case, women in the informal economy) as key actors that are ready to work with other stakeholders in the community.
- Links among various actors in the value chain, which spans from input supply to production to marketing and consumption to payments and investments, in a mutually beneficial and reinforcing manner.
- Shared responsibilities and access to resources from the public sector (the state), NGOs/civil society, and private groups.
- Ensuring product quality and development, sustained networking for marketing, and SSE promotion and advocacy.
- Participation in local governance, which facilitates access to state funding, resources, and support services (e.g., the BUB).

- Addressing the primary economic needs of the community, such as food and homecare products.
- Recycling, environmental safety, and conservation, which are connected to disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) and climate change adaptation.
- Integration of a gender perspective that recognizes and develops the productivity and potentials of women in poverty towards their empowerment and gender equality.
- Readiness to improve, expand, develop, upgrade, upscale, and converge to ensure sustainability, resilience, and plowing back of greater benefits to people and planet.

Agricultural Production and Food Sovereignty

Organic and Sustainable Farming in Laos: A Case in Luang Prabang

Ken Pitsapheng

Luang Prabang Green Organic Farm,
Green Community Development Association, Laos

The Luang Prabang (LP) Green Organic Farm (or simply LP Green Organic) produces vegetables without harming the precious environment and without chemical or artificial fertilizers. The farm also gives an opportunity to train young local farmers in organic farm techniques and be a center for visiting students to learn our traditional and environmentally friendly practices.

LP Green Organic was started in October 2016 by Mr. Ken Pitsapheng, who graduated from a business and marketing course in Laos. However, he envisioned to start a farm that produces organic

▼ Ken Pitsapheng represented
the Luang Prabang Green
Organic Farm



fruits and vegetables as a home business. It took him six months to conceptualize and plan LP Green Organic. He took trainings and lessons from local farmers in gardening, fertilizer use, soil preparation, seeding, marketing, and exporting. He focused on producing Western vegetables like beet, radish, carrot, zucchini, spinach, rocket/arugula, and lettuce. Unfortunately, the first year of LP Green Organic was a failure. Mr. Pitsapheng realized that his lack of networks led to the failure of the farm.

After understanding his shortcomings, Mr. Pitsapheng started to look for networks using social media. After setting up a website and Facebook page for LP Green Organic, he was immediately contacted by restaurants and hotels. At present, LP Green Organic supplies fresh organic vegetables to restaurants and hotels all over Laos.

Activities in LP Green Organic

Visiting students, organizations, and individuals can experience farming with the local farmers through activities that promote local techniques from folk wisdom and tradition.

Half-day tours

LP Green Organic provides short tours from the city of Luang Prabang to the farm. In the farm, visitors can witness and experience different types of farming techniques employed by community farmers. Their farm uses modern techniques in farming, while their neighbors practice traditional methods that have been passed down from generation to generation. This allows visitors to learn, experience, and understand local farming techniques and methods that are anchored in traditional and environmental-friendly practices. Visitors can plant and grow their own vegetables.

Farm-to-tables

From a short tour around the farm, visitors can pick their own vegetables from the garden and cook them in their traditional Lao kitchens. Visitors can freely choose which vegetables they would like to enjoy from a large variety that the farm offers.

School exchanges

LP Green Organic offers lessons to young students who are willing to learn about the organic techniques and sustainable farming. For a full day, students will work at the garden and experience different activities focused on sustainable farming.

Veggie baskets

The veggie basket is a way of LP Green Organic to make their produce accessible to other communities through their free delivery scheme. It is available during weekdays around Luang Prabang.

From a single home, LP Green Organic is now a community. Their neighbors provide local vegetables and herbs, while LP Green Organic produces Western vegetables. They work and plan together to help supply the increasing demand for their produce. Basically, they work with and support the local community through teaching new

techniques, linking them with marketing networks, conducting farm-to-farm exchange, and providing seeds to grow for themselves. As Mr. Pitsapheng said, “In the end, it is all about organic and sustainable farming.”

Alternative Development Frameworks

An Alternative Engagement with the National and Local Budget Process

Maria Victoria R. Raquiza, Ph.D.
Social Watch Philippines

In 1997, the Action for Economic Reforms (ACTION), Accessing Support Services and Entrepreneurial Technology, Inc. (ASSET), and the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM)—with Professor Leonor Briones as the lead convenor—formed and convened Social Watch Philippines (SWP). As a part of the Social Watch global network, SWP is committed to promote social development and eradicate poverty, and later, it branched out to include gender justice. In 2006, it formed the Alternative Budget Initiative (ABI) as a platform where various civil society organizations (CSOs) and individuals are able to engage in the national and local budget and financing process by formulating and lobbying for the adoption of alternative budget proposals.

Dr. Raquiza’s presentation covered the principles underlying the financing social policies and of citizens’ participation in the budget process. A case study in working with the government in making the budget more responsive to poor and socially excluded groups, as well as continuing challenges for alternatives to the current budget process, were also presented. According to her, the budget process has not always been a linear process. It is usually one step forward, two steps back, as there is always progress and pushbacks, which is a familiar tune especially for those working in social movements.

Introduction

We all aspire to live a life of dignity and well-being in our life cycle (that is, from womb to tomb), but this requires a lot of quality social services that are adequate, accessible, affordable, and available, as well as decent work. It can be achieved not only through individual efforts, but it also requires different structures to provide necessary resources. These structures include the government, the private sector, and individuals/households.

Principles

The financing of public resources spent on people is guided by two basic principles: the principle of progressivity and the principle of solidarity. Progressivity simply means that those who have more will give more in society. The rich must pay a larger proportion of their income to taxes,



▲ Dr. Maria Victoria Raquiza discussed the Alternative Budget Initiative as an alternative engagement with the budget process

as compared to poorer groups. However, such is generally not the case today, especially because value-added tax (VAT) and direct taxations are going up. Solidarity means the promotion of the spirit of *damayan* or fostering social cohesion. This principle is very prominent in other societies, especially in welfare societies. An example of this is when citizens pool their resources for social insurance, so that if an individual needs resources (e.g., when s/he gets sick), the entire pool fund goes into supporting that individual, especially if s/he comes from the marginalized sector.

As progressive schemes foster higher solidarity, it constitutes direct taxation wherein the rich will pay higher proportion of their income to taxes compared to the poor. Meanwhile, as regressive schemes foster the least solidarity, it pushes for indirect taxation, user fees, and self-provisioning (out-of-pocket spending). This is a problem in other developing countries, where the notion of solidarity is not that emphasized in many different contexts.

Factors that determine social spending

The government often invokes fiscal and administrative constraints as reasons for low social spending. For example, every time the public demands to increase the budget for education and health services, politicians always offer reasons like fiscal constraints or administrative constraints to hinder the possibility of a budget increase. The Department of Health (DOH), for instance, has not fully utilized their budget within the fiscal year. In the following year's budget process, this can be used as justification for cuts to the DOH budget. The current administration is now reducing budgets for education, health, and agriculture, claiming that the agencies responsible for these social services do not have absorptive capacities. It is also the main reason and excuse for reducing budgets for social spending, which is actually true up to some point. However, there is a need to problematize why these institutions are having a hard time in absorbing funds—it is because

the capacities of these institutions have been eroded. This also brings us back to the question of the government's development strategies and the availability of funds for these strategies.

The availability of funds for public spending is highly dependent on the country's economic performance and development strategies. These include the government's capacity to generate revenue and produce savings. However, as the country experiences different economic drawbacks, capped with worsening agricultural production and deindustrialization, the generation of public funds can be a problem for the Philippines. This fact has been slightly bumped off by safety valves in the form of income from remittances and debt.

Finding resources for social spending is only half of the problem. Even if the country has available resources, making the resources go where they should go is ultimately a bureaucratic political process. This is where policymakers play an important role, particularly in the budget process. They are the ones who decide how funds should be allocated. However, policymakers, bureaucrats, and technocrats basically come from elite groups. Studies show that it is not financial constraints that stop the government from prioritizing education, health, and other social services, but rather its reliance on the policy framework that it adopts—particularly neoliberalism. This framework compels policymakers to think that social spending is an expense.

Neoliberal policymakers tend to overemphasize the cost-effectiveness of policies directed at social spending. Moreover, the prevailing measure of development—the gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP)—likewise legitimizes the reasons to disregard social spending.

However, studies show that more development-minded policymakers and governments, like those in welfare states, do not look at social spending as an expense. They see it as social investment that can generate multiple positive impacts, from reducing poverty and income insecurity in the short-term to enhancing the country's productivity and capacity for innovation in the long-term. Financing social policy is often not so much a matter of fiscal space, but a matter of the values and priorities of policymakers, and ultimately, of political will.

In fact, there are many countries in the world that have lower levels of GDP than the Philippines who are engaged in universal social spending, such as Bolivia, Lesotho, and Namibia. This is the reason why we cannot use GDP levels and fiscal constraints as an excuse to ignore social spending.

People's participation in the budget process:

The Alternative Budget Initiative (ABI)

Remember that government funds are generated from the people's taxes, whether directly or indirectly. This means that the government's operations are funded by money from the people. Laying down the foundation towards the promotion of social spending, it is significant that the people engage with the government's budget and financing processes.

"In fact," Dr. Raquiza states, "when talking about reclaiming the commons as one of the main points of this conference, which generally includes our natural resources, I think we should look at our budget as

part of the commons and we should reclaim the budget, because the budget is ours.”

Citizens' participation

There are good public programs that need to be prioritized for funding. Mainly, these are programs that aim to benefit the poor and marginalized as the government commits to lift them out of poverty. However, government commitments and promises are meaningless and cannot be implemented without proper budgetary support. In fact, the best way to sabotage a good program is to deny its budget. This is contrary to what the Constitution stipulates: that the state has the duty to uphold, protect, and promote the rights of its people as duty-bearers, and at the same time, to recognize its citizens as rights claimants. Because of money from taxpayers, the government functions; hence, it is due that the government must also be accountable to the people.

Engaging in the budget process and offering alternative budgets ensure that resources are directed to essential services. It is also an effort to curb corruption and promote transparency and accountability. Studies show that organizations of the socially excluded and marginalized, when able to influence policymaking, can contribute to development outcomes that tend to be more redistributive. Hearing people's voices and allowing them to participate in the budget process enable the bureaucracy to improve its capacities to deliver better services.

Unfortunately, citizens' participation in the Philippine budget process is limited largely because public finance structures and practices are shaped by certain laws that do not provide for citizens' participation, if not making their engagement difficult. When democracy was restored in 1986, the budget process stipulated in Presidential Decree No. (PD) 1177 (the “Budget Reform Decree of 1977”) was instituted in the Administrative Code of 1987 (Executive Order No. 292), but did not include citizens' participation. PD 1177 previously concentrated budgetary powers almost exclusively to the President, but the current budget-making process is highly technical in terms of content and procedure, which makes citizens' participation gruelling.

With the severe underfunding and decline of expenditures for social services and development in the Philippines, the call for people's participation in the budget process intensifies. The impacts of economic, social, and environmental crises and challenges make the need for citizens' participation in the budget process more urgent than ever.

The SWP-ABI experience in the Philippines

Participatory budgeting has gained traction in many parts of the world. Its beginnings can be traced to Porto Alegre in Brazil and is now practiced in Italy, Kenya, Canada, India, and Bangladesh, among other countries.

In the Philippines, the Alternative Budget Initiative was organized by Social Watch Philippines in 2006. It basically started with twenty organizations. At present, about 200 organizations are part of the ABI network. They have engaged in budget processes at the Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The ABI has forged a citizen-

legislator partnership in formulating and lobbying for alternative budget proposals for increased funding for health, education, agriculture, environment, and social protection. They have also engaged in cross-cutting themes such as gender, climate change, and persons with disabilities.

The starting point of this initiative was to build the capacities of partner organizations in understanding the national budget and its process. Through workshops, lectures, and trainings, they taught themselves how to dress and use the language in the parliament. They have also engaged in hands-on experiences in dealing with the executive and legislative branches of the government. Aside from increasing their capabilities, they have partnered with policymakers and legislators who have championed their causes. They undertook actions as individual citizens and as a collective, such as writing letters to legislators and bureaucrats and attending budget forums and hearings.

Aside from capacity building activities, SWP-ABI's scope also includes the preparation of and campaign for an alternative budget, budget monitoring and tracking, and pushing for budget reforms. Because of SWP-ABI's partnership with some legislators, House Resolution No. 1376 ("Urgent Resolution Allowing the Active Participation of Bona Fide People's Organization in Public Hearings in Congress Annual Budget Deliberations") was filed in the House of Representatives in 2006 and was eventually adopted in 2007. It was then filed by Senator Panfilo Lacson in the Senate.

Throughout the years, the SWP-ABI has successfully participated in the budget processes of the DA, DSWD, DOH, DENR, DepEd, and other government agencies and institutions. However, the SWP-ABI regards these as victories on paper. Even though they managed to put it on paper, some of the budget reforms were never realized. The struggle towards creating a more participative and responsive budget process is far from over. Every administration has created bills to push for reforms, but each of them has failed in actually facilitating citizens' participation in the budget process. The challenge continues for the SWP-ABI in putting forward their advocacy for citizens' participation in the budget process towards the crafting of people-centered national and local budgets.

Reactions

Flora Assidao-Santos

Alliance of the Poor in Baesa, Philippines

Acknowledging that the first and second presentations were focused on social solidarity economy, Ms. Flora Assidao-Santos stressed the value of the word "solidarity." According to her, solidarity is an important element in an economic enterprise that people build and maintain. It entails the value of cooperation and helping one another to achieve a certain goal. She also identified two key concepts in the presentations. First is collective action, which is a crucial element in both the presentations of PATAMABA and HomeNet. People have to work



▲ Flora Assidao-Santos of the Alliance of the Poor in Baesa, Philippines gave reactions to the case studies presented

together in any endeavor, whether economic or political. The second key factor is active participation of the members. An organization requires active participation not only from leaders, but also from its members. Sometimes, organizations are leadership-focused and leader-centric. It is important that the members also actively participate and take part in any participatory process. This is the reason why capacity building initiatives should be shared among all members of the organization.

She also recognized the efforts of organizations in Southeast Asia (SEA) in terms of SSE. Organizations in SEA are now rapidly expanding. What the people are doing is anchored on the principle of self-reliance. People are helping themselves to alleviate their own poverty without having to depend on the government. Through SSE, people have achieved a level of empowerment that transcends to self-reliance. People must learn to be self-reliant, she added.

Ms. Assidao-Santos also observed that PATAMABA's engagement with the local government was very clear. She suggested that it should be done in all cities and municipalities, but stressed the point that the people should be part of local governance. The local government must hear the voices of their constituents and allow them to take part in the decision-making processes at the local level.

She also pointed out that the third presentation on LP Green Organic by Mr. Pitsapheng was more about learning from past mistakes and failures. The process of understanding and learning from drawbacks is very crucial. Through this process, the organization can assess and manage their weaknesses and plan for strategies to address these. This was apparent in the case of LP Green Organic, which has now expanded and is getting more markets for its products.

For the final presentation, Ms. Assidao-Santos mentioned the essential role of the people in the budget process. The people should be vigilant and should participate in the budget process not only at the local level, but also at the national level. This requires the government to be transparent and accountable in terms of budget allocations.

Lastly, she stressed that NGOs and peoples' organizations (POs) need to focus on their objectives. "Our role has to be concretized and so as the people. The people in the grassroots has to fill in," she ended.

Joseph Purugganan

Focus on the Global South

Mr. Joseph Purugganan pointed out a common theme in all the presentations. It was the idea of people being at the center of development. He described the presentations as assertions of people's sovereignty.

However, based on Dr. Raquiza's presentation on the Alternative Budget Initiative, he cited that what we are challenging now is a dominant economic paradigm which is controlled by corporations and corporate nations and has infiltrated the day-to-day lives of the people. As corporate control increases, its power over people also increases. As the economy moves forward into a digital realm—a digital economy—not only the power of corporations over the economy rise, but the power also moves away from the people. He also recognized the increase in corporate concentration, especially in food production and agriculture wherein all inputs and processes—from seeds to mechanization—are all controlled by corporations. He pointed out that given the current context, corporations are now in control of our economies.

He also identified the impact of corporate concentration, control, and power on rising cases of corporate crimes related to human rights abuses, along with the shrinking spaces of the poor and marginalized communities.

Similarly, there are international laws like the ASEAN trading laws that protect the interests of corporations and not of the people who are suffering from corporate abuse.

▼ Joseph Purugganan of Focus on the Global South gives his reaction to the case presentations



Conclusively, Mr. Purugganan perceives this as a political process. He states that the people's movement towards alternative development cannot be brushed aside as simply politicking because it is serious about advancing this paradigm. Having said this, he believes that the promotion of people's movement is inherently political and contentious. Development alternatives are not just about asserting the rights of the people, but are also about challenging dominant development paradigms that undermine people's efforts and initiatives. The challenge for those in the ground and those who build people's alternatives is to keep up with social movements. Social movements, on the other hand, should likewise keep up with people at the grassroots who are engaged in building solidarity economies and other alternatives.

Ultimately, there is a need to empower the people to challenge dominant paradigms. He hopes that the conference provides the space for movements working in different issues to come together to strengthen the resistance and to realize the vision that alternatives offer.

Jenito Santana

Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute, Timor Leste

Mr. Jenito Santana's reaction was more of a reflection on the cases presented in relation to the experience of Timor Leste. Majority of Timor Leste's population is dependent on rural farming and small-scale farming is the primary livelihood activity in communities. However, agricultural production and farmers' income are apparently low.

According to Mr. Santana, the government distributed land to the farmers and told them to plant food. However, the government eventually changed its stance as local food and cash crop production did not meet national or export demands. The government told the farmers that they were non-productive, and refused to buy their produce and even threatened to take back the land that they were farming on.

▼ Jenito Santana of Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institutu, Timor Leste shared his insights on the presentations



Because of this, Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute initiated capacity building activities and organized farmers' organizations. They established cooperative groups in small villages and trained the farmers to manage their profits in a way that is collective, independent, and sustainable. Farmers were trained to effectively and efficiently utilize local resources, including land and seeds, that can be managed as a source of income for the farmers and communities.

Mr. Santana said that at first, it was really hard to find buyers for the produce of the farmers who shifted their crops to coffee. The institute tapped different partner organizations in the region and managed to find potential buyers through network building and linkages in Japan.

Since then, farmers and rural communities managed to earn suitable profit. The community negotiates on the price of the coffee and were trained to produce good quality coffee. They are now supplying good-quality organic coffee globally. The farmers have developed sustainable ways of farming and are champions of community leadership, advocacy, and network building.

The farmers' organizations support their members through social protection programs and capacity building. They managed to build houses for poor families in Timor Leste and trained their members in organic farming techniques. At present, the farmers' organizations of Timor Leste continue to promote the social economy of the people that is anchored on environmental protection, sustainability, and people's empowerment towards social and economic development.

Open Forum

Dr. Remedios Nalundasan-Abijan (World Council for Curriculum and Instruction–Philippine Chapter): I liked the stories, of women, of economies, etc. I loved the stories that you put together and also the endeavors that you have initiated. My question is for Dr. Ofreneo: You mentioned about neoliberal globalization and how it contributes to poverty, environmental crisis, and other issues. Now, what model of economy are we bringing to the grassroots? Is it not the same as neoliberal globalization—economy of scarcity? Did we bring an economy of abundance? Because what we are going to teach them is the same: to produce more and consume more. If you have earned large profits, you are successful.

I am a teacher, but we have links to communities. Whenever we go to the communities, how can we explain to them neoliberal globalization when we are also saying that they also need to earn large profits for them to be successful? But I like the aspect of sustainability. It's one step upward. However, in the long run, how can we teach them these concepts?

Dr. Rosalinda Pineda Ofreneo (HomeNet Philippines): It is important to discuss the four pillars of social solidarity economy. The four pillars include sustainability, social development, environmental protection, and the fourth—the most important pillar—is redefining values. Redefining and transforming values, in this sense, is that social solidarity

is an ethical and values-based approach to economic development that prioritizes the welfare of people and the planet over profits and blind growth. It is like we are purifying the minds of the people because they have been infected with the capitalist values. What SSE entails is having a sense of community and promoting responsible consumption and production. Moreover, aside from the above-mentioned, climate change adaptation should be the focus of the efforts. The life of the present and future generations hangs in the balance because of climate change. Community education should be focused on climate action and justice. It should be embedded in our day-to-day life in the community. It is the most urgent thing that we need to focus on, or else, the next generation will perish.

Dr. Maria Victoria R. Raquiza (Social Watch Philippines): For example, Joseph was talking a while ago about the role of multinational corporations; however, we see that multinational corporations, as Dr. Ofreneo have also mentioned, are heavily invested in microfinance. They are making big profits out of microfinance. Now, there is a new frontier for making profits in disaster capitalism. Multinational corporations are now going into climate financing, [by] providing funds for disasters. An example of [this] is the DSWD Social Protection Strategy, where the role of the DSWD and—I think—the CCC (Climate Change Commission) is to tap private banks to provide climate financing for victims of disasters. So that is the new area where they could get their profits from. That is packaged so beautifully, that they used progressive-sounding words; they did this with microfinance. Now, they are doing it with climate change adaptation. It is really something that we really need to prepare for.

Erni Kartini (Serikat Petani Pasundan): The first question is about participation and budgeting. Basically, I observed that Indonesia and the Philippines are approximately similar. The efforts of the civil society to pursue independence through alternative efforts are continuing in both countries; however, we cannot rely on the state alone. No matter how much we push the state, nothing is going to happen. The best way to achieve this is by resisting and pressuring the state. It is important to always ensure that the people have the capacity to resist, organize, and advocate. Creating coalition with the parliamentary members is significant, but at the end of the day, it is the people who really gets the effects of these advocacies.

Quoting Gramsci, “we need optimism of the will;” otherwise, we will be trapped into a problem like Joseph of Focus on the Global South had just shared. We are yet facing another globalization. The alternative development we are talking about in this conference is so much needed by the people; otherwise, it will be filled by other alternatives. It is already happening in Indonesia. What “alternative” means in Indonesia is not a broad form of solidarity, but a very limited sectarian one. As the structures continue to pressure the people, the restlessness of the masses also grows and continues. However, the answers are only coming from the sectarians. We, the progressives, still stumble in coping with complexity and some other issues. What I want to say is to always help the people in the resistance. It may be the most important thing at the moment.

Dr. Maria Victoria R. Raquiza (Social Watch Philippines): I think there is no disagreement with what the participants have shared. We



know that in the budget process, technocrats want the process to remain as technocratic as possible to insulate it from public scrutiny. They want it to remain as a conversation among “experts” and we don’t want it to go that way. If it remains that way, then our needs will not be prioritized. That’s why we need to democratize the budget process. The best way to achieve that is to tip and shift the balance of power in favor of the civil society organizations, movements on the ground, and the marginalized, so that they can demand and claim their rights. We [in the SWP-ABI] are advocating for these initiatives and processes which involve several CSOs and different groups. Rest assured that this is something we always value, because if you want to make policymakers listen, the strategy is to engage the people in voicing out through public opinion and to name and shame. If the political power of these politicians is threatened, then something can utterly happen.

Ultimately, it is about politics, and the politics of redistribution is what we need to strengthen. This can be realized through movement and capacity building. I think what’s new here is we also have to learn to negotiate and operate in these technical aspects, with a broader political progressive framework and practice.

Prof. Maureen C. Pagaduan (UP College of Social Work and Community Development): I have been engaged in a social enterprise project in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. “Igting” is the name of the organization, with the hashtag #GawaItaNiNanay. It’s a women’s organization, but not all are women; there are also men. I think we are very conscious of what the Indonesians are telling us and what Joseph said. There are attacks already to the point that they are creating confusion. Social enterprise is very much in danger in becoming microfinancing. Before, as we start with the Bulacan project, we have to put a lot of efforts on community education.

There are three meanings that I want to emphasize in social enterprise that is very crucial in business and with the people’s understanding of what business is all about. First is value, second is

▲ **Dr. Remedios Nalundasan-Abijan of the World Council for Curriculum and Instruction-Philippine Chapter** shared her thoughts during the open forum

profit, and the last is money. What are the meanings of these? If we go by the old economic meanings of these terms—such as they are the ones that make surplus, how to create surplus, how do you invest in surplus, how do you save it—if we don't go about the old meanings of these terms, then for me, it is cooptation. If we don't ask the people what it means for them and stick with what the books and experts are saying, then it will not be apprehended. We will just be coopted by the system.

Cluster 2 Case Presentations

Alternative Artmaking

Artmaking as Space-making: Asserting Sitio San Roque Through Art

JV Sangalang and Joshua Sales
Save San Roque Alliance, Philippines

Sitio San Roque is a small community of informal settlers found in Barangay North Triangle in Quezon City. The community is currently being directly affected by the Quezon City Central Business District (QCCBD) Project, a development project of the local government that aims to convert approximately 250 hectares of land into a mixed residential and commercial district. Ayala Corporation is set to extensively develop the area in partnership with the National Housing Authority, which deems the land as idle and therefore in need of conversion to become productive. The private corporation is in charge of the overall development, while the government housing agency provided the land to be developed.

As early as 2009, this joint venture by the private sector and the government has been implemented and up to this day, the community of Sitio San Roque faces development aggression and forced displacement due to the project.

Through Sining Kadamay, a cultural group affiliated with the urban poor group KADAMAY, and the Save San Roque Alliance, Sining San Roque was born. Sining San Roque is an artmaking initiative in the community wherein art is used to resist development aggression, reclaim the people's spaces, and assert their rights to the city.

▼ Joshua Sales shared on how art became a form of resistance against development aggression in the case of Sitio San Roque, Quezon City, Philippines



This initiative became possible because of the strong resistance and genuine participation of the community. *Bayanihan* culture is well and alive in Sitio San Roque and through the Sining San Roque initiative, different art activities are organized within the community as a sign of resilience.

The concept of “tumbalik”

“*Tumbalik*,” a shortened form of the phrase “*Tulong-tulong na ibalik ang mga ginibang bahay*” (rebuilding demolished homes together), is a term conceived in the community of Sitio San Roque. Beyond its literal meaning, the people of San Roque are also hand-in-hand in helping one another. Despite being displaced from their own space, the people of San Roque have found ways to work together. The people contribute their own time and resources for their own community’s development. With the help of the Save San Roque initiative, the community is in the process of creating their own community development plan that will push for their rights.

Art space

One of the first initiatives of Sining San Roque was to create an art space that showcased artworks by different artists and volunteers. The exhibition was mounted on an on-site art gallery and in an art space in Makati City. Since then, Sining San Roque has shifted from being volunteer-based to community-based, which means that the people from the community are the ones learning and actually making art.

Creative workshops

On Saturdays, Sining San Roque holds art workshops in the morning, wherein volunteer artists do not just create art, but they also help the community learn about making art for themselves. In the afternoon, actual art production takes place, as walls of the houses, whether demolished or not, are filled with murals and other do-it-yourself (DIY) artworks. The different artworks reflect the ongoing struggle of the community against development aggression and the resilience of the people. An example of these artworks is a mural of Ka Inday, a prominent figure in the community’s fight for their rights. This and other murals also integrate aspects of Sitio San Roque’s community development plan. Some of the murals in the community represent the kind of development that the community envisions in the future.

Other activities

Aside from their usual Saturday workshops, Sining San Roque also holds other activities such as film showings and cultural nights. Progressive films and documentaries about social issues are projected on a white cloth hanging on demolished walls. Those who are watching are surrounded by tall buildings, which gives a unique feeling to watching the films. During cultural nights, the community is brought together through performances by volunteer artists and community members. Educational discussions, as well as art forums, are also held during the cultural nights in order to educate the community about art and how they can use it towards to express their struggles and aspirations.

Art for the people by the people

As Sining San Roque continuously evolves, the community of Sitio San Roque symbolizes unity, protest, knowledge, art, kindness, and the power of the people.

Social Enterprise, Alternative Trade, and People's Solidarity Economy

**Cultivating Women's Future in Myanmar:
The Case of Thandaunggyi Women's Group**

Mar Mar Cho

Thandaunggyi Women's Group, Myanmar

The Thandaunggyi Women Group (TWG) was founded in 2008, after Myanmar was struck by a cyclone. It was during that time when women in the community realized that they needed solidarity. They gathered women's groups and organizations to form a women's organization network in Myanmar. The TWG is a group of women from the Karen State, who are faced with the dangers and effects of a civil war. As the people of the Karen State fight for independence from the whole of Myanmar, Karen women are severely affected by the war and have to struggle for survival. While civilians, most especially women and children, have been suffering, women in particular experience multiple burdens beyond the impact of the civil war. The TWG was established as a way not only of providing livelihood in communities, but also of empowering women to export and market their products to other countries.

After nearly 70 years of civil war, the state called for a nationwide ceasefire agreement in 2015, which was signed by ethnic organizations.

▼ Mar Mar Cho shares the case of the Thandaunggyi Women's Group in Myanmar



Now, the situation in the current state is relatively improving, especially for the women and children. Since Myanmar is an agricultural country, most especially in the Karen State, the organization studied agribusiness and social enterprise. They learned about models and processes to improve production and coffee farming in Thandaunggyi, which they have been operating since 2012. Currently, their products are regularly traded in the local and the international market as they also sell to Singapore and Thailand.

TWG's packaging of their coffee products—mostly Robusta and Arabica coffee—is designed after ethnic clothes and cultural references in the Karen State. Now, women members of the group are involved in the production and operation processes of the social enterprise, as well as in activities in the community. The coffee farming provides income for more than 200 women, as the group is still looking to expand its reach and engagement with more members from the community.

Women work every day and the social enterprise provides income for their families, for their survival. From planting to processing, members of the women's group are involved. TWG aims to promote peace through empowerment of women in terms of economic wellbeing and decision-making capabilities.

Agricultural Production and Food Sovereignty

Food Systems as the Main Driver of Climate Emergency and the Need for a Game Changer

Ted C. Mendoza, Ph.D.
University of the Philippines Los Baños

Introduction

At the present time, the Philippines may not be considered as a food sovereign country. A huge amount of the food in the country is controlled by different food conglomerates. Globalization also contributes to the success of these conglomerates by providing an open market wherein food produced from one country can easily be transported to another.

Food security is defined as the availability of food and one's access to it. Food sovereignty, on the other hand, asserts that people who produce, distribute, and consume food should control the mechanisms and policies of food production. Food Sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food, produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.

How food systems became the main driver of climate crisis and emergency

According to statistics, the current world population is at 7.6 billion, wherein there is an approximate increase of 82 million per year. At this rate, the food supply must then increase by as much as 60 percent or more by 2050, while for developing countries, a 77 percent increase is needed. Dr. Mendoza argued that the increase in population is not

necessarily the main driver of greenhouse gas emissions, but the type of food that the population consumes under the dominant food system. Food becomes the major emitter because of (1) the way that food is produced, (2) choice of food consumption and its corresponding waste, and (3) how food is stored and made available to different places.

Currently, the way food is produced is unsustainable. Seventy percent of agriculture lands are used for pasture and feed production wherein 56 percent of the produced grains are fed back to the animals. The high demand for specific types of food such as beef and pork contributes to the massive use of agriculture land for livestock wherein animals are among the major causes of deforestation, biodiversity decline, and greenhouse gas emissions. The amount of greenhouse gas contribution of the agriculture lands being used up for food production and livestock rearing have higher numbers compared to the transportation sector. Off-season production of fruits and vegetables is also unsustainable as it requires more energy consumption compared to its natural production.

As for food consumption, international food conglomerates could enter markets from all over the world in order to supply people the food of their choice. However, the trend tends to point towards an increase in meat consumption due to the rise of population as well as the increase in population income which provides buying capacity. Food that is produced from Europe would make its way to Southeast Asia because of the high demand. As a consequence, more carbon footprint would be emitted in order to provide for the demand of the people and their choice of food. All of these, in addition to the carbon footprint for the process of keeping food in storage must also be considered.

The need for a game changer in the food system

As it is now evident that the contribution of the current food system to the climate crisis is huge, there are still many ways to address its consequences.

First, on the demand side, a consumption-led greening of food systems requires consuming less and less meat, consuming what we can. This also includes minimizing food wastes. It is possible to feed 180 million people should human diet be focused on rice, vegetables, fruits, and very minimal meat.

Second, on producing food, accelerate the adoption of regenerative agroecology-based organic agriculture systems. This requires innovation from farmers and from scientists/technologists from the academe and institutions that is demand-led (consumers), instead of supply-led (the farmers).

Third, adopting an innovative paradigm shift from food security to health security—from finance insurance to health insurance, from financial banking to health banking, from measuring yield per acre to health per acre.

Fourth, re-engineering agri-food systems into agroecotourism as a way of attracting farm visitors and tourist-enthusiasts and attracting human interests and investment flows to the rural area. This would generate rural employment, slowing down or stopping out-migration to urban areas and overseas work.

Finally, there is a need to urgently expedite the shift from capital- and resource-intensive (e.g., land, water, and energy inputs) agricultural practice. This can be achieved through innovating tax sanctions for carbon emission, soil erosion, and water consumption to finance the transition and conversion process. With this, restorative, regenerative, and vibrant agroecology-based organic agriculture and food systems can be realized.

Reactions

Al Obre

CAMP Asia Inc.–Philippines

Mr. Al Obre enumerated the main points of the the presentations that were striking for him. For Sining San Roque, the presentation showed their effort to present people's stories and the power of people through art that is context-based. Context-based art depicts the realities of the community from their own situation. This is what we mean by providing alternative expressions of struggle—especially at a time like the present where people appreciate and give value to art as an expression of people's stories. Many young people today create conditions towards community expression for their common and unified interests, concerns, aspirations, trial, and even collective action. The reactor expressed his appreciation that, because of their efforts and through arts, we are able to create our unique and own forms of arts, even terminologies. He cited the story behind the term "*tumbalik*." He continued that the challenge in looking for alternatives is the question on how we can provide counter-culture that would express people's aspirations and struggles, especially those who are victims of oppression. He added that this has been expressed long before, but remains to be relevant now.

As for the second presentation, the reactor relates it to the story of rising up, which eventually became a part of a movement for peace. He also expressed affinity to the effort because they are similarly working in a relocation site in Bulacan, where one of the main steps they began with is organizing the community, families in the area. For instance, they started a Community Health Watch (called Bantay Kalusugan Pampamayanan, also for the purpose of making our program sustainable. Through this, they were eventually able to broaden the initiative to include other sectors in the community, so that BKPampamayanan gave birth to sub-groups under that umbrella organization, namely: BKPampamilya, a health group for families; BKPangkalinga, a support group for diabetic and hypertension patients; BKPampaaralan, engaging students and teachers to look after their health, since there are four national high schools in the relocation area; and BKPangsamahan, membership by organizations. He continued that he can relate with the efforts in Myanmar, that the first step they took is to organize themselves. He concluded that the main point he picked up in the presentation is the value of continuously working towards organizing and making people come together to address their concerns.



For the last presentation, Mr. Obre agreed that there are a lot of technical concepts and terms used when talking about food security. He then posed the following questions: How would common people understand this kind of information? What is the perception of the common people on the issues of food? What values do ordinary people give to the concerns and issues related to food? At this point in time, given all that is happening in the ecology, how do people really value food? He concluded by stating that perhaps attacking food issues should be values-based, countering the current operative existing attitude and behavior of people on food issues; thereby addressing issues mentioned earlier about food habits and practices.

Finally, he ended his sharing on the three themes that emerged in the presentations. First, everything should be born out from the real situation of the people. Unfortunately, he adds that he has experiences when some community development practitioners ignore this, which should serve as a reminder. The second theme is the importance of building linkages and connections. The last theme is about discovering models that are not necessarily new but are rooted in indigenous practices. In people's search for paradigms and wanting to discover something new, sometimes they just need to rediscover and pool models together that are rooted in their own stories as a nation.

▲ Al Obre of CAMP Asia, Inc.
responds to the presentations

Bong Ramilo

Asian Movement for Peoples' Peace and Progress
(Delivered by Leonard Reyes, Asian Movement for Peoples'
Peace and Progress)

The reactor provided a brief background of their group, a collective of musicians and songwriters from different parts of Southeast Asia. They have members from Cambodia, a group of factory workers who came

together and formed a band to express their sector's issues and concerns. They also have musicians from the Karen indigenous community in Thailand.

Bong Ramilo, part of the collective based in Australia, a songwriter and art activist, shared the following: "A few questions occurred to me when I think about this project. What does this project wish to achieve? What does reclaiming the people's space through art mean? How will saving the walls of houses meant for demolition assert the community's demands, cause presence and their right to the city? Political public art is a popular form of protest and its purpose is generally well-known to express dissent, to rally resistance, and to claim or reclaim space by marking it with the community's expressions. The project of San Roque will, in all likelihood, be protest art, and will serve the purpose of expressing dissent, rallying resistance, and so on. Would the project, however, have other purposes? For example, is there a possibility that ratifying the space may deter attempts to demolish the houses?"

Dodo Chris Tanto, an artist, is known for a project he worked on about beautifying the community in the face of demolition. The art project stopped the demolition because the artistic and other values of the area improved significantly. Is there a possibility that this could happen to San Roque? Can art be a *kalasag* (shield), or even an *anting-anting* or *agimat* (amulet or charm) to protect the houses in the community? Is there a chance that this could happen and what is painted on the walls will perhaps be different to what will be painted in protest or to inspire resistance and defiance? Art can be a spear, a shield, or a weapon. Whether it is a shield or weapon or both, the act of making the art—the art of space-making and art-making—the processes need to be the processes of community empowerment. They need to be artistic in the cultural development processes in ways to enable the community to work together creatively, to make and share art, and extend this inter-creativity in art- and space-making to the meaning of another clearer and sustainable world.

How, then, can art be made and shared? Will professional artists make design and use community members to execute the design? Will there be an equality of partnership between artists and community members that operate from conceptualization to the execution of the art? Will all participants in the project be seen as artists, because anyone who makes art is an artist? Or are they makers who have different goals? Will space-making be limited to painting walls? The presentation has shared many platforms, but what about ephemeral variations like performances, or community-based design, projection art? What about a combination of these or other artistic practices?

Lastly, at this time of climate emergency, we also need to ask, will the community relate their struggle for justice to the struggle for climate justice? Will the project address thematically the imagination of the city as a sustainable habitat? Will the materials or the operational practices be ecologically responsible? And will the project also explore the relationship of art, community, and ecology?"

Rene E. Ofreneo, Ph.D.
Freedom from Debt Coalition, Philippines

Dr. Rene Ofreneo began sharing his comments on the presentations. On the first presentation, he shared that he is reminded of the fact that society, economy, and culture all go together, with the history of the Philippine labor movement. In 1902, at the height of American colonialism, national hero Isabelo de los Reyes led the first labor federation. It is a very unusual federation, because when they participate in mobilizations and rallies for independence, whole families would be present, together with their children. At that time, the labor movement was not exclusive to paid workers, it included the whole community. In 1902, at the height of American oppression, people had to express their dissent against colonialism and labor in a different way. It found expression in some of these so-called seditious plays performed in Teatro Bernadero patronized by workers. Their cultural efforts yielded cooperation and solidarity from the people. Not satisfied, Isabelo de los Reyes even pushed for the foundation of an alternative church. These are the interrelated dimensions of community life in a resistance setting. The reactor commended San Roque for their initiative and keeping up the cycle.

He continued to share that the second presentation is similar to a current initiative of the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) pushing for a people's economy. With that, the initiative aims to change the economic structure, push for economy liberalization; unleash the people's productive capacity through social reforms and capacity building; address the environmental challenges posed; and build solidarity economy that is women-led and grassroots-based. In the Philippines and other Asian countries, women do not only hold up half of the sky, but also keep families together. When women come together and unite, they help build stronger communities. We have a way of responding to crises, called *damayan*—helping one another in times of crisis. *Bayanihan* is also emerging, the coming together to build a new home, a new pathway. If the spirit of solidarity is alive and sustained, we also help sustain enterprises. These are the elements that should be nourished and strengthened, and used to scale up.

With regard to the third presentation, the reactor mentioned that Dr. Ted is an example of a green activist. Dr. Ted expressed his concern for the environment and his anger at the commodification of food, because of the role of multinationals, the role of globalization, and how the system is contributing, not only to the degradation of the environment, but also the intensification of climate change. The reactor concluded with an invitation to join in pursuing this new “religion,” green consumption, green production, and green system.

Open Forum

Dr. Ted C. Mendoza (University of the Philippines Los Baños): Both the capitalist and the socialist governance have fallen into this trap of promoting environmental crisis in all their endeavors. The most recent is

China. China is now the number one greenhouse gas emitter, surpassing the United States. Their argument is that, “per capita-wise, we are still low.” The United States have about 20 tons per capita while the Chinese are at five tons per capita. Only, the Chinese are 1.4 billion while the Americans are about 350 million. Yes, it will be a little bit difficult to accept for us. But if we reclassify this aggregate giving the most emissions, it is the rich people, because they have the capacity and propensity to consume more. Ecology-wise, the pauper lifestyle is the best lifestyle. But no one wants to be poor, especially those who have experienced conveniences and luxuries. The challenge for the young people is to learn from the older generation. The greatest drive or reason for deforestation is the meat part of the human diet. Majority of indirect emission is from grains that are being fed to our pork and chicken that comes from chemical agriculture. So what is our option? To go back to a plant-based diet. Incidentally, in the Philippines, we are lucky. We have 220 million hectares of coastal and marine areas. Fish has low emission.

Jose Monfred Sy (UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development): A while ago, you mentioned about the food eating culture as one of the main drivers of climate change. But looking at the statistics that we have, over 700 million people are going hungry. So I do not know which food eating culture exactly you are referring to. It made me feel that the blame is being put on consumers. As an environmental activist, I try my best to eat vegan, but unfortunately, everywhere I go and given my financial constraints and my lack of time to grow my own food, all I can eat would be what is available in stores. I think that goes the same for a lot of middle-class people. For a lot of impoverished people, not only in the Philippines but around the world, the adjustment might be a bit too hard. Especially as mentioned a while ago, with China being the biggest producer of greenhouse gases, that would be in the sector of transportation, exportation, importation, which are not exactly related to food consumption. Given that kind of system, how can consumers actually stop mass food production, given that it is part of profiteering?

Dr. Ted C. Mendoza (University of the Philippines Los Baños): I have to delegate my answer philosophically and grounded in reality. The hungry people of roughly about 800 million of the 7.6 billion are being put forward just to dramatize the inequality and injustice. But there is also what we call food injustice. Just to think that one-third of all food is simply wasted. Many people are also dying because of excessive food intake. There are many ways of dramatizing injustice and one of them is that. But what we are trying to drive up to is that if we do not change the way we eat, then that's it. The main driver of deforestation is our food. The emission contributed by the food system is more than all the emissions of the cars. Of course, this is not to obscure the fact that we need these vehicles. But think about later on, of holding a conference that all of us will just be staying in our home. Let's think of alternatives. In science, the two are always there, a null hypothesis and an alternative hypothesis.

Mar Mar Cho (Thandaunggyi Women's Group): I just want to rephrase what was said earlier, what was recapped. Actually, the current state in Myanmar is not fighting for independence. The people in Myanmar are fighting for their rights, for equal rights.

Raquel Castillo (Sustainability and Participation through Education and Lifelong Learning): I am also the current convenor for Philippine Process for the ASEAN People's Forum. When the Philippines hosted the ASEAN People's Forum and ASEAN Civil Society Conference in 2017, we actually put out the idea that a very important convergence space would be on the cultural solidarity and resistance. We have been trying our best, from year to year, to actually push through with this thematic area that we will develop as part of alternative regionalism. For this group, the earlier presentation was narrating a lot on the resistance, the protest of the people as embodied in the kind of artwork and cultural activities that you organize and put together. My question for this group is regarding the solidarity part of cultural resistance and solidarity. I would like to ask if there has been an impact on how you have been able to raise the solidarity of the community with other communities or with other people having similar problems of evictions, etc.

My second question is for the second resource person, Mar Mar Cho. Thank you so much for your very interesting input similar to how we would go about our initiative at Freedom from Debt Coalition on people's economy and women-led economy. I do not know how the production and marketing parts are organized. Is it all women doing everything? Are all the officers women so you can say it is women-led? Is there any role for the men in the community?

For Dr. Ted, thank you for that interesting and kind of scientific presentation. First, you were presenting an alternative food system. I would like to see an alternative food system that is less of looking at the consumption and production, but also looking at it as a social system—food social system. For a family, does the husband and wife both work? Who prepares the food? How much of the time do you prepare the food? I just want to find out because when we look at how much ordinary families have to cope with, we can understand why it is difficult these days for us to change in our everyday way of preparing our food and choosing the right kind of food. There is always a gender

▼ Raquel Castillo of SPELL responds during the open forum



consideration that is put into this process. If we change from what we have now to what you are envisioning as an alternative, what should be the just transition elements that come in? For example, what do we do with our workers in the fast food sector? How many workers will be displaced and what would they do? It is not really just the system at the level of these numbers that we are looking at but we come up with what exactly do we do so that we are able to do the change and transition in a way that is just and will not displace and disempower people.

Joshua Sales (Sining San Roque): Thank you for the questions. I'd like to recognize the call for cultural solidarity for the whole sector, not just at one site. The scenario of the whole Sining San Roque phenomenon is based on the campaign of the urgent and pending demolition. We tried to focus there as different groups of allied organizations. Within that alliance, there are different organizations such as my organization, SIKAD and KADAMAY. SIKAD, in particular, has been doing a lot of efforts in different urban poor communities such as relocation sites, or to state actual sites, Payatas, Batasan, North Caloocan. All of these workshops are being done continuously. Right now, we are just saturated and focused on Sining San Roque. With regard to the artists who go down to the communities, that is the kind of network that we are trying to solidify. We are actually not the cultural arm of KADAMAY, but an independent sectoral organization for art. We get our funds or grants from NCCA or producers and allies from Canada. All of these budget-making to forge a progressive art making and production not just for fellow artists but fellow artists learning from the community themselves—where original art is produced. To sum it up, the limitation for our organizations at SIKAD is the manpower/human power and volunteers, since all of us are part-time. Another limitation at Sining San Roque is that not everyone is asserting at the community for their rights. Others are even conservative to opt for the little compensation from NHA, so they would rather go on and just see these artworks as spectacles. It really has to start, as mentioned as the whole point of this conference, at the grassroots, even on the part of the artists who go out of their bubble industry and make time for organizing the people and going to other sites that are also in demolition situations.

Mar Mar Cho (Thandaunggyi Women's Group): For our social enterprise of agribusiness, the whole process is led and operated by all women.

Dr. Ted C. Mendoza (University of the Philippines Los Baños): It would be difficult for us if the perspective we are using comes from the macro level and we apply it to the micro, household, or individual level. I am just emphasizing here the aggregate contribution of food at the macro level. In the micro level, you have asked the question, am I preparing the food? Yes, of course, from the soil to the plate. We have to do this change. Because of this, we are now rediscovering how to grow and process our own food with less labor. There are many perennial vegetables. I grow about 20, meaning you just plant once and continue to harvest. There is no such thing as waste. We need to put that perspective into practice.

Cluster 3 Case Presentations

Alternative Development Frameworks

Popular Pedagogy and Nation-Building: The Case of Karen Development Network

Dr. May Shi Sho

Karen Development Network, Myanmar

The Myanmar government introduced its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) plans in August of 2018. It includes five points that provide the development framework of Myanmar for twelve years (from 2018 to 2030). The goals are as follows:

- (1) Peace, national reconciliation, security, and good governance
- (2) Economic stability and strengthening of macroeconomic management
- (3) Job creation and private sector-led growth
- (4) Human resource and social development for a 21st-century society
- (5) Natural resources and the environment for prosperity of the nation

The projects under the Myanmar SDGs will be managed by various government ministries that would ensure that specific goals are met. However, most people find the SDGs centralized, having a top-down structure, with limited public participation and much emphasis on the private sector. One good thing observed in the SDGs is the continuity of the projects even with the possible change of administrations every election. It is then presumed to be sustainable. Despite this, there are still many spheres in which the civil society organizations (CSOs) and the grassroots community are needed to further reach marginalized communities that are not reached by these projects. One of which is the World Bank organization, Karen Development Network (KDN).

Myanmar has been affected by the armed conflict crisis for over 70 years. The long-standing armed conflict between the Myanmar military and ethnic armed groups has displaced and affected the welfare of rural communities. When the democratic government came into power, bilateral agreements were signed by a number of ethnic armed groups between 2011 to 2013 which resulted to a national ceasefire that was signed by eight ethnic armed organizations. The formal peace process started in October of 2013.

Having lived in fear for decades, the people were wary of the new peace process and were reluctant to engage it. The people were afraid of any retribution they might face. But as access to transport became easier, and trade and health facilities were built, life became more comfortable and children were able to attend schools and pursue formal education. Also, checkpoints were removed in their communities. They began to enjoy freedom and wanted the peace to be everlasting.



▲ Dr. May Shi Sho discusses the case of the Karen Development Network

KDN has a long history of responding to the needs of those affected by the armed conflict. During its five years, KDN started small and worked on the ground. They were able to gain the trust and friendship of the grassroots communities. They started to approach the community and religious leaders, ethnic armed groups, and officials in their area. They were able to mobilize the community by building their skills and capacities to engage with different stakeholders. KDN also encouraged women's participation as they consider it as an essential part of the peace process. At present, the ethnic armed groups as well as community leaders, local authorities, and local community members can now sit down, come together, and engage each other.

However, after five years, the peace process weakened and eventually came to a halt. The changing dynamics caused a series of unrest to take root. CSOs and grassroots communities working on the ground took the responsibility to prevent any adverse situations from happening. The civil society organizations took the necessary step to continue working on the ground. They felt that they cannot stop what they have built together with the community for many years. "Trust and promises will be broken, relationships will be gone, and friendships will go down the drain," Dr. May Shi Sho adds.

KDN knew that in such dire times, it is their responsibility to keep the relationship that they have built between the community and the CSOs alive. They understand the significance of the unities that they have forged with the grassroots throughout the years of working together. KDN continued to alleviate the concerns of the community and the local people as they continued to engage and support the engagements between the community and local authorities, and within the community and ethnic armed organizations. They have done this by continuously building the skills and capacities of local community members through various training sessions including awareness-raising workshops on paralegal and human rights. Communities and local organizations encouraged key actors to return to the peace table as KDN

facilitates and provides platforms for talks and consultation regarding the issue.

They recognize the importance of sustaining the peace talks and not leaving it in a hiatus. If the peace talks stop, then this only means that they have to start from zero again. At present, KDN has been a significant actor in promoting peace by involving local communities in the peace process. Through popular education, KDN has empowered community members to become key stakeholders in promoting and achieving everlasting peace in conflict-affected areas in Myanmar.

Other challenges

As mentioned before, the areas that they are in are mismanaged areas. This means that there are more groups (ethnic armed or government troops) in the same location. There are also two administrations in these areas which makes the local people caught up in two administrative measures. This puts them in conflict as they do not know who to call during adverse situations.

Also, one big issue in Myanmar is the land rights. The Myanmar government has its own land policy and so do the ethnic armed organizations. The double law does not recognize the customary tenure rights of the land and the ethnic border areas. However, the ethnic land policy recognizes the land and the people working on it. CSOs have to provide awareness-raising regarding land rights and assistance for small landowners in the border area to reclaim their lost land.

Many lands have been reclaimed and worked on as coffee plantations managed collectively by rural farmers, who are mostly women. The coffee they produce are now marketed to large buyers. Although it is grown organically, it is not recognized because it lacks an organic certificate. It is difficult for rural farmers to obtain a certificate due to the lack of financial resources.

Although the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan aims to prevent illegal infrastructures that disrupt the natural resources and other related practices that they consider as environmental crimes, the conservation of natural resources still lies with the cooperation and participation of the local people. However, it is not enough to prevent it. Similarly, many projects which are detrimental to both the environment and the welfare of the community residing in the facility continue to be in progress despite the objections of the people. Many mega projects started with limited consultations with various stakeholders; however, a number have been overturned with the opposition of the people involved through holding numerous consultations with various stakeholders initiated by local people and organizations.

Critique of the Myanmar SDGs

- The Myanmar SDGs put much emphasis on private sector-led development and little on people-based initiatives.
- There is limited participation of civil society organizations.

Recommendations

- The CSOs need to initiate to fill the gaps for a harmonious and sustainable development of the people.

- The government needs to recognize and appreciate the alternative efforts of the CSOs. Actors of alternative practices should unify and work for these initiatives.
- Finally, although the alternative practices have many challenges, they have their strengths and weaknesses. We must look ahead to address the needs of the people so that they can be able to live in peace and dignity.

Healing at the Border: Developing the Mae Tao Clinic

Nang Snow

Deputy Director, Backpack Health Worker Team, Myanmar

“There are problems—but without health, no development can pursue. If you are sick, how can you work.”

Struggles and conflicts are still happening in Myanmar or Burma. Though ethnic armed organizations agreed to the nationwide ceasefire, conflict still occurs in the states of Kachin and Shan and some parts of Karen. Because of the conflicts, many ethnic groups in Myanmar are forced to migrate to Thailand and stay in the borders. These internally displaced persons/peoples (IDPs) from Myanmar who are staying at the border are deprived of basic social services like basic education and health.

Given the situation, the Myanmar government still focused its budget on the military, leading to a disproportion of budget allocations that should have been allocated to other basic social services. The centralized form of government employing a top-down approach made healthcare programs inefficient and ineffective. People in the community, especially IDPs, are struggling to avail healthcare programs.

▼ Nang Snow discusses the case of the Mae Tao Clinic



Because of the health conditions of refugees from Myanmar, ethnic health organizations (EHOs) and community-based health organizations (CBOs) were established to respond to the needs of the community in terms of healthcare. CBOs and EHOs are formed by different health organizations from Thailand, Myanmar, and other countries wherein one of which is the Mae Tao Clinic.

Mae Tao Clinic

The Mae Tao Clinic was founded in Mae Sot, Thailand in 1989 through the initiatives of Dr. Cynthia Maung. Dr. Maung was among those who sought refuge in the borders of Thailand and Burma when state suppression of pro-democracy movement reached its peak in 1988. Realizing the need to provide immediate medical attention to the injured refugees, Dr. Maung started the Mae Tao Clinic from makeshift facilities and a handful of dedicated volunteers comprised of both medical practitioners and non-practitioners.

At present, it acts as the main facility for health care trainings for EHOs and health CBOs. They provide vital community health assistance for conflict-affected areas and displaced and vulnerable populations from both sides of the Thai-Burma border. Their current focus in Thailand are clinic relocation and upgrade, health workforce accreditation, cross-border referral system (medical, social, child protection), health promotion activities in migrant communities, and improving the accessibility to Thai government health insurance for undocumented migrants. Meanwhile, their current focus on the other side of the border, Eastern Burma, is strengthening their health system project and continuing medical education programs for health workers in the field.

Backpack Health Workers Team (BPHWT) was established in 1998. They coordinate with health workers from Karen, Mon, and Karenni areas. Its aim is to reach IDPs and vulnerable population in remote and conflict-affected areas wherein there is no access to health care. Their goal is not only focused on providing immediate healthcare but also promoting disease prevention. Mainly, it is to equip communities with the skills and knowledge to address their own needs while working towards long-term sustainable community-based primary health care system. They have three main programs: the medical care program (MCP), community health education and prevention program (CHEPP), and maternal and child healthcare program (MCHP). The following are the activities under each program:

- Medical Care Program
 - Treatment of common illnesses (e.g., malaria, ARI, anemia, worms, diarrhea, and dysentery)
 - Emergency treatment for war-related injuries
 - Treatment of mental illnesses
 - Provision of medicine and medical materials
 - Strengthening of the existing referral system
 - Distribution of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs)
- Community Health Education and Prevention Program
 - School health promotion
 - Community water and sanitation program

- Nutritional promotion
- Village health workshops
- Village health worker workshops
- Village health committee meetings
- Maternal and Child Healthcare Program
 - Trained traditional birth attendants (TTBA) training
 - Traditional birth attendant (TBA) and TTBA workshops
 - TBA/TTBA supplies and maternity kits
 - Family planning supplies
 - Nutrition for pregnant women
 - Safe deliveries
 - Antenatal care (AN)
 - Prenatal care (PN)
 - Referrals
 - Reproductive health (RH) and gender-based violence (GBV) awareness workshop

Currently, there are 114 backpack teams spread all over the states and regions of Myanmar or Burma. Each backpack team is composed of three to five health workers working with an average of 2,000 target population. The Mae Tao Clinic trains community members to become health care providers. The programs capitalize on the people's indigenous knowledge of healthcare and the community's available resources. This is one of the reasons why MTC trains health workers in their respective communities realizing the importance of health workers coming from their community itself.

Challenges

Despite their grueling efforts to provide health care for migrants in the borders, MTC still receives no support from the Myanmar government. They have tried to work with the government before, but to no avail. At present, they are continuing to explore sustainable strategies to be able to continue their operations.

Migrant Education Along the Thai-Burma Border

Naw Gold Rain

Children's Development Center

Thousands of refugees in the Thai-Burma border camps have lived in difficult situations for years, and even decades. Their prolonged confinement in camps has created several social problems and concerns. One of which is the lack of educational services for children who have been displaced by the conflict. Because of this, several migrant learning centers (MLCs) were established to provide basic educational services for migrants.

In Thailand's Tak Province alone, there are 70 migrant learning centers with an estimated 12,090 students and 672 teachers. All MLCs are working together with the Migrant Education Coordination Center (MECC) which is under the Thai Ministry of Education.



Children's Development Center

The Children's Development Center (CDC) has been providing education for migrant children for over 24 years. Currently, there are 860 students (nursery to Grade 12) enrolled in CDC. It is composed of different ethnic groups and religions. They use multilingual methods of teaching because of the ethnic diversity of their students. Lessons are taught in three main languages, namely English, Burmese, and Thai. Until 2016, Children's Development Center was free; however, the cost of running the school without proper funding pressed them to charge enrollment fees. Fortunately, CDC still provides affordable education for migrant children. Also, CDC has boarding houses wherein students can stay. Boarding houses cost around THB 450 (USD 15) for a month of food and hygiene supplies. A year of quality multilingual education for a student costs THB 7,200 (USD 240).

CDC is also an accredited school to provide educational paths for students willing to pursue higher education. The Thai Non-Formal Education (NFE) is a six- to eight-year program that is equivalent to a Thai high school certificate after finishing. The General Education Development (GED) is a two years program for those who want to attend national universities. They also have the Education Quality Assurance Board, or the Myanmar School Welcoming Program established in 2015. It is for individuals returning to school by starting with their previous academic level.

Challenges

Because of the conflict situation, parents and students are highly mobile. They tend to move quite a lot around the border. This results in students dropping out from school. Sometimes, the grade level does not match the age of the student. Also, students and teachers lack the appropriate documents. Mainly, because students and teachers are migrants, some of them do not match their occupancy.

▲ Naw Gold Rain discusses about migrant education at the Thai-Burma Border

Another challenge for CDC is the lack of scholarship opportunities for GED graduates. A high number of GED graduates rarely avail scholarships. Only a few students can afford universities, and with the lack of scholarship opportunities, students cannot continue their schooling. Aside from the lack of funds, they also have to contend with formal bureaucratic processes for accreditation.

Reactions

Romlawati Kamad

Perempuan Kepala Keluarga (PEKKA), Indonesia

Romlawati is from PEKKA (Women-Headed Family Empowerment), a women-led NGO that helps empower women-headed households in Indonesia. According to her, there are similarities in terms of strategies with their organization in Indonesia and the organizations that shared their cases in the presentations.

She pointed out three cross-cutting themes in the presentations: raising critical awareness, capacity building, and advocacy and social change. Romlawati stressed the importance of raising critical awareness in the grassroots level. According to Romlawati, raising critical awareness enables the community members to analyze their conditions and the different factors that affect their lives. Through this, community members can understand the formal and informal structures of society which contribute to these factors and conditions. Second is capacity building. Through capacity building, they are able to make the community effectively respond to their life situations. Making the most of their potentials and developing them through education, training, and organizing. She points out that “to organize the community is to empower them.”

Third is advocacy and social change. According to Romlawati, this theme is significant for organizational building towards the goal of engaging the community and local government to respond to the local issues and challenges. It is the key to achieve their envisioned ideal life. From an individual's mission and vision, through organizing and conscientization, they create a shared aspiration.

Katutubong Dumagat from Tanay, Rizal

Samahan ng mga Health Organization sa Tanay

As a reaction to the presentations, the representative of the Dumagat-Remontado of Tanay shared their own experience in their community in connection with community health care. The Dumagat-Remontado of Tanay, Rizal organized a health organization composed of nine community health workers covering ten upland barangays. With their own efforts, they managed to organize themselves and facilitate a health financing strategy. Every member saves a peso a day, saving up to PHP 30 per month. Their contributions are pooled together in the form of savings and is shared with the members of the organization. They usually

use the savings fund for emergency purposes, especially if members and/or their family requires hospitalization and purchase of medicines.

As an indigenous peoples group, the Dumagat-Remontado tribe use their knowledge of herbal medicines to cure illnesses as a part of their culture and practice. However, there are times when they encounter severe health problems and illnesses in their community that traditional health practices cannot cure. During such incidents, they use an available trust fund provided by DOH Tanay for the members of their organization. The trust fund amounts to PHP 1,700 per family. The organization is thankful to DOH Tanay for providing the health assistance. If they were to save such amount, it would take them five years.

Despite their efforts to provide health care assistance to the community, the Dumagat tribe in Tanay still face a handful of problems. They still have no electricity and cellphone signal in their community. Also, there is an imminent threat of displacement in their own ancestral domain due to the construction of the Kaliwa Dam, a China-funded project. The project will affect nine barangays in Tanay with an estimated household population of 15,000. Mainly, it would cause flooding, displacement, and disruption of the ecosystem. Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewage System (MWSS) even promised to provide livelihood opportunities if they were to leave the area. However, the Dumagat tribe strongly disagreed with the idea of leaving their ancestral domain. Their representative emotionally expressed and shared her childhood memories of going to school when it was still made from 'kugon' and tables were cut-off wood planks. She said now that they have schools and a college in their community, and everything is provided by their ancestral domain, "what else are we looking for?"

At present, they are linking with other communities that will be affected by the Kaliwa Dam Project. They are willing to fight against the construction of the dam; however, they often hear other people say

▼ Romlawati Kamad of PEKKA, Indonesia shared her thoughts on the set of presentations



that even if we go against its construction, it will still continue. The Dumagats remain strong and positive with their campaign and efforts to stop the construction of Kaliwa Dam.

Raquel Castillo

Sustainability and Participation through Education and Lifelong Learning (SPELL), Philippines

As the lead convenor of SPELL, an organization focused on education and lifelong learning, Ms. Raquel Castillo recognizes the significance of education in the development process. She relates it with Dr. May Shi Sho's discussion of the Sustainable Development Goals. She mentioned SDG 4 which ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all. Unlike the Millennium Development Goals, SDG 4 puts emphasis on lifelong learning as a goal. It liberates learning as a goal which can be achieved not only by formal educational systems but also through non-formal, alternative learning systems.

She also mentioned the dominant paradigm of human resource development. Breaking out from the dominant perspective that human resource development should be focused on capacity building but rather viewing well-being as a capacity that primarily includes education and health allowing them to actively engage with the community's development activities.

She pointed out three significant points during the cluster presentations:

- Alternative programs and initiatives from the people should not be viewed as filling in the gaps of development but rather viewing the people as key actors in the development process through alternatives development approaches.
- There is no such thing as illegal learning. Learning is learning. It should be recognized that learning happens in different settings. Mainly, learning does not necessarily need to comply with the formal education systems for it to be called learning.
- Understanding the realities of learners and students and recognizing the diversity of these realities.

She also mentioned the importance of having assessments for learners. Assessing the learners is a way to look into the individual needs of the students. Also, it can be used to engage the government in recognizing the efforts of an organization or institution and its contribution to the development of a community.

Lastly, Ms. Castillo related the alternatives presented with Paulo Freire's "learning to read the world"—"it means that if we understand how the social context works and how society works, we are able to analyze the situation." Learning is a never-ending process. Through analyzing the context, we learn to formulate alternatives and create new ideas.

Open Forum

Representative from the Samahan ng mga Community Health Organizations sa Tanay: There are times that we cannot bring women who are in labor to the hospital because of its distance from our community. Because of this, they often give birth in our community. We use a type of bamboo to cut off the umbilical cord. For the health of our children, we use herbal medicines planted in our backyard. We usually use clavo, oregano and lemon grass. For toothaches, we use chilis. The problem is, we don't know where to get the proper medicine. We are pitiful, we cannot even have health centers in our communities.

Marivic Atacador (Bantay Kalusugang Pampamayanan): The questions are for Nang Snow of the Mae Tao Clinic. What activities does the program do to make community members participate? How do you sustain the program even without the support of the government? What kind of trainings do you provide?

Nang Snow (Mae Tao Clinic): We can say that we have 100% community participation. We train people to provide health care for the community. We are not the ones who provide the health care; we only train them. It is also best that the people we train come from the community. They already have an in-depth understanding of how the community works and respect indigenous knowledge. They know when to move and when to go. We find it more important that the health worker should come from the community itself.

To sustain the program, we use the resources from the community. We tried to have community fund raising to sustain the program, but we are still looking for more sustainable strategies. We also tried to work with the government before that there are so many challenges. The basic training that we have includes a basic training course for six to ten months. After the course, the trainee is considered an intern. The next course includes a two to three years training. After which,

▼ The Dumagat of Tanay, Rizal share their experiences as reactors



the intern is called a health assistant. We also train conditional birth attendants.

Marivic Atacador (Bantay Kalusugang Pampamayanan): One of our challenge is encouraging the community to participate. Because your program and our program are similar, do you have any tips on encouraging 100% community participation?

Nang Snow (Mae Tao Clinic): It is important that you recognize that the community shares the same visions and goals. Making the community understand that health is a cross-cutting theme that affects everyone. Also, we treat our volunteers as family members.

Marivic Capuno (Ayta Mag-Indi Tribal Council): I want to share my experience of becoming a woman IP leader in our community. I became a leader so I can promote the rights of women and children in the community. It is important that we see the problems in the community using our hearts. I think I would be happier if government did not intervene with our lives and left us the way we are. We had trainings in candle and vase making but it did not help us in anyway. They also offered microfinancing, but the interest was too high.

In terms of health, I realized that pigs were luckier than us humans. As the Asian swine flu issue spread, the government prioritize the pigs rather than funding the health of the people.

Prof. Maureen C. Pagaduan (UP College of Social Work and Community Development): The stories you have all shared make me feel sad. It's good that now, we are starting to have connections and linkages. However, even our children are paying taxes. Actually, every one of us are paying taxes so if we don't claim what we are paying them, then we can't take it back. We, as citizens, are rights claimants and the government as duty bearers have the obligation to fulfill, protect, and uphold our rights.

Flora Santos (Alyansa ng Maralita sa Baesa): I think there is hope. Imagine communities that live very far from health centers and hospitals. We can see how oppressive their situation can be. We can't leave the government doing nothing. We are the government! They have the power and all the resource. if we leave them, then we have more to lose. They need to respond to our needs. That is why we need to continue fighting. They need to do their obligation as duty bearers.

Violeta Abuque (Ayta Mag-Indi Tribe): I am a wife of a barangay captain. Currently, we have a problem regarding our ancestral domain. Up until now, our CADT is not awarded to us IPs. There is also an existing national discrimination with the IPs in terms of health and services.

Dr. Rosalinda Pineda Ofreneo (HomeNet Philippines): There must be a sharing of knowledge in terms of health care practices and methods. When we had a tour in Subic, an Ayta identified every tree we came across with and enumerated their health values. If we can only integrate indigenous people's knowledge in our programs and activities. We can link your indigenous knowledge of medicinal plants to the Mae Tao Clinic efforts.

Nang Snow (Mae Tao Clinic): We also have our own medicinal herbs that we use in the community. We accept the traditional medicinal practice along with the formal medicinal practice.



Marivic Capuno (Ayta Mag-Indi Tribe): I can relate with what have been shared by the speakers. Our ancestral domain provides everything that we need in order to live. Our ancestral domain is our hospital, our school, etc. It's the source of our medicine and everything we need is tied to our land.

Asst. Prof. Karl Arvin F. Hapal (UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development): IP knowledge is a well spring to our potential collaboration and knowledge transfer in the future. One thing we might pursue is IP knowledge in different forms, especially in health care. Let's think about what we have learned from the clusters today and imagine what are the potential linkages and collaboration we can form.

▲ **Marivic Atacador of Bantay Kalusugang Pampamayanan** asks questions during the open forum

Cluster 4 Case Presentations

Alternative Development Frameworks

Worker's Information Center: Ensuring Decent Work, Empowering Women Garment Workers

Touch Sophorth
Worker's Information Center, Cambodia

For context, demographics on Cambodia and its industries were presented, with the following data:

- Population: 15,288,489 (2019)
- Capital: Phnom Penh
- GDP growth rate: 7% per annum (for the last 10 years) and 7.5% in 2018
- Two largest industries: apparel and tourism
- Main source of income for many in rural areas: agriculture
- Heavily concentrated on trading activities and the services sector
- Primary export product: apparel (73.7% of total exports)

There are over 1,153 factories reported in the textile and footwear industry, with around 840,000 workers where 85 percent of workers are women. The industry continues to be the backbone of Cambodian economy, which is reported with a value of USD 10 billion—export to Europe (46%), USA (24%), and Canada and Japan (27%). Wages remain at USD 182 per month in 2019, with investors from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and Korea.

▼ Touch Sophorth discussing
the case of the Workers
Information Center, Cambodia



Given the growth of the industry, the conditions surrounding the garment workers are heavily-regulated by the government. In 2014, as part of the legislative expansion of the government, they created the Tripartite Negotiation Committee on minimum wage—one party from the employer, one from the union, and one from the government. Since the committee was established, the minimum wage of workers increases every year (from USD 170 in 2018 to USD 182 in 2019). In 2015, the government passed the special lease law which helps workers get access to affordable rental rooms and leasing conditions, not allowing landlords to increase rent every two years. The government also passed the bill on access to public electricity to workers, letting the public electricity connect directly to the rental rooms of workers. In 2016, the government extended the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) policy, that provides a fund from the contribution of workers and employers, accessible to members for pensions, healthcare, health and safety at work, and unemployment benefits. Effective 2017, 100 percent of the NSSF fees is paid by the employers. In the same year, the water price for workers was also regulated by the government.

Even though there has been regular minimum wage increase, the living conditions of garment workers still have not improved. Landlords increase rental fees—to small, unhygienic, unsafe rental rooms. At the same time the minimum wage increases, the cost of living (food, house utilities) also increases. Workers are also subjected to worse working conditions along with the increase in wages. When the minimum wage increased, workers' quota/targets rose up to almost double in many factories. There was also a distinct reduction of workers in the production line (approximately three to ten workers). In addition, workers were subjected to mandatory overtime, disguised in the form of incentives. Garment production in the country is largely controlled by China, where there are exploitation through working with the government, abuse of the rights of workers or workers sued in court (union cases), and threats by the use of police/security force. Eighty percent of contracts are fixed-term contracts, where factories are able to evade responsibility to their workers. With high quotas, forced overtime, a 50-hour work week at the least, workers live on low wages, poor health, and rising debt. Many factories are small and sub-contract factories which make it easy to avoid legal responsibilities with no respect to workers' rights.

Worker's Information Center (WIC) is the women garment workers-based association which seeks to empower garment workers by "organizing and providing safe space where workers can gain knowledge and power, access counselling, peer networks, training, basic healthcare and legal advice," plan collective action, and seek a broad range of services and support. It emerged from a project of the Women's Agenda for Change (WAC) on garment workers empowerment. The WIC primarily aimed to build workers' rights consciousness, self-organizing, and self-empowerment to advocate rights through the drop-in centers (DICs). At present, five DICs are operating in four districts of Phnom Penh where most of the garment factories are located. The centers aim to provide safe and accessible spaces for workers to use; share their experiences; discuss their working, living, and social conditions; and access information to build social networks.

WIC's strategic objectives include:

- Providing safe space for workers to understand, build, and analyze concepts through the drop-in centers;
- Organizing garment workers to build confidence, trust, and unity among them;
- Encouraging women workers to seek leadership roles in unions and federations and bring women's issues to union agenda;
- Support women workers-led improvement efforts on social services and social protection for better working and living conditions; and
- Support workers/unions advocacy initiatives through brands monitoring and documentation.

WIC's approaches include organizing women workers, critical analysis (problems and root cause), strategic planning (demands and solution), and structural, systematic, and policy change. These are translated into programs on awareness-raising, empowerment, organizing, and advocacy. Programs are geared towards workers realizing their rights and having a safe space to share, learn, and analyze their experiences, particularly: human and citizenship rights via the constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); labor/worker's rights via the Labor Law and international treaties; occupational health and safety; organizing and unionizing; democratic leadership and participation; and the garment industry and supply chain. Empowerment and organizing processes involve recognizing the problem, being able to speak about the problem, leading to policy analysis at the national, international and global level. With this, women start to speak about their common problem and gain a collective voice. Advocacy activities include meeting and dialogue, forum and assembly, marching/strike, research/documentation, media, and cultural arts.

Since the WIC, there have been several notable changes at the workers' level. Women workers are:

- Aware, confident, understood, and analyzed;
- Able to challenge and lead in addressing violations/abuses at factories and unions;
- Organized and strategized for better working and living conditions; and
- Supported and actively participating in campaign and advocacy.
- At the social/political level:
- Violations are documented and shared for advocacy purpose (brands monitoring);
- Space for expression and engagement with constituencies; and
- People's policy development—workers' voices in policy implementation and reform (health, housing and utilities, safety and security).

Pangiyak Ki!: Bakwit as the Lumad's Assertion for the Right to Education

Lumad Teachers and Students
Bakwit School, Philippines

“Our education is liberating. Our education is connected to our struggle as indigenous people.”

Lumad Schools in Mindanao

The Lumad is the collective term for the different indigenous peoples in the Mindanao region of the Philippines. They lived and thrived in their ancestral domains in Mindanao for centuries wherein vast natural resources are available. However, the Mindanaoan indigenous people have long been deprived of basic social services from the government. They are also subjected to different issues of oppression such as discrimination, land grabbing, plunder, militarization, and displacement, all of which are related to the exploitation of natural resources in their ancestral lands. As a response, Lumad communities with the aid of religious sectors and other organizations established the Lumad schools in Mindanao which started around the 1980s. From 2003 to 2007, Lumad communities finally established formal Lumad schools that offer two forms of education. One was formal and the other was the alternative learning system. Both are anchored in similar orientations and goals—patriotic, scientific or science-based, and for the masses.

In 2011, the Department of Education (DepEd) developed the National IP education policy framework and formally recognized the Lumad schools through DepEd Order 62, Series of 2011. It was made possible through the support and campaign of several organizations that backed the alternative schools of Lumads. Even though the DepEd has yet to create an IP specific curriculum, the Lumad schools have already developed their own IP curriculum. They have long been asserting their rights to self-determination, particularly the rights to establish and manage their own educational system as stipulated in the 2007 United Nations (UN) Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

IP Curriculum

Lumad schools are established not just to defend their ancestral land, but also to preserve their culture. The IP curriculum of the Lumads has three main components—agriculture, academics, and health. These components were realized in recognition of the fact that their basic needs are centered within these themes. The drive to develop their land and promote the indigenous agriculture is tied with their advocacy for food security. Promoting agroecology is also a part of the struggle to defend the environment. Their agricultural practices are unique as they incorporate indigenous ways of organic farming.

Health is also included in their curriculum due to the poor access to basic health care in their communities. Moreover, doctors that visit and provide health assistance in their communities are being harassed and even killed. Through the inclusion of health in the Lumad school's curriculum, they have learned acupuncture, checking of vital signs,

and preparation of herbal medicines. Recently, some of the graduates of Lumad schools are capable of basic surgical procedures. According to the students, they can apply what they have learned in school and provide basic health services in their communities.

The IP curriculum is also anchored in three (3) orientations of learning which include “*makabayan*” or patriotic, “*siyentipiko*” or scientific, and “*makamasa*” or for the masses. Patriotism is education rooted in the love for the nation and its natural resource. It recognizes national values and upholds independence and sovereignty of the nation. It is people-oriented because it serves the interest of the people, honors the strengths and work of the people, and understands the struggle of the masses, particularly those from different marginalized and vulnerable sectors. It is scientific because it strives towards truth and encourage curiosity and open-mindedness.

Attacks on Schools

Out of 250 Lumads schools, 144 are forcibly closed by military attacks and harassments or by closure orders from the Department of Education. Killings of community leaders, women and children, and Lumad School executives/leaders continue. With the recent declaration of martial law in Mindanao, 54 Salugpongan schools in Davao are forcibly closed. Along with its closure was the arrest of 27 teachers facing trumped up charges. There were also about 3,000 individuals that were forced to be fake rebel surrenderees. Lists of rebel surrenderees circulate within the community that had names of civilians, community leaders, and members of Lumad schools. Even more, Lumad communities were not spared from indiscriminate firing and military operations. Incident of torture also grew rampant. According to the students, two of their classmates that were left in Mindanao were tortured by the military. The military even asked them if they wanted to die running or kneeling. Their classmates were also burned alive but some managed to survive by playing dead and running back to their community.

The Save our Schools Network (SOS) has documented 671 cases of attacks in President Rodrigo Duterte’s four years of presidency, which is larger than the 368 cases during the span of the six years of the previous administration. The DepEd, along with the military, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) continue to harass and threaten volunteer teachers, parents of students, and the IP communities.

Lumad Bakwit Schools

Due to the harassment, attacks and threats to the Lumad communities and schools in Mindanao, they were forced to evacuate their ancestral lands. In spite of this, IP communities continued their struggle and have established Bakwit schools in Metro Manila. The term Bakwit is a colloquial term that comes from the word ‘evacuate.’ Bakwit schools are hosted by different partner universities which provide the safe space and venue for Lumad students to continue their education and learning. However, the students of the Lumad Bakwit schools acknowledged the need for solidarity and unity in the campaign to end development aggression and militarization currently happening in their ancestral domains.



For the Lumad students, to defend their land means to defend the environment, and to defend the environment means to defend our future. Lumad Bakwit Schools is a symbol of struggle, the highest expression of children's resistance against attacks on Lumad education. Their initiative is an assertion of their rights as IPs.

▲ Mech, a Lumad student of the Bakwit School, shared the potential of indigenous education

SOGIESC Justice

Introducing the "Strengthening LGBTQ+ Communities' Collective Memory to Promote Inclusive ASEAN Values" Project

Jan Melendez
ASEAN SOGIE Caucus

Organization

The ASEAN SOGIE Caucus (ASC) is a network of human rights activists from Southeast Asia that pushes for the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics inclusion in the mandate of human rights duty bearers in ASEAN. The organization became official on August 19, 2015 upon obtaining its legal registration and its official name, Southeast Asia Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression Caucus, Inc.

Background

The LGBTQ+ community has been the victim of social stigma and discrimination in our society today. As human rights defenders advocate for the rights of the LGBTQ+ community, even their calls are being challenged. However, there are already efforts around the globe to address these issues. In the global context,

recognition of the rights of the LGBTQ+ community is already happening.

Resolutions and ordinances have been made by different countries, including the Philippines. In the Philippines, non-discriminatory laws have been existing and supplemented such as the Magna Carta of Women, the Safe Spaces Act, and other anti-discrimination ordinances. However, the national legislation for the LGBTQ+ community, specifically the SOGIE bill, did not pass in the Philippine Senate. It also becomes clear that though many communities are already supporting legislation for the LGBTQ+ community, there are still people such as lawmakers with conservative and traditional views that pose an obstacle to LGBTQ+ activism and human rights defenders.

Even within ASEAN, there are government actors and influential powerholders who exert effort to delegitimize the LGBTQ+ community's plight. The discrimination by government actors as well as within the ASEAN against the LGBTQ+ community continues because of the following reasons: the LGBTQ+ community existence is a foreign idea within ASEAN; their ideologies are against traditional norms, religious views, and public morality; and that the LGBTQ+ community are threats to national development and security. The ASEAN SOGIE Caucus was created in order to address these issues and advocate for the human rights of the LGBTQ+ community.

ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Project

Despite certain progressive advocacies of the ASEAN, the project was conceived as a systematic response to the viewpoint of the governments that the LGBTQ+ community's lives are contrary to the traditions and norms of society. Mainstream LGBTQ+ activists fall short in terms of addressing the issue at a regional level. By consolidating the experiences and years of culture of their community, the goals are two-fold: to consolidate a collective memory of LGBTQ+ human rights defenders and their communities into an instrument of political transformation;

▼ Jan Melendez introduces the collective memory project of the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus



and to increase transnational collaborative actions done by grassroots LGBTQ+ human rights defenders in Southeast Asia.

The project, entitled “Strengthening LGBTQ+ Communities’ Collective Memory to Promote Inclusive ASEAN Values,” is targeted on the year 2020. The goal is to create cultural materials, both tangible and intangible, that would ultimately be used as a regional political instrument to advocate for the human rights of the community. As the title implies, the collective memory of the LGBTQ+ community would be used to recognize that the community’s contribution to ASEAN values, cultural traditions, and norms are existent and genuine contrary to the views of government actors and institutions as well as the religious sector. The lives and stories of the people within the LGBTQ+ community are what makes up the collective memory the project aims to consolidate as evidence that their experiences are critical to the growth and development of this region and to the protection of human rights, tradition, norms, and apparently, national security.

During the conception of the project up until today, there are obstacles and hindrances that the project has faced. The first challenge that the organization is facing is the danger of national peculiarities. Government institutions are still somehow viewing the LGBTQ+ community in a different light. Political campaigns that supposedly promote their rights are being used to cover up administration scandals or other forms of human rights abuses. For example, in the Philippines, the SOGIE bill, which eventually did not pass in the Senate, was making a lot of noise the same year that the war on drugs was also happening, killing thousands of alleged drug users or peddlers.

Another challenge that the organization is facing is being viewed as funders of projects or programs. This entails that communities or organizations within the LGBTQ+ community to apply unnecessary pressure to themselves thinking that there is a need to impress ASC as providers of resources. The relationship changes when financial resources are involved. This kind of issue is also experienced by the ASC as it has to source funders as well from other institutions and organizations. Sometimes, funders do not recognize the amount of work, time, and life that a person or a team gives in order to produce output that they require. Justification of resource grants are too much work and unnecessary at times.

Another challenge is that the project requires advocacy work and activities on the grassroots level. This would require project activities to be focused on far-flung communities. Although safety is one aspect to be concerned about, another issue is having to go through all of the so-called gatekeepers in communities. This kind of political climate is practiced in rural areas wherein you have to go through specific individuals as well as organizations in order to work with the communities. This process would eat up a lot of resources and sometimes hinders the whole project itself.

However, despite these challenges, the ASC will continue to work with and collaborate with funders, government actors, and most importantly, the grassroots community.

Reactions

Esperanza Santos

Trimona Multi-Purpose Cooperative

As a reactor to the presentations, Ms. Esperanza Santos shared her deep connection with the experience of the Lumad Bakwit students as she was once a bakwit during the Martial Law period. Ms. Santos was a Mindanaoan who experienced hamleting during the 1970s. It was a strategy by military forces during the martial law adopted from Vietnam. They imposed curfews to community members and required them to return to their homes by five in the afternoon. Community members are gathered in one place so that the military would know if everyone was accounted for. Unfortunately, she felt *déjà vu* upon hearing the stories of the Lumad students.

She pointed out that education is a basic human right. However, why are the Lumad children being deprived of it? The Department of Education, the agency responsible to fulfill, uphold, and protect the rights of the students, is the one that needs to be educated. She commended the Lumad students on being aware of their current situation and the reasons why this is happening. They are not just presenting their problems as victims but, as one community, doing something concrete. She also acknowledged the grounding that the students have as they know what kind of education that they need, which is empowering. It is challenging the mainstream education and presenting an alternative form of education for the people, especially IPs. It is showing that we are not just activists that oppose, but we are also presenting an alternative development paradigm.

Ms. Santos strongly asked the participants if they are not agitated with Duterte's war on the poor. She then expressed a call for solidarity to unite with the campaigns and advocacies of the marginalized sectors. She pointed out that the conference was valuable to gather advocates, organizations, and individuals together and listen to the voices of the marginalized and vulnerable.

Finally, she expressed her gratitude to the organizers for providing the opportunity and space to hear and discuss the presentations. She hoped that someday everyone will be successful in their struggles and will be able to achieve their goals.

Maris Dela Cruz-Cardenas

Network for Transformative Social Protection-Asia

Ms. Maris Dela Cruz-Cardenas started her reaction by giving a short introduction of last year's conference on alternatives. She expressed her delight upon hearing this year's cases which were filled with new experiences, stories, and learnings of grassroots organizations and other networks in Southeast Asia. There is an evident growth of advocacies and campaigns from sectors like indigenous peoples, LGBTQ+, and other sectors as well. According to her, these sectors have reached a wider, much bigger space and venue for their voices to be heard.

As stated by Ms. Dela Cruz-Cardenas, for many years, the dominant development paradigm has failed to improve the lives of the people. The government and different development agencies have tried many things from policies, programs, and projects; however, it has failed to provide solutions to address the multi-faceted poverty that the people are experiencing. Ms. Dela Cruz-Cardenas pointed out that the people are starting to realize and learn from the failures of these programs and policies. Because of this, people in their communities, workplace, and organizations are beginning to adopt their own alternative systems and development paradigm. It presents an alternative for the long existing paradigm of development that could actually change the living conditions of different communities and sectors.

However, to do this, there is a need for people to assert their rights and demand accountability from the government. The roles and responsibilities of the government to fulfill, uphold, and protect the rights of the people as duty bearers. She added that there is a need to withdraw from the “business as usual” mentality and instead, develop new models and systems of development. We are looking forward to a system that is sustainable and prioritizes the rights of the people. She also recognized the national and international policies that were created to uphold and protect the rights of the people; however, many of these policies are not recognized and implemented by governments in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines. An example shared by Ms. Dela Cruz-Cardenas is that while there are different labor agreements that were passed, all aiming to protect the rights of workers, exploitation persists through unsafe working conditions, low compensation, and legalized contractualization.

She also shared that there is a need to bring forward the issues of indigenous peoples. What they have presented is bringing about a new paradigm of development which is culture responsive, people-centered, and suitable for the IP communities. She concluded her reaction by thanking the organizers and presenters during the case presentations.

▼ Pangging Santos of the Trimona Multi-Purpose Cooperative reacts to the presentations in the fourth cluster



Remedios Nalundasan-Abijan, Ph.D.

World Council for Curriculum and Instruction Philippine Chapter

According to Dr. Nalundasan-Abijan, the first presentation gave us a glimpse of what is happening in Cambodia and what are the NGOs doing for the workers. Establishing a social protection mechanism in such an environment where workers are exposed to unsafe working conditions is something to be commended. She hopes that there are more facilities like this all over the world, especially in the Philippines.

For her, NGOs should be in the forefront of campaigns for issues concerning the marginalized sectors. They should also serve as their voices whenever they are not heard. She shared her experience in New York wherein 3,000 NGOs came to the streets and rallied along with workers for labor rights. The mobilization was enormous that it was covered by different news channels and media outlets.

She then expressed her loss for words for the presentation of the Lumad Bakwit School. She immensely admired the presentation and expressed her heartfelt appreciation. She shared that her experience in social movements was nothing compared to the Lumad students when she was their age. They endured the threats and harassment of the government and greedy corporations. Ms. Remedios encouraged them to continue their campaign and fight for their rights and ancestral land.

Do Anh Cham

Center for Women and Development, Vietnam

Because Ms. Do Anh Cham works with women in Vietnam, her reactions were focused on the rights of women and children. She was interested in the presentation on Cambodia. According to her, the Worker's Information Center is very important and necessary especially for women. Women are more likely to be oppressed and abused because they are vulnerable. This is due to the lack of opportunities to be informed about their rights and how to access this opportunities. She recognizes the need for women to be informed of their rights for them to be empowered. In fact, she plans to apply the Worker's Information Center model in Vietnam.

Like in Cambodia, Vietnam has several testing and industrial factories wherein women workers are vulnerable to sexual harassment. According to Ms. Cham, this model of awareness-raising for women about their rights can decrease or may eradicate sexual harassment in the workplace. The expansion of this alternative model in other countries is also possible by involving the government and other institutions. Also, providing other livelihood opportunities can improve the welfare of these women. However, without sufficient funding, sustaining a program such as this can be difficult. She also suggested to develop different methods or approaches in raising the awareness of both men and women with regards to women's rights.



Open Forum

▲ Do Anh Cham (center) reacts for the Center for Women and Development, Vietnam

Maris Dela Cruz-Cardenas (Network for Transformative Social Protection–Asia): How do you convey or present your situation and recommendations to relevant government officials in your country?

Esperanza Santos (Trimona Multi-Purpose Cooperative): You said that majority of the working population in Cambodia are women in the garment factories. How many percent have you reached? And how are you getting them involved in your activities, advocacy, organizing work? Just an estimate of how many percent have you reached of working women?

Touch Sophort (Workers Information Center, Cambodia): We have engaged with government officers through inviting them into our public forums. It also gives us and other sectors the opportunity to dialogue with other stakeholders, especially the government. Every year, we organize a public forum and invite local government officers to become speakers.

Villages are controlled by the local authority. The workers then organize themselves and conduct public forum in villages. The goal is to establish communication lines with the government. We invite the village leaders, employers, and local authorities to have dialogues and work the problem out especially issues related with the workers' welfare. This is how we engage with the government. More or less 600 garment workers usually participate in the forum.

Honey B. Tabiola (UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development): Do these public forums achieve positive outcomes?

Touch Sophort (Workers Information Center, Cambodia): The public forum is organized by the village, there are some successes but there are also losses or like failures to secure positive outcomes.

Delilah Rivera (Rizal Informal Sector Coalition): I am confused with the situation of the Lumads. I think the government does not recognize

the Lumads, and they are viewed as outsiders. Why does the government view Lumads as something different? Is my assumption right when I say that DepEd itself does not recognize the legitimacy of Lumad schools and the IP culture? Can we work together to include them and their struggles in our campaigns? Because what I see in the television, they portray them as inferior and detached from our society. Now, I can fully understand why we should not look at them that way. We must treasure the Lumads and all other IPs in the Philippines.

Lumad Bakwit School Student: Before, DepEd recognizes the Lumad schools as a legitimate educational system for us Lumads. Since 2014, we have acquired permits to operate. However, because they want us to remain ignorant of the social issues and illiterate to hinder us from understanding agreements that they want us to sign, the NCIP, DepEd, and DILG are conniving with corporations, especially mining companies, to close Lumad schools and remove us from our ancestral lands. As I have presented earlier, the Lumad schools is a form of resistance. Long before, we really don't need schools and formal education. We learn from our experiences and the indigenous knowledge being passed down by our elders. We already have our own indigenous political structure long before the mainstream political structure was created. We already know how to manage and govern our political, economic, and cultural systems.

But when they came, our ancestors were easily deceived because they were uneducated. They unknowingly signed agreements through thumb mark that were meant to seize and exploit our ancestral lands. This is when we realized that we also need to learn to read and write. The government claims that we were brainwashed by the New People's Army (NPA), but the truth is, we are brainwashed by the system. The existing system that prioritizes profit over the rights of the people pushed us to evacuate our ancestral lands and study in fear here in the lowlands. The media and reports have failed to report the killings in our lands. Even in our graduation, the background music was the sound of gunfire.

Our curriculum was created long before the mainstream curriculum was introduced by the DepEd. They have given us permits to operate but why are they still closing our schools?

Benny Capuno (Ayta Mag-Indi Tribe): My comments are to clarify and support our fellow IPs, the Lumads. During the presentation, they mentioned about the DepEd Order No. 62. It was passed by former DepEd Secretary Bro. Armin Luistro in 2011. I think one of the factors why it was not recognized was the apparent change of administration. Along with it was the different agenda that each administration carries. I think we also need to talk to the new DepEd secretary if she still supports that DepEd order that recognizes the ancestral domain as an alternative classroom. They are wondering why we are considering our ancestral domain as our alternative classroom. As presented by the Lumad students, long before the mainstream curriculum was introduced, we IPs have our own IP curriculum. They are pushing for the standardization of the curriculum based on the mainstream educational system. That is why they do not recognize the IP curriculum.

Mainly, their complaints about the IP curriculum is its informality and the lack of documentation requirements. We said that the IP curriculum is a process of immersing ourselves in our ancestral domain.

Our activities like farming and hunting and gathering include a diverse array of lessons and learnings which can be related to different subjects in the mainstream curriculum.

There is also the DepEd Order No. 51, cultural standards. It implies that everything inside the ancestral domain is considered as learning materials. They are having a hard time to accept that because the learning materials that they are looking for were written books and lectures. They do not understand that our ancestral domain provides the necessary learning materials that we need. We consider it as our own library of knowledge and experiences. They are afraid of our IP curriculum because we are the ones knowledgeable and capable of teaching it.

Yet again, I think this regime does not promote nor accept these DepEd orders. This is based on my own opinion. It could be the reason why they are forcibly closing the Lumad schools in Mindanao. Also, I want to express my heartfelt support for the workers of Cambodia, especially for the women who are working there.

Stella Maria Jugueta-Galang (World Council for Curriculum and Instruction–Philippine Chapter): Actually, I am working with a tribe along the Sierra Madre in Puray, Rodriguez. I know what the Lumad students and the Aytas are saying about the closure of their schools. It is because we have experienced the same thing. From the mountains, it would usually take about three hours walk to reach the nearest school. You need to cross fourteen rivers for you to be able to reach our small classrooms that only cater preschoolers up to Grade 3. These two classrooms that I was saying are under the umbrella of one private school in the lowlands. Then came the DepEd, they inspected and looked for our permit. Our permit happened to be under the umbrella of the private school, so they said, you have to apply for your own permit because we no longer allow umbrella schools.

We complied and tried to apply for a permit. We submitted the necessary requirement and our IP curriculum. The classrooms that we showed are the two existing classrooms in their community. Unfortunately, our request for permit was declined. Despite of it, we still continue our volunteer work because this is what we believe in. If we don't go up to the mountains, and if our volunteers will not stay there, these people will remain illiterate, and literacy is very important especially in these areas.

Many people from the lowlands go to the mountains and run for barangay officials. They are not legitimate IPs but because they know how to read, write, and has available resources, they usually win the elections. And all the policies that they propose to the local government is in favor of them, but not in favor of the local IP tribe. They use the ignorance of IPs to exploit their resources.

This is also our plight. This is something we want to change. I am very emotional with this young lady because I was also administering a group of refugees from Tawi-tawi. They travelled back door and went to Malaysia. We have a learning center there and you know these are stateless peoples as well. So, I am glad and truly grateful that I joined this group and was able to listen because I learned a lot from just one day and maybe we can work together at some point. I know something will happen. Thank you so much.

Trinidad Domingo (HomeNet Philippines): I am very saddened with what the IP communities are experiencing. Why don't we write all of their experiences about their culture and importance of the ancestral domain for their communities? What if we help them as professionals to write their curriculum and develop it into a book? We can be able to spread their real history and situation to more and more people. Because we all know that not all of us know their history and struggles especially for us who are living in urban areas. But if it is written in readings or books then, it could further reach more people.

Remember that we are all Filipinos, and we must need to know the situation of our countrymen, especially the IPs. If we only rely on such conferences for us to hear their stories, then it would be difficult for everyone to be able to understand their situation. If the DepEd is saying that we need to respect the culture of IP communities, then why are they doing that? I believe that they are following the orders of those people who are ruling today and are being dictated on things that they should do. Unlike us, we are not listening to anyone aside from the masses.

Andrew Aeria (Universiti Malaysia Sarawak): My first point is, I want you to resist by teaching your language, resist by teaching your children your culture, and resist by keeping your villages. You don't have to fight to win, you just have to survive. Your struggles and your stories are not any different from the Australian aborigines, the native and Latin Americans that were exiled and purged from their lands. I urge you to survive.

The second point, please give me the names of these companies whether they are mining or oil companies, please give me the names. There will be a meeting in Sabah, Malaysia where we will discuss and assess these transnational corporations that are responsible for grabbing the lands and destroying your ancestral domains. We should also include the banks that are financing these companies. If they commit such atrocities, then they should be accountable for their actions and should be punished.

Jenito Santana (Kdadalak Sulimutuk Institute, Timor Leste): We are experiencing the same situation and that's why we are gathered today to voice out our issues together. In Timor Leste, we have free education but access to education is hard. There is the lack of infrastructure to accommodate the students. We also have our local curriculum, but the government is urging to use the international curriculum. Therefore, we are gathered together to unite our collective efforts to respond to the situation.

Delilah Rivera (Rizal Informal Sector Coalition): This is regarding what Mr. Benny Capuno was saying about DepEd Order 51, cultural standards. During our elementary days, we have our social studies, but right now, I really can't understand the books that my grandchildren are reading. It lacks the cultural aspect of our society, and I am afraid that the next generation would be blindsided by this. If the information about what is really happening to our IP brothers and sisters are just coming from the television and social media which do not show their true situation, then it would be deterrent and devastating for them.

I suggest that we formulate reading materials that would show the historical and cultural aspect of the Philippines from the IP communities itself.

DAY TWO

October 24, 2019

Opening Address

Grounding Developing Alternatives Beyond the Logic of Capitalism

Melisa R. Serrano, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

School of Labor and Industrial Relations

University of the Philippines Diliman

Let me start by addressing the question “what is an alternative?” Between 2010 and 2012, together with trade union leaders and activists from different countries who are part of the Global Labour University network, we examined contemporary literature that dealt with the prolema of alternatives to capitalism (and neoliberalism), and did ten case studies of what we considered “alternatives.” We defined an alternative as an on-going, multi-dimensional, non-deterministic process of people’s economic and political struggle beyond the capitalist logic that aim at changing people’s circumstances and simultaneously transforming themselves in the process. The full development of human

▼ The second day of the 2nd Southeast Asian Conference on Alternatives was comprised by panel discussions and workshops



potential based on equality, solidarity, and sustainability is at the core of an alternative. Moreover, building an alternative is and involves a long, slow, difficult, and cumulative process of collective learning and struggle, during which people develop new capacities, capabilities, and the confidence as objects of the transformation.

We identified different socio-economic arrangements that go against and beyond the main tenets of (neoliberal) capitalism:

- Collective ownership and management of production as against private ownership and capitalist-controlled production;
- The market as a redistributive mechanism rather than being a tool for private accumulation;
- The solidarity economy rather than the market-dictated economy (or the economy of expropriation);
- Decent and socially-useful labour, instead of fragmented and alienated labour;
- Flexibility for workers to balance work-time and free-time against the contemporary paradigm of work intensification;
- A broad-based and democratic working-class politics instead of politics based on vanguardism and sectarianism;
- City space as part of the commons rather than grounded in models of urbanization that exclude the poor;
- Female empowerment and self-determination as against women's exploitation and oppression; and
- Reclaiming the commons and environmental justice as against industrialization based on the exploitation of fossil fuels.

Through our case studies, we found that critical consciousness and transformative capacities are key in constructing the emancipatory moments of people's economic, political, and social initiatives. For us, critical consciousness encompasses three intertwined dimensions: (1) an understanding of the systemic nature of oppression and injustice based on the lived experiences of people; (2) an understanding of the need to resist the underlying causes of peoples' oppression and exploitation; (3) a recognition that people have agency, that is, they have the capacity to act to change their circumstances. Transformative capacities, meanwhile, are the material and concrete expressions of critical consciousness. They include a bundle of critical skills which people acquire and develop in the course of their struggle, such as analyzing critically, organizing, mobilizing, educating, campaigning, lobbying, doing research, managing enterprises in a democratic way, networking and negotiating, community-building, cooperating across political differences, and others.

Though the initiatives we studied are not dramatic breaks from capitalism, their achievements, and here I quote two authors (De Sousa Santos and Rodríguez-Garavito), "embody forms of production and sociability beyond the capitalist values and institutions."¹ In other words, they open spaces for the further transformation of capitalist socio-economic arrangements. To deny the significance of such initiatives to peoples' lives can be detrimental to the strengthening of an alternative framework as "it can close doors to proposals that might gradually bring changes" and "create pockets of solidarity within the heart of capitalism."²

1 Boaventura de Sousa Santos and César A. Rodríguez-Garavito, "Expanding the Economic Canon and Searching for Alternatives to Neoliberal Globalization," in *Another Production is Possible: Beyond the Capitalist Canon*, ed. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (London/New York: Verso, 2006), xxi.

2 Ibid., xxii.

The late Michael Lebowitz stressed: “even though the needs [these initiatives] attempt to satisfy do not in themselves go beyond capital, the very process of struggle is one of producing new people, of transforming them into people with a new conception of themselves—as subjects capable of altering their world.”³

In short, our studies highlight that capitalism is not the only form of economy. Alternative economies—people’s economies—exist in which human needs and relationships are given primacy. Forms of solidarity economy built on the principles and values of cooperation, equality, self-determination, and democracy exist and are taking shape in many parts of the world. These forms include household economies, barter economies, market economies, community budgeting, participatory budgeting, community-based local currency exchange systems, and ethical trading, among others. Labor organizations have also provided spaces for building capacities in the struggle to defy capitalism. These are seedbeds for constructing an alternative regionalism in Southeast Asia. What is needed is to make these initiatives visible and build networks between and among peoples and organizations that are in the struggle for, and here I quote Marta Harnecker, “making possible tomorrow that which appears impossible today.” This implies the need for popular movements to organize, grow, and transform themselves into a decisive pressure group to move the process forward.

The peoples’ struggles in our case studies and the initiatives presented in this Conference are making their history. While telling stories of resistance, they are also offering alternative narratives to the “capitalocentric” conceptions and interpretations of the world. These struggles and initiatives demonstrate how people in themselves and for themselves are able to change their objective conditions and in the process bring about social change.

Thank you.

3 Michael A. Lebowitz, *Beyond Capital: Marx’s Political Economy of the Working Class* (Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 180.

Panel Land, Water, and Resource Struggles

Peoples vs. Pak Mun Dam: A Fisherfolk's Movement for Justice

Kridsakorn Silarak

Peoples vs. Pak Mun Dam (formerly part of Assembly of the Poor),
Thailand

The Pak Mun Dam is located in Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchatani Province, Thailand. Through loan grants given by World Bank, the Thai government pushed for its construction to supply electricity to factories within Thailand. In the 1960s, Thailand underwent a plan of development (the National Development Plan) supported by the World Bank, intended to help the country industrialize. A paradigm shift towards a “western concept of development.” The Thai government shifted its development perspective and adopted the international perspective of development which is centered in economic development, import-export, industrialization, and GDP as the measurement of development. However, local communities, with their perspective of development focused on protecting their natural resources, living in harmony with nature, and focusing on social welfare, contended the paradigm shift.

The dam's construction started in 1991 by the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) and was finished in 1994. However, it was heavily criticized for its adverse effects on the livelihood of the people surrounding the Mun River, especially the fisheries sector. Communities were displaced and villages were flooded because of the Pak Mun Dam. An estimate of 912 families were displaced and 780 households lost their land. Protest actions were immediately staged outside the government house in Bangkok in

▼ Kridsakorn Silarak (left)
shared to the conference the
peoples' struggle against the
Pak Mun Dam



response to the negative impacts of Pak Mun Dam to local communities in Thailand.

The Assembly of the Poor against Pak Mun Dam

The Assembly of the Poor started in 1995. It was convened by five grassroots networks engaged in different issues such as Pak Mun Dam, forest conservation, urban poor rights, and health care. They protested in front of the government house in Bangkok for approximately 22 days with an estimate of 10,000 individuals participating in the mobilization. Because of their efforts, Banharn's government admitted that Pak Mun Dam caused problems for the local people. Along with the administration's acceptance of the dam's failure was the promise to address and prioritize the problems of the local people and the dam problem.

However, after two years, the people came back to the streets and staged protests in front of the government house for 99 days. The mobilization was an assertion of the promises of the government (now referred to as Chavalit Yongchaiyut's Government) to address the problems of local communities affected by the Pak Mun Dam. This time around, 30,000 individuals participated in the mobilization. The protest action successfully influenced the decision of the government and abolished the construction of several dams in Thailand. Compensations were also given to the local people affected by the adverse impacts of the dam.

But in 1999, Chuan Leekpai came into power even without elections and ruled the government. The administration exhibited a tyrannical rule which did not take into consideration the problems of the people. Unlike the past administrations, the movement cannot negotiate with Leekpai's government and showed no accountability to the people. During his term, the administration's military violently arrested 223 villagers protesting Pak Mun Dam. The administration is also responsible for the dispersal of seven groups in Isan and two groups in Bangkok, all of which are poor villagers. On April 25, 2000, the government gave orders to open only one dam in Mun River called the Rasrirsai Dam.

Chuan Leekpai's administration was followed by administrations that were more open to dialogues and negotiations. In Thaksin Shinawatra's administration, negotiations and protests led to the administration's decision to open the dam for four months per year to allow the fish to spawn. The Thaksin administration also withdrew from building the Lomdom Dam. In 2010, Assembly of the Poor changed its name to the People's Movement for a Just Society (Pmove). The new governments, the Abhisit (2010) and Yingluck (2012–2013) administrations, were also open to conversations and negotiations with the movement. Compensations amounting to 10,000 USD each, were given to the families affected by the dam. People in the community were also given community title deeds which allow them to own the land in the form of Community Land.

However, on May 22, 2014, the Royal Thai Armed Forces, led by General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Commander of the Royal Thai Army (RTA), launched a coup d'état. They declared martial law, imposed nationwide curfew and banned political mobilizations and gatherings. They arrested and detained politicians and anti-coup activists and even took control

of the media. Pmove was unable to negotiate with the government anymore and was suspended to do any action. At present, members of People's Movement for a Just Society focused their efforts on protecting the ecology of the rivers in Thailand. They turned their role towards the ecological conservation of fishing areas in eight places alongside Mun River, one in Long River, and one in Lomduannoi River.

For almost thirty years, they are still trying to negotiate with the government towards the realization of the people's vision of development. Alongside this is the conscious efforts to revive the movement.

Struggle for Land of Our Ancestors

The Talaandig and Higaonon tribes of Maramag, Bukidnon have long been fighting to defend their ancestral domain, utilizing constant tactical negotiation with government agencies, legal actions, mobilizations, and resistance to the longstanding landlordism in the province with the height of their struggle being the landmark occupation of two former cattle ranches, with women taking the lead.

The five Talaandig clans from Purok Kiramanon, Panansalan, and Purok Kawilihan, Barangay Dagumbaan, both in the Municipality of Maramag, Bukidnon are struggling to fight for their ancestral domain, spanning 1,200 hectares, through the application for the Unified Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title.

Merlina Dumotan

Baclig Farmworkers' Association (BACFA), Philippines

The Baclig Farmworkers' Association (BACFA) started in 1993 when a piece of land—part of their ancestral domain—owned by former Mayor Levy Edma was sold to businessman Allan Uy operating a pineapple plantation. The members of BACFA, working as farm laborers, were forcibly ousted from the ranch in 2005. In 2007, through the partnership of Task Force Mapalad (TFM), BACFA was able to conduct protest actions, legal actions, and surveys for land investigation which served as the start of their resistance against the businessman, asserting that the ranch-turned-pineapple plantation is land that was confiscated from their ancestors.

In 2008, BACFA filed a petition for the cancellation of the Forest Land Grazing Lease Agreement (FLGLA) of Uy, as the land was already being utilized as a pineapple plantation. At the same time, the Talaandig clans occupied the land, and in the process, although families were threatened by the ranch owner, they continued resistance inside the community and through a series of travels all over the country to pressure the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)—even appealing directly to Secretary Lito Atienza—to grant their petition for cancellation, which was approved shortly after. Parallel to the petition for cancellation, BACFA also applied for the Community-Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA), their legal strategy for the government to grant the community ownership and use of the land.



In 2009, a case was filed against the Talaandig on alleged destruction of the forest, pasture, and watershed. After being provided with legal proof that the community is present, in 2010—two years after the resistance, the struggle, and all the arrests and threats to the community—the environment office was forced to grant them collective ownership of the land under the CBFMA.

After that, they were able to have the security for them to be able to plant whatever they wanted and needed in the area. They were also able to access government projects and aid like farming machinery and equipment. However, current challenges they face revolve around farm planning: because the land was formerly a pineapple plantation, it has been a challenge to convert to mixed crops and manage right away.

▲ Women leaders from Bukidnon

Vilma Monera

Panalsalan Dagumbaan Tribal Association (PADATA), Philippines

The history of the Panalsalan Dagumbaan Tribal Association (PADATA) can be traced back to when former Mayor Ernesto Villalon claimed ownership over several hundreds of hectares in the ancestral domain. In 1997, the Pasture Lease Agreement of Villalon expired. In 2008, the Talaandig started to occupy the land of the former Villalon Ranch. They started with building makeshift shelters in the land to symbolically express and assert themselves as the real owners of the land. Similar to BACFA, they also faced pressure and threats from the landlord. In 2010, the lease agreement of Villalon was renewed through a dummy identity claiming to belong to an indigenous tribe. With this, the harassment received by the Talaandig intensified, resulting in a farmer being killed in the occupation struggle.

Because of harassment in the area in which community member's life was also taken, they sought the audience and support of former Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary



▲ Amelita Aslag discussed the experience of the Panalsalan Dagumbaan Tribal Association (PADATA)

Jesse Robredo to share and express the harassment they experienced in the community. Prior to that, they asked for help from the local police who seemed to evade responsibility of protecting them and helping them seek justice. Because they were able to meet with the central office of DILG, the police was forced to investigate the case of the killings and harassment.

From 2010 to 2012, the indigenous peoples of Bukidnon actively campaigned to have the fake free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) of the Villalon Ranch revoked. As symbolic expression of their resistance, they shaved their heads during the protests to symbolize their being deprived of their rights to their land. The group also engaged in dialogue with the commissioners of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. In 2012, they went as far as camping out for three months in front of the DENR office to raise awareness on their problems and the harassment that they experienced. In response, they successfully pushed for the Status Quo Order on Villalon's claim over the land.

In 2013, DENR reached what they deemed a “win-win solution” where 264 hectares of land was granted to PADATA, while 200 hectares was allotted for the Villalon Ranch. PADATA conceded to the solution as at least that allowed them to be recognized as owners and residents of the area, without harassment and threats from Villalon and his people. With this, they were able to organize their community and build the necessary infrastructure such as a water reservoir, schools, and farm plots.

In 2015, they started the application for the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT)/Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC). They continue to be challenged by the NCIP—the commission that is supposed to represent and fight for them and their rights as indigenous peoples—as they, based on PADATA's experience, work very slowly in implementing the processes provided in the law. They are currently waiting for the results of the survey that the NCIP is conducting for them to finally reclaim their ancestral domain.

Workers-Managed and Workers-Controlled Enterprise

Arsenio Lascano Villamento

Asosasyon sang mga Mamu mungon sa Nolan, Philippines

Dionesio Sanchez

Nakalang Padila Farm Workers Association, Negros, Philippines

Negros Island, located at the central part of the Philippines, is one of the biggest islands in the country, known for Mt. Kanlaon, one of the active volcanoes in the country. For centuries, Negros has been ruled by landlord families, usually of Spanish origin—with names such as Montilla, Cojuangco, Maranon, Lopez, and Arroyo which are all also influential throughout the country. For a time, Negros was termed as the social volcano, because of the struggles of immigrant farm workers and sugar mill workers against the haciendas—large-scale sugarcane plantations. Negros was showcased by the government in promoting the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARP) in 1988. The implementation of the comprehensive agrarian reforms for Negros is supposed to give social justice to the landless farmers and farm workers, but has failed its mission as it perpetrated a violent process of land distribution. For instance, the Sagay massacre in 2018 occurred when eleven farm workers were killed by gunmen as they occupied the land on a farm in Sagay, Negros.

With no access to capital, technical knowledge, and business networks, a farmer beneficiary cannot make the half-to-one hectare of land granted to them productive, thereby unable to provide for their family's modest needs, much less pay for amortization and real property taxes. Parcelization of land and individual farming led to the decline in agricultural productivity, particularly in the sugar industry. Cases of land return became rampant as peasants and farm workers end up leasing back their property to hacienderos or arrendadores. Government data shows that almost 70 percent of the land covered by CARP was returned to landowners. Those who opted to cultivate their land, on the other hand, had to borrow capital from usurers, which eventually led to the latter claiming the land as collateral.

It was the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) that initiated organizing the farmer beneficiaries into associations upon awarding of the certificates of land ownership (CLOAs). However, because these organizations are hastily formed, most of them were disbanded since many were forced to pawn or lease their land.

Asosasyon sang mga Mamu mungon sa Nolan (AMANO), established in 2000, and Nakalang Padila Farm Workers Association (NAFWA), established in 2005, are among the ten Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARB) organizations that practice the workers-controlled and workers-managed enterprises in Negros. They farm on an estimated 400 hectares of sugarcane and other crops. The scheme is a form of collective farming introduced by the Negros Workers Development Center (NWDC), an active member of the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC). This viable model is in stark contrast to the parcelization of land into small individual family-based farms that the government champions. NWDC assisted ARBs to access financing and other

programs/projects from NGOs, government agencies, and trading firms like Alter Trade Philippines and Fair Trade International. AMANO and NAFWA export their products to Europe and Korea. NWDC also launched continuous trainings on organizational/project management, leadership, values formation, etc. Because of the lack of access to financing and other support services, the organizations were provided with assistance and training to access, lobby, and negotiate for funding. AMANO and NAFWA are currently supported by different government agencies—Department of Agriculture, Sugar Regulatory Administration, Philippine Coconut Authority, Department of Labor, and even the local government—not only financially but in technical assistance as well. Right now, they have continuous education so that their capacities are continuously developed and values sustained.

ARB communities practicing workers-controlled and workers-managed enterprises devote a parcel of land to sugarcane, home lots, and non-sugarcane crops such as rice (mainly for members' consumption, with excess being sold to the market), banana, coconut, fruits (guyabano and other fruit trees), vegetables (cabbage), and root crops (turmeric). Because of the worsening sugar industry crisis, AMANO and NAFWA continue to gear up for diversification of other crops, as well as family-based livestock-raising (chickens, goats, carabaos), to add to their organizational income. For more than a decade, the practice has effectively changed the economic and socio-political conditions of farmer beneficiaries who earn several times more than the average. AMANO members earn as much as PHP 80,000 annually compared to the average PHP 18,258.23 according to a study commissioned by the Provincial Government of Negros Occidental in 2007. Additionally, they are acknowledged and recognized by different government agencies as among the progressive organizations in the field, with institutions being the ones to offer services to them.

AMANO and NAFWA practice solidarity economy, not only in their organizations but within their communities. Their experiences and struggles provide substantial lessons in building the People's Economy, FDC's alternative development framework, banking on the principles of *bayanihan*, *tangkilian*, and *damayan*. They not only think of the development of their organization, but also of their communities by providing social and welfare services to their members. Operating on collective decision-making, they also provided solidarity funds and joined mobilizations for other organizations. Net income of the organizations is divided into:

- CLOA holders dividend;
- Labor/workers dividend;
- Members dividend;
- Land amortization;
- Land tax;
- Capital buildup;
- Organizational fund;
- Welfares fund—including educational assistance, burial and hospitalization and initial premium of SSS;
- Contribution to community (e.g., road projects, water and irrigation system)



- Land redemption fund; and
- Solidarity fund to other organizations (especially for struggling ARBs).

▲ Representatives from AMANO and NAFWA discussed the workers-managed and workers-controlled enterprises in Negros

For AMANO, NAFWA, and the other ARB organizations in Negros, the following remain as lessons and challenges. They believe that continuous education is a must for leaders, members, and the next generation of leaders. The organizations should ensure and sustain dynamic, transparent, democratic practices among leaders, members, and their communities. In addition, they deem building networks, alliances, and movements necessary to form links to other groups locally and internationally. As workers, they believe that they must continue to deepen members' values and concern for welfare and solidarity. Diversification remains to be a challenge in the midst of the worsening sugar industry crisis, with the price of sugar constantly fluctuating. Finally, they continue to strive to provide contributions to the community, rural development, and protection of the environment.

Struggle for Agrarian Reform: Land to Farmers of SPP

Erni Kartini
Serikat Petani Pasundan, Indonesia

Brief background of SPP

Serikat Petani Pasundan (SPP) originally started in the late 1980s through the democratization movement headed by formations of student activists, religious leaders, peasant activists, and other sectors promoting farmers rights, agrarian reform, and conservation of nature. Formally established in January 24, 2000, SPP expanded their territory reaching out to 27,320 hectares of land spreading across 100 villages,

and consisting four districts, including Garut, Tasikmalaya, Ciamis, and Pangandaran. These districts are also main food source of Jakarta and other cities in Indonesia. SPP has approximately 200,000 members.

For the peasants, marginalized villagers, and members of SPP, government efforts were limited to resolve poverty and to provide alternative livelihood opportunities for the people. Unfair land policies, marginalization, and the assertion of their rights led towards a strategy of collective land occupation to fulfill their basic needs. Reclaimed and occupied territories used to be pine forests owned by state-owned companies as well as private companies. After reclaiming, the people changed cultivation patterns to rice and other crops for consumption. They also built facilities like schools within the territories.

Vision of SPP

“Develop and Build Structure life of economic Social Politics based on Value and Principle of Humanity, Infinity and Justice.”

Mission of SPP

- Create members that will become change agents to provide assistance to the region towards economic, social and political prosperity.
- Develop and build active participation in formulating and implementing policies especially in the countryside level.
- Assess the accomplishments of projects to ensure fair, competent and sustainable implementation.

Reclaiming and occupying for their rights

Throughout the years, SPP was popularly known for mobilizations geared towards reclaiming and occupying lands, especially from state-owned enterprise and companies. In order to do so, SPP utilized three classic principles: educate, agitate, and organize. Through educating the people about the significance of agrarian reforms, they became aware of

▼ Erni Kartini of Serikat Petani Pasundan discusses agrarian reform in Indonesia



issues and problems in their community. People then became agitated which paved a way to organize and mobilize them into units that are needed to reclaim and occupy the land. The land is utilized by the community in the form of agricultural land, planted with crops, long-term, medium-term wood, and herbal plants. Also, the land is used as a new settlement for residents and has formed territorial ties at the village level.

Other lands are used for ecological purposes, such as environmental sustainability, in the form of community self-managed forests for the availability of sufficient water debit, clean air, and the survival of animals and plants. In addition, the land is also used for public interest in the form of construction facilities, construction of new roads, public cemeteries, public sports fields, and green open spaces for villages.

Within the last ten years, the SPP shifted its focus to producing new leaders from the peasants' sector. After the formation of SPP, their first- and second-generation peasant activists have suffered numerous repressions, intimidations, coercion, and illegal detention because of the demonstration and mobilization for collective land occupation. A lot of peasant activists were detained, demoralized, and criminalized by state forces.

Because of the existing gap between the agrarian reform movement in Indonesia due to the criminalization of activists, SPP established schools that offer educational program in leadership and organizing which trained potential community leaders to become genuine leaders of peasants in their territory. SPP also believed in the importance of peasant women in the movement, therefore they formed leadership schools for them. Legal aid assistance was also established to effectively respond as a counter repression measure of the police and by the state. SPP built schools for legal education and provided SPP members with legal aid.

It is also an obligation of the SPP members to send their children to SPP schools. SPP has three ethnic senior high schools, three junior high schools, and also several Islamic schools or otherwise known as *madrassahs* in Indonesia. New activists are developed directly from the members of SPP. The alternative schools offer education beyond collective land occupation and also teach different livelihood strategies. SPP views them as a continuation of the struggle of their ancestors and families.

SPP also provides an alternative social protection program. Although there is an existing social protection program of the state, it is not enough for their members. SPP provides grants for members who are sick, suffering, and those who have died. The source of funds for the alternative social protection comes from the monthly tuition of their schools and also from 'zakat,' a regular contribution of members of SPP. It is collected from the lowest unit to the top level of SPP and redistributed again especially for the social protection program. They also have a collective rice supply which is allocated to the food security of elderly members who are unable to join the productive activities anymore.

Product development from the harvest

Most of their produce are used for the community's consumption. However, surplus is produced during events like Islamic festivity, cultural

gatherings, and other celebrations. There is a psychological motivation for the members of SPP to produce more when these events are going to happen.

Their main products include corn, banana, and rice. They also produce coffee beans which are now becoming a trend in the Indonesian market. They are distributed in several coffee shops and coffee makers throughout Indonesia.

Alternative political party

With SPP's 19 years of experience, they believe that social and economic struggle is not enough to assert people's rights. However, SPP does not trust the existing political parties anymore. SPP envisions to form an alternative political party with other civil society organizations whose leaders and constituents are farmers, laborers, indigenous peoples, fishermen, and other marginal groups, such as the People's Workers' Party (PRP) in Indonesia. Through which, SPP presents an alternative governing body that is composed of people that truly represent the marginalized sector.

Reactions

Benny Capuno

Culture Master, Ayta Mag-Indi

Mr. Capuno expressed his appreciation of the presentation on Thailand and the people's struggle against the Pak Mun Dam as it exhibits the power of unity, collective action, resistance, and the will to fight for their rights. According to Mr. Capuno, it increased his morale. He also learned a lot from the case presented and intends to apply similar strategies in their own community. He praised the perseverance of the People's Movement for a Just Society in Thailand as they strongly continued their struggle and did not give up their fight. His only concern was the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is recognized by other countries in Asia, but not by the Philippine government.

He also applauded the presentation of the Manobo tribe and hopes that this also inspires the women of the Ayta Mag-indi tribe to continue standing up for their rights as women and as indigenous peoples. Mr. Capuno stressed that the Manobo's share the same challenge with them as they have also applied for CADT (Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title) in 2008, but up until now, it has not been approved. He criticized the policies of the government like the CBFMA (Community-Based Forest Management Agreement) and IMNA (Integrate Management of Natural Areas) that do not recognize the importance of the ancestral domain to the IPs. The ancestral domain is considered by the indigenous peoples as a communal territory and should be under the private ownership of the IPs as a whole. However, the government does not recognize and respect their sentiments. Mr. Capuno expressed his concern as to what reasons the government has for it to require the IPs to secure such certificates if they are recognized to be the owners of their ancestral land.



He also mentioned the FPIC (free, prior, and informed consent) of the government which only acknowledges the physical aspects but does not recognize the spirituality aspect within the ancestral domain. Mr. Capuno mentioned about Section 3 of the Philippine Constitution that states, “the State recognizes the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of Philippine society as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace. The rights of indigenous cultural communities/indigenous peoples are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.” However, it seems that the state does not recognize, protect, nor promote their rights as indigenous people.

In the case presented on Indonesia, Mr. Capuno shared that he was inspired by the continuing struggle, the strength of their organizing as well as collective action, and their farming strategies as he personally felt and experienced them when he visited Indonesia through the people-to-people exchange program.

In fact, he shared to the participants that he immediately formulated their own alternative framework of development right after the visit.

Lastly, Mr. Capuno expressed his unity with the indigenous tribes that attended the conference and called for solidarity among all IP groups in the Philippines. He also expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the conference which allowed them to share and present the current situation and struggles in their communities.

▲ Benny Capuno, culture master of the Ayta Mag-indi, reacts to the presentations

Andrew Aeria

Associate Professor, Department of Politics and International Relations,
Faculty of Social Sciences, University Malaysia Sarawak

Professor Andrew Aeria expressed his excitement as he was once again invited to the conference. What he felt was a mix of emotions as he eagerly listened to the presenters. He felt excited, depressed, and inspired with the presentations. Listening to all the presentations was



▲ Prof. Andrew Aeria reacts to the presentations

an overwhelming and touching experience for Professor Aeria as he expressed his utmost gratitude to the organizers and the people that shared their cases.

The next point that Professor Aeria shared was an appreciation for the Indigenous Peoples that have shared their struggles and successes in the conference. He said, “IPs have cared for the earth for hundreds of years, and I pay my respect to all of you. Don’t go away! Keep living, resist and stay there, survive!”

He also expressed that each and every one that attended the conference represents a completely different paradigm of what the world needs to be. A paradigm that values the environment above anything else. Much of the world today is all about money, cash, wealth, and profit. He shared a quote from the economist Herman Daly that says, “There is something fundamentally wrong in treating the earth as if it were a business in liquidation.” It is an affirmation of the dominant development paradigm that puts profit and wealth accumulation before environmental protection and conservation.

According to Professor Aeria, the economy is only a subsidiary of the environment. The environment is the mother of the economy and not the other way around. If we put the economy before the environment, then there is something fundamentally wrong with the way we think of the world that we are in. He also recognized the failure of years and years of development plans that put economic development as its primary concern as poor people are still poor, and wealth is as unequal as ever.

There will be a day that we will exhaust all the resources of the world. The day we will kill the land, poison our rivers, and cut down the trees. The day we gave up all our land, seas and forests. Let us see if you can eat your money.

He then mentioned the significance of the event and of providing the space to come together as a part of the continuation of a historical struggle of people who value solidarity, humanity, and the environment.

He felt inspired and challenged especially upon hearing the cases presented during the plenary sessions. All the presentations talked about the need to organize the community and to educate the people. He stated that without organizing and education, we will not succeed. He also acknowledged the role of the future generations in the protection and conservation of the environment wherein the continuity of the struggle lies within the next generation. There is a need to inspire and invest on the youth as future advocates.

Professor Aeria also recognized the need for alliances and coalitions from the academe, media, politicians, religious groups, and other sectors. He ends his reaction with a quote from Martin Luther King, “Those who love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war.”

Irwansyah

Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia

Mr. Irwansyah shared essential key points that he observed during the panel presentations. One of which is all the cases that showed and demonstrated successful result of the social movement and people’s movement came from a combination of militant, persistent, and disruptive mobilization in combination with the people’s capacity to negotiate independently and creatively with the government. As shown in the presentation, there will be a time when windows of opportunities or democratic spaces open. Whenever these windows open, social movements and people’s organizations need to effectively utilize these opportunities to negotiate and push for alternative development.

His next point was about the power to do collective territorialization as an essential or vital source of power for people’s struggle. Mr. Irwansyah describes collective territorialization similar to organizing. Mainly, it is the ability to organize and mobilize the people through

▼ Irwansyah of Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia reacts to the presentations



different platforms like social media. It also includes the utilization and ownership of terms like alternative development and solidarity and creating new terms and definitions appropriate for the alternative development paradigm. Using terms like 'solidaritas' as contrast to capitalism.

Another point was the brilliance of self-management and workers control which also inspired him upon listening to the presentation. He shared that they have already done it in Indonesia, but it failed miserably. Their story of success can be a trove of experiences that can be shared to other social movements planning to advocate or mobilize towards self-management/workers control. He sees the potential of self-management and workers control to compete with mainstream economies as it has the capacity to manage economy better than the mainstream economic paradigm.

Mr. Irwansyah posed a challenge of making alternative development productive. As he mentioned that alternative development strategies involving production have created an abundance of surplus which needs to be redistributed.

Lastly, Mr. Irwansyah called for cooperation and collaboration with the members of the conference. He excitingly asked the participants to have people-to-people exchange and exchange of technologies of alternative development strategies.

Workshop I

Workshop Mechanics

Assistant Professor Venarica B. Papa

UP College of Social Work and Community Development •

Project Leader, UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development

The workshop serves as a platform to possibly find commonalities, similarities in terms of issues, challenges, and initiatives. A form with a matrix (see next page) is distributed as three clusters are formed to discuss the following topics:

- (1) Reclaiming the Commons: Land, Water, and Forest Resources;
- (2) Economic Alternatives and Social Protection; and
- (3) Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, Sexual Characteristics (SOGIESC) Justice.

The cluster on “Reclaiming the Commons” refers to those initiatives that aim to reclaim control, access, and ownership of common resources. The second cluster discusses a broader framework as some organizations are anchored on economic alternatives in terms of social protection (solidarity economy, social enterprise, and other community-based livelihood). However, the cluster also answers to other social protection frameworks anchored on health and education. The third cluster would talk about issues of the gender, particularly (SOGIESC), but also women’s issues—rights, equality, etc.

Clusters are instructed to fill out the matrix, with the four columns representing the lenses or perspectives that may be used to analyze issues, initiatives, and challenges.

▼ Asst. Prof. Venarica Papa explains the workshop mechanics



	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues				
(Example: Land ownership)	Formation of community-based organizations for collective struggle	Formation of women-led committees	State agencies that may either facilitate or hinder attainment of land ownership	Indigenous peoples as stewards of the environment
Initiatives				
Challenges				

Discussion

Reclaiming the Commons: Land, Water, and Forest Resources

Development Aggression in Ancestral Domains

One of the most prevalent issues discussed during the workshop session was development aggression taking place on ancestral domains of indigenous peoples. Representatives of IPs from the Dumagat-Remontado tribe from Quezon province, Ayta Mag-Indi from Pampanga, and Lumads from Mindanao shared similar concerns regarding development aggression caused by development projects of the government. However, not only IP groups from the Philippines experience this but also neighbor countries like Thailand.

Development aggression was contextualized through similar experiences of group members as forcibly displacing a community or a group by using development projects and government policies to exploit the available resources in the area. Sometimes, development aggression makes way for private individuals/companies to own and exploit ancestral land through mining, illegal logging, and land development.

The Ayta Mag-Indi tribe, Dumagat-Remontado, and Thais are threatened to lose their ancestral land due to land use policies mainly focused on creating infrastructure projects like dams, parks, and industrial and business centers. These land use policies do not favor IPs because they limit and hinder the IPs' agricultural activities within their ancestral domain. Their life is deeply connected to their ancestral land which provides food, livelihood, and other basic needs. Meanwhile, one of the reasons Lumad communities are militarized disguised as counter-insurgency efforts is to exploit the resources in their ancestral domains.

Moreover, development aggression is just a single layer of oppression for the IP communities. For this development project to push through, government agencies and implementors need FPIC or Free Prior and Informed Consent from the IP communities. However, FPIC is usually gained through dubious and deceptive consultations with IPs, exploiting their innocence and unfamiliarity with the laws and processes.



Despite this, IP communities have continued to strive and present diverse initiatives to counter these issues. Indigenous peoples from different regions organized themselves to protect and uphold their rights to their ancestral land. In particular, the Dumagat-Remontado tribe initiated consultations and dialogues among community members and local government agencies such as the NCIP, MWSS, NCIP and DENR which are directly responsible for the construction of the Kaliwa/Kanan Dams. For the Ayta Mag-Indi tribe, they organized farmers aiming to promote indigenous farming methods. It is intended to revitalize and promote the IP agriculture as a means of sustainable production. For the Lumads, they established the Lumad, and later on, the Bakwit schools as a form of resistance against oppression. The IP curriculum being taught in Lumad schools are focused on agriculture, academics, and health anchored in the principles of patriotic, knowledge-based, and mass-oriented learning. Mainly, it is a response of the IPs to the deprivation of basic social services from the government. Meanwhile, initiatives in Thailand are mainly focused on negotiations with the government and conducting community research in the form of mapping and documenting communities in their respective lands.

IPs have also formed strategic alliances with non-government offices, progressive groups, religious sectors, and some government officials to strengthen their campaign against development aggression. Women's role is also glaring in these initiatives. Women's involvement and participation is high during community consultations. Women are represented in the tribal councils and community organizations. Moreover, IP women are frontliners in their fight against development aggression and oppression.

However, the challenge still remains to address the dominant development paradigm that has caused displacement, claimed lives of hundreds of Indigenous people fighting for their rights, and disrupted the welfare and lives of many IP communities.

Housing: Demolition, Displacement and Relocation

Besides development aggression, another issue discussed during the workshop was about demolition, displacement, and relocation in urban poor communities. Provision of basic social services is essential to the welfare and development of the people. This includes basic education, health, and housing. It is mandated in the constitution that the government shall provide basic social services to the people, especially to underprivileged and marginalized communities. However, despite these provisions, basic social services, particularly decent housing, have been inadequate. In contrary with their mandate, government agencies, along with private corporations and companies, are the ones responsible for the demolitions and forced displacement in urban poor communities. Government agencies such as the National Housing Authority (NHA), local government units, and security forces are usually the perpetrators of evicting informal settlers in areas that are deemed to be developed into private condominiums, government infrastructure, and business centers. After communities are demolished and displaced, they are, at times, relocated by the government to resettlement/relocation areas far away from the city. Due to the lack of livelihood opportunities, poor housing conditions, and inaccessibility, informal settler families (ISFs) tend to return in urban poor areas. The above-mentioned are also the reasons why urban poor communities are strongly against off-city relocation.

Other than that, relocation sites in rural areas are usually farmlands converted into housing projects. Agricultural lands through land conversion are developed by the government into residential areas for displaced ISFs. This implies that lands that are meant for agriculture which may have been a source of income for farmers have been converted into housing projects for displaced ISFs. The irony of it was expressed by group members during the workshop as people from rural areas migrate to urbanized communities in search for better livelihood opportunities. These people usually end up in urban poor communities who are then displaced and relocated back to relocation sites in rural areas.

Gender-based issues related to displacement are also prevalent in urban poor communities. Primarily, women are the most affected by demolitions and displacements. It was shared during the workshop that women who were left in their households are highly vulnerable during demolitions. An account of miscarriage was documented during a demolition as it caused panic and distress to a pregnant woman living in an urban poor community. Relocation also puts women at difficult situations given their traditional gender roles in the community worsened by the lack of basic social services in the relocation areas.

However, several urban poor communities have continued to struggle and campaign for just and humane housing and relocation. Different initiatives and alternative strategies are employed by urban poor organizations to campaign their issues and concerns. They initiated petitions, mobilizations, and awareness-raising activities. One of the group members shared that they occupied the city hall grounds as a form of mobilization for over a month in order to pressure the local government to act upon their issues of displacement and relocation. They also share their success stories to other urban poor communities

hoping that these communities could learn from their lessons and emulate similar strategies. Urban poor communities also utilized art as a way to express their sentiments to the masses and the government through visual or performance art.

Women from the urban poor sector also played a significant role in the campaign for land ownership and housing rights. They spearheaded mobilizations and dialogues with government agencies and private sectors. Women leaders are the front liners during picket lines and anti-demolition mobilizations. In fact, members of the group came from women-led organizations advocating for land ownership and housing rights.

Clearly, the challenge to attain just and humane housing and relocation lies within the government's view of development. If the government's perspective of development remains in the realm of economic and profit-driven development, then it would continue to favor the private sector and capitalists over the underprivileged and marginalized. There is a need to sustain the efforts of educating the masses, especially the urban poor sector about their rights and the role that the government plays as duty bearers. It is a step towards asserting their rights and claiming accountability from the government. The government should also propose a higher budget for land acquisition as well as land and housing development. Moreover, the government must always include the affected population or the people on the ground in consultations and planning regarding land development and housing. It is necessary to hear out the voice of the urban poor sector to understand and identify their needs and plan an effective and efficient housing project. One of the initiatives of urban poor groups as shared by the members of the group was the creation of a community development plan (CDP). The CDP, or People's Plan as they call it, is an alternative plan formulated by the people themselves based on their assessment of the community and how they want the community to look like depending on their problems and needs. It serves as a counter proposal for housing and relocation to government and private developers. However, the adoption and approval of such plans still depend on the local government.

Land Grabbing, Privatization of Resources, Corporate Power, Land Conversion, and Land Banking

Related to the abovementioned issues, land grabbing/conversion and privatization of resource were also highlighted during the workshop discussion. Land grabbing/conversion and privatization is a cross-cutting issue that affects different sectors from indigenous people, farmers, women to urban poor settlers. Land, as a basic resource, provides diverse and yet similar benefits among these mentioned sectors. For indigenous peoples, they acknowledge their ancestral land as their life. The source of their livelihood, food, water, and shelter. For farmers, land also means livelihood and basic sustenance. Other sectors view it as shelter and security of house tenure. However, land also means monetary wealth and financial resources for the government and private corporations.

As the dominant development paradigm still revolves around the premise of neoliberalism, resources mean profit and increase in GNP/GDP. Mainly, these are the reasons why land grabbing/conversion

and privatization persist, especially within grassroots communities where the people are powerless and vulnerable to oppression. These things are conceived through government policies that are deemed disadvantageous for the sectors mentioned. Land use plans and policies have adverse consequences to IPs and farmers as they limit agricultural activities through land conversion (protected area/residential/industrial). Meanwhile, urban poor communities are also displaced because of land use policies that favor large businesses and corporations which convert their land into business centers and condominiums. Moreover, privatization of lands, particularly ancestral lands through the Mining Act of 1995 and other laws in conflict with the IPRA (Indigenous People's Rights Act), are utilized by private individuals and corporations to exploit IP communities. According to the members of the group, mining activities, illegal logging, and land conversion into industrial and residential areas are currently happening in different IP communities in their ancestral lands.

In addition, the government does not only use policies to grab and convert lands but also utilize its armed forces. Harassments and intimidation are usually experienced by community leaders, people's organizations, and other groups that oppose deterrent government policies and projects. Aside from these, consultations initiated by the government rarely happen. Basically, the planning process for these projects does not include the people that will be affected by them. One example was the NGP (National Greening Project), a reforestation program initiated by DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources). During its initial phase of implementation, the program was criticized and objected by IP communities as trees planted by the agency were non-indigenous trees that have adverse effects on the ecosystem. One of the reasons was the lack of proper consultation among IP communities upon planning the program.

In spite of this, initiatives to counter land grabbing/conversion and privatization were initiated by different sectors. Petitions, mobilizations,



and awareness-raising activities were organized to campaign against the issue. Different alternatives are formulated to challenge the dominant paradigm of development that encourages land grabbing and privatization. However, harassments and threats continue to instill fear to community organizations and their members. At present, indigenous people, farmers, women, and urban poor sectors continue to organize themselves and formulate creative ways to campaign against the issue.

Economic Alternatives and Social Protection

Livelihood

The first issues discussed are linked to neoliberalism and the free market—cheap labor and no social protection for workers. Workers are subject to low wages for longer hours of labor-intensive work, with little to no health care, educational assistance, or social housing. Other issues discussed were safety of workers in the workplace and limited job opportunities due to lack of skill and access. Another issue involves the intense competition versus the mainstream market, making product development and meeting market demand difficult. In addition, women's participation in government engagement and other organizations continues to be restricted because of patriarchy in society. In the experience of a participant, women in their area are not allowed to leave their homes at night which makes them unable to participate in discussions and activities outside of work. In industries, investors and consumers have the power. As for environmental or ecological concerns, organizations, groups, and individuals should be conscious of however the alternative would affect the environment. They control production so they should also consider the environment in the process—e.g., disposal of waste and health hazards to workers and the community. Participants agree that, in discussing issues, initiatives, and challenges, the distinction between the formal and informal labor sector must always be considered. The context and circumstances that informal workers operate in make them more vulnerable. A participant adds that the informal sector is also more vulnerable to disasters, citing the experience of a community-based social enterprise that risked losing all their produce to typhoons.

Initiatives include community-based social enterprises to help promote social and solidarity economy. Those in the informal sector are encouraged to engage in initiatives for home-based workers, particularly women who also fulfill household duties. There are attempts aimed at organizing them into groups such as cooperatives that provide a venue for small-scale producers to market their products. In these initiatives, upscaling and sustainability remain to be challenges due to the limitations of small-scale, community-based producers. Studies have shown that the poorest do not necessarily have access to formal credit, microfinance, and even social protection programs. In the case of the Igting Sewing Center, the only support they received from the government and the private sector is the provision of limited equipment for their operations.

In the labor sector, spaces must be created for workers to discuss issues and find common ground. Initiatives to respond to issues on the formal economy could be focused on organizing workers to gain a

collective voice, and making them understand the context and factors concerning their plight in order to elicit ideas on how to address and resolve their issues. A specific suggestion was to establish a drop-in center—a physical space where all workers can rest and have time and space to discuss problems that they have. The drop-in center would serve as a space for workers to discuss their problems and plan to respond to those collectively. Another strategy would be selecting champions to support movements lobbying for workers' rights. There is also a lack of interest and participation of community members as they are forced to prioritize daily sustenance despite poor working conditions. Similarly, diversity in the community poses a challenge due to the differences in beliefs, languages, etc. Other challenges include difficulty accessing capital, expensive product development, punitive taxation and restrictive policies of the government, and poor or non-compliance with social protection policies.

Undocumented children

Issues discussed for organizations working in the Thai-Burma border involve difficulty in documenting children in the border, restricting mobility and access to social services (especially for those who are poor and with poor social connections). In this issue, both genders are vulnerable. Because they are unrecognized by either the Thai or Myanmar governments, they are unable to avail of social services, education, and employment opportunities outside their community. There is also poor appreciation of major stakeholders about the issue (e.g., parents, state, and international NGOs). Because of the challenges of meeting their daily survival needs, households and community members do not recognize their "statelessness" as a pressing issue. Due to this, skills and knowledge of members are not maximized to benefit the community.

Community-based organizations are present and the government is open for migrant children to return home and obtain identification records. But because of the lack of appreciation of the families—as it is the least of their problems in their day-to-day struggle—children remain undocumented. NGOs respond to this by implementing alternative birth registration processes in hopes of eventually being recognized by the government. What participants recommend is to lobby for policy change for the states to recognize these families. They agree that stakeholders (parents, government, other agencies) need to be challenged to raise awareness and consciousness on the need for identification. Another challenge raised is that the government does not recognize community-based organizations and programs on social protection and services. The government is more inclined to acquire more medicines or are more inclined to invest in health equipment rather than community-based programs that are more effective.

Food security

Food security remains to be a pressing issue for farmers, particularly in Negros. Issues of agrarian reform beneficiaries primarily include farmers going hungry due to detrimental rice importation policies. Consumers prefer imported rice because it is cheaper. Traders control the prices and flow of commodities because the government has allowed private

entities to import products (rice) from Vietnam, Thailand, and Myanmar at more cost-efficient regulatory processes in favor of businessmen. This created problems on the consumer's side—as consumers have no say on prices dictated but must still need purchasing power for their daily needs—and producer's side—as the government does not regulate the importation of products that leave small-scale farmers' products at less quality and market prices. A participant shared that farmers are now discouraged from planting rice because the price is so cheap—comparing NFA rice at a price of PHP 17 to the production cost of PHP 20 for farmers.

An initiative discussed is crop diversification—in terms of varieties and types of crops—in the case of the agrarian reform beneficiary organizations. Consciousness must also be raised for consumers to patronize local products and its benefits to the community. In line with that, direct links from community-based producers to consumer groups must be established. The challenge there is to further develop the capacities of these groups and communities in partnership and network building. Through the gender lens, participants find that women must be engaged to participate in the crop diversification process, particularly in capacity building activities. Crop diversification is a long, complex process as farmers cannot simply shift their products. Ultimately, farmers also need support from the government in the process. To begin with, the Department of Agriculture dictates what crops to plant in different areas depending on what is most marketable abroad. Parallel to concern for the environment, the ARB organizations recognize the need for crops that are climate- and disaster-resistant.

Farmers and farm workers lack access to farming technologies that makes competing with imported rice more difficult. These organized groups of farmers need to have a clear plan of what kind of agricultural system or management they want to be implemented in the Philippines that is suited to our local, small-scale farmers. Knowledge and technology transfer in crop diversification must be





designed and developed to specifically respond to the needs and align with collective goals. It was also emphasized in the discussion that these issues are multi-dimensional and interconnected. For instance, workers must be provided with good pay to be able to support the produce of the farmers.

Health

With regard to health, participants find that communities lack access to universal health care service, professionals, medicine, and facilities. Centralized health care is also difficult to access, especially for vulnerable groups (such as undocumented families, farm workers, or workers in the informal economy), putting them even more at risk.

Initiatives involve making governments accountable through various demand-making activities (e.g., dialogues with government agencies, policy development). Communities must learn to adopt alternative medicine and preventive healthcare practices. Therefore, the knowledge and capacities of community members must be strengthened. Participants mentioned established community-based insurance programs of people's organizations like the Damayan program where members pool together a small amount regularly to create a fund for emergencies to which all members have access.

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, Sexual Characteristics (SOGIESC) Justice

Gender, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, Sexual Characteristics (SOGIESC) justice

Before the start of the session, a brief introduction and discussion about SOGIESC was facilitated by the facilitator and a member of the LGBTQ+ community to the group. It was initiated to level off a basic

understanding about SOGIESC with the participants included in the discussion.

Patriarchy, discrimination, and culturally-dictated norms

During the discussion, it was pointed out by the participants that culture plays a significant role when talking about SOGIESC. Basically, culture is formed and transferred through interaction of people and communities. Through this interaction, values, norms, and traditions are passed on, maintaining a level of understanding within a society. This includes patriarchy and culturally dictated norms that influence the way people view things. As stated by the facilitator, people tend to follow historical and cultural norms by looking at things in a heteronormative way. A worldview that only accepts two genders: the woman and the man while other gender identities are considered “abnormal.” However, this does not mean that that culture cannot be changed.

As shared by a participant, some indigenous peoples (IP) communities have been predominantly patriarchal as they preserved their culture for centuries. *Datus* or tribal leaders are typically deemed as leaders of the community while women help hand in hand to support the tribal leader. However, there are instances where women leaders rise to the occasion and lead community initiatives. Similar with the story of the Dumagat tribe and their plight towards land ownership. An IP women leader along with other IP women organized fellow tribe members and led a mass land occupancy of their grabbed ancestral land. The leadership of the IP women manifested because of a specific situation that pushed them to address the issue of land grabbing. As for LGBTQ+ in some IP communities, there is a sense of invisibility with their presence because the concept of LGBTQ+ does not scratch the surface. If there is any discrimination against LGBTQ+ happening within the community, it is because they see gays as feminine men. This is relative to how a patriarchal society views women as the inferior sex.

IPs are also subjected to discrimination, similar to how LGBTQ+s and women are discriminated in society, which also renders these sectors unable to fully contribute to the development of society.

A participant also raised that an individual can face multiple levels of discrimination just by being an IP woman or LGBTQ+, all as a result of how culture influenced and portrayed gender and ethnicity within its intergenerational evolution. The idea is to break away from those culturally dictated norms and values that deprive women, IPs, and LGBTQ+s of their rights in general.

Moreover, as stated by the participants of the group, culture, norms, traditions, and worldviews, as they have been passed for several generations, can also be changed. SOGIESC is still interrelated with the basic concepts of equality, human rights, values, and understanding. Hence, rights advocates, non-members of the LGBTQ+ community, and other progressive sectors should also engage in advocating for the rights of the LGBTQ+ community. Engaging and creating platforms in communities, private and public institutions, and the government is necessary to change mindsets and perspectives towards a culture that fully accepts LGBTQ+ in the community.

Acceptance of structures and institutions

Different structures and institutions play an important role towards the acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community. This was agreed upon by the participants during the discussion. “Full acceptance,” as they coined it, must always start from the family. As shared by a participant, even family members find it hard to accept LGBTQ+s in their family. In some instances, they can only be accepted if they can contribute economically, a factor that is conditionally met to earn that acceptance. However, this does not always lead to decision making power or full acceptance. An LGBTQ+ representative shared that this condition must be met by an LGBTQ+ to be able to be accepted in the community but as a person with economic power, not as a member of the LGBTQ+ community.

It was also discussed and agreed upon by the group that the state and the church play a vital role in creating spaces towards legal and moral acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community. Different local LGBTQ+ organizations have initiated dialogues with religious institutions aimed towards achieving this goal. It is pointed out by the group that advocates for LGBTQ+ rights must engage with the religious sector in developing a religious education that promotes acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community. It is breaking out from the traditional conservative teachings of the church. Similarly, LGUs must spearhead initiatives to organize and embolden LGBTQ+ representation in the decision making within the government. As shared by a participant of the group, the LGU of Angono, Rizal has organized a local LGBTQ+ organization and passed their own SOGIE bill. Through this, opportunities can be generated for the LGBTQ+ community to influence legislation, development plans, and programs to incorporate pro-LGBTQ+ initiatives within gender and development (GAD) planning and budgeting.

The challenge for the LGBTQ+ community is to create bridges of communication and initiate dialogues with church and government leaders. Engage them in discussions and make them understand, accept, and address the issues of the LGBTQ+ community.



Presentation of Results

Reclaiming the Commons: Land, Water, and Forest Resources

Development aggression in ancestral domains

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disputes in the ownership of ancestral domain due to development aggression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development aggression (e.g., construction of Kaliwa/Kanan Dam) leading to the loss of their ancestral domain (Dumagat) Rights to education and defense of ancestral lands (Lumad) Ownership of the ancestral domain (Ayta) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayroong IPMR/ IPS na nakasentro sa usapin at konsultasyon patungkol sa kanilang lupaing ninuno (Dumagat) Inisyatiba ng komunidad na magtayo ng kanilang sariling paaralan na nagsusulong ng edukasyon na angkop sa kanilang kultura (Lumad) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malaki ang magiging partisipasyon ng kababaihan sa mga konsultasyon (Dumagat) May parehas na pagkilala sa karapatan ng kababaihan at kalalakihan (Lumad) Kasama ang mga kababaihan sa pakikipaglaban at pagdesisyon sa pamamahala Hindi kasama ang babae sa diskusyon ng FPIC Pagkakaroon ng chieftain at kagawad sa Tribal Council (Ayta) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pagkakaroon ng dayalogo kasama ang NCIP, MWSS, DENR, at mga tribal council/ leaders ng iba't ibang barangay Pumusisyon ang alkalde ng Tanay laban sa Kaliwa/ Kanan Dam (Dumagat) Nagtutulungan ang DepEd, NCIP, DSWD, DENR, AFP, at PNP upang ipasara ang Lumad schools (Lumad) Tinitingnan ng gobyerno ang paglaban para sa lupaing ninuno bilang insurgency kaya nagpapadala ng detachment sa kabundukan (Ayta) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pagkasira at pagkawala ng kalikasan dahil sa pagiging tourist spot ng mga sagradong lugar at mga ecosystem, kabilang ang mga hayop at mga halaman (Dumagat) Ginagawa nila ito dahil napakayaman ng aming lupain (***) Unti-unting ginagawang pribado at minimina ang lupa; pinuputol ang mga puno (***) Ang mga pananim ay kinain ng mga militar at ang mga alaga naming hayop ay kinatay (Lumad)
Initiatives				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pagtatag ng Bakwit schools bilang pormal na pakikipaglaban (Lumad) Pagpapanatili ng kultura at pagpapanumbalik ng katutubong palay (Ayta) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DepEd closed 144 out of 215 Lumad schools Nagkaroon ng dialogue sa DepEd, ngunit sila-sila lang ang nag-usap-usap (Lumad) 	
Challenges				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate a dialogue and investigation on the closure of Lumad schools and forward a petition to lift the closure (Lumad) Other Lumads are also used by the 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hindi alam ng mga kababaihang Ayta ang ADSDPP (Ayta) 		

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Challenges (continued)				
	government against themselves (Lumad)			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hindi updated ang ADSDPP na nakasulat pa sa English (Ayta) Walang pondo ang NCIP para iupdate ito (Ayta) 			

Housing: Demolition, Displacement and Relocation

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land ownership, housing, and water (as a social service) ISF communities in NCR are in danger zones (e.g., along waterways, under bridges, etc.) There is no housing support for Ayta communities affected by the earthquake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting community leadership and the common struggle Depressed communities organize themselves and form federations (a group of organizations sharing common goals and objectives) Organizing the community and educating and mobilizing the people (urban poor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainly men, but when women speak, they have equal say (Erni Kartini, Indonesia) Women-led organizations in the Philippine context Majority of the organizing activities are women-led (Kridsakorn Silarak, Thailand) Women's empowerment Nangunguna sa laban sa tenure Women as leaders are the frontliners during picket lines/ anti-demolition mobilizations Subjected to harassment and HRVs during demolitions (e.g., had a miscarriage due to harassment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government—hindi nagbibigay ng serbisyo hangga't hindi pinupukpok NHA—katuwang ng developer at pinapayagan ang demolisyon LGU—walang imik dahil sa developer Private owners—minsan, mas madaling kausap kaysa gobyerno Korporasyon tulad ng Ayala na pinapaalis ang komunidad sa lugar upang pagtayan ng istruktura Pulis—kasama sa pananakot LGU regarding building permits—the power of the LGU to approve or disapprove housing projects NHA/SHFC—funding Government and private corporations guilty of land-grabbing Laws and procedures favor wealthy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandamus order to clear waterways for safety and sanitation Segregation of waste and waste management in urban communities is a constant issue People recognize water as a vital resource and villages promote water conservation through tree planting and other initiatives (Erni Kartini, Indonesia)

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues (continued)				
			landowners and the state	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State neglect and failure to fulfill its mandate Native (indigenous peoples) rights to land are perilous and problematic as it is biased against the people themselves Rights claimants are jailed for asserting themselves 	
Initiatives				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of “paraleaders” or leaders Critically engaging with the local and national government Promoting peoples’ plans Paggamit ng sining upang maiparating ang paglaban sa pamamagitan ng disenyo, arte, pelikula, at musika Pagsulong sa on-site, in-city relocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paraleaders or leaders belong to the communities themselves Educate and raise awareness of organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of women-led organizing activities for them to develop their skills and capacities to organize Promotion of youth education (both boys and girls) to encourage equal participation in community decision-making Promote gender-sensitive housing programs Pagpapalaganap ng kuwento ng laban ng maralitang kababaihan para sa pabahay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Villages are elected to public posts, enabling community members to appropriate state power and enact policies that are pro-people (Erni Kartini, Indonesia) Development of programs for and by the community Community/ collective ownership of land titles (Kridsakorn Silarak, Thailand) “Critical engagement” with state agents and acknowledging that some of them truly wish to serve the people The people formulate the peoples’ plan, but the approval remains with the LGU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop forests surrounding local villages Promote the preservation of land for agricultural purposes Promotion of green communities and urban gardening as alternative source of income
Challenges				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting education on rights of the urban poor; gaining knowledge of these rights is the first step towards asserting them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage urban poor participation Involve the community in the decision-making process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-education of men and women on gender perspectives Socio-cultural effects of patriarchal society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The challenge of strengthening POs to reclaim power to self-determine by organizing the people themselves to take control of their situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing grassroots awareness of climate justice Transforming the overall framework of development from being

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Challenges (continued)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and exacting accountability from duty bearers The poor are relocated, but they are not provided with any livelihood opportunity; sometimes they are forcibly evicted from their lands with no plans for them at all Government budget is not enough for housing projects, including land acquisition, land development, and housing construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy campaign (e.g., mobilizations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women are perceived as "less educated;" therefore, they should have less decision-making capacity Women are only "forced to move" when the men are unable to do so (e.g., when they are jailed, etc.) (Erni Kartini, Indonesia) The problem of timing: women work all day, which leave them very little time for organizing work (Erni Kartini, Indonesia) Gender roles: the men like to plan, but when it comes to implementation, they leave it to the women Housing projects of NHA are located far away from their basic needs (e.g., water for women, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanding networks to include people/ communities who do not necessarily share the same problems (e.g., mass participation through social media) Involve agencies such as SHFC, NHA, HLURB, and PAG-IBIG (financing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> profit-oriented to being people-centered Agricultural lands converted to residential lands

Land Grabbing, Privatization of Resources, Corporate Power, Land Conversion, and Land Banking

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land grabbing, privatization of resources, corporate power, land conversion, and land banking Rice Tarriffication Law: hindi bumababa ang presyo ng bigas tulad ng sinabi ng mga nagsulong ng batas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperatives Joint management Workers control Control of market pricing (land grabbing) Organisado ang mga magsasaka at buo ang istrukturang politikal ng mga katutubo (land conversion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal participation of women and men (land grabbing) Hindi kasama sa titulo ang pangalan ng asawang babae; ang nakalagay ay "Maria married to Pedro" Nagpalabas na ng Administrative Order ang DAR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big property developer; plantations/ agribusiness; political families; bureaucrats; and technocrats (land grabbing) LGU—may land use plan pero hindi pabor para sa mga katutubo dahil nalilimitahan ang 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to prioritize environmental issues over economic issues Sinasabi na ang mga katutubo ang sumisira ng kagubatan dahil sa kanilang pagtatanim Watershed protection Pagkuha ng mga materyales upang

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues (continued)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> na ito ay gawing "Maria and Pedro," subalit hindi pa ipinapatupad (land conversion) Family decision-making (i.e., who decides to sell the land) (land banking) 	<p>gamit pang-agrikultura</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nagbibigay ng permit pabor sa land conversion Developer—ginagawang subdivision ang dating agrikultural na lupain DENR—sa pamamagitan ng NGP ay nagtatanim sa loob ng kagubatang sakop ng ancestral domain NCIP—may diskiminasyon sa loob ng NCIP Pinamumunuan ng hindi naman mga IP Pinapakalma lamang ang mga tao upang hindi tuluyang magalit pero hindi rin ito nakakatulong sa kanilang sitwasyon Gobyerno—taga-implementa ng batas na walang buti at puro masama ang epekto sa maliit na magsasaka "Divide and rule" through providing financial assistance 	i-develop ang tourism areas
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May MOA ang mga katutubo at mga investor na binibigyang-laya ang mga katutubo upang gamitin ang bahagi ng kanilang lupaing ninuno Pagkalampag sa mga ahensya ng gobyerno (e.g., rally sa DA) Petition at mobilization sa LGU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's empowerment Nangunguna sa laban sa tenure 		

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Initiatives (continued)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pag-oorganisa at pagmumulat sa mga isyu ▪ Press conferences and interviews 				
Challenges				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nalalabag ang nakasulat sa MOA ▪ Kahit buo at organisado ang komunidad, may takot pa rin sa otoridad/gobyerno ▪ May nangyayaring pananakot at harassment ▪ May diskriminasyon at pagmamaliit sa kakayahan ng mga katutubo 				

Economic Alternatives and Social Protection

Livelihood

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low wages and long working hours in the formal sector ▪ Safety in the workplace ▪ Intense competition versus the mainstream market, making product development and meeting market demand difficult ▪ Limited job opportunities due to lack of skill and access 				
Initiatives				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community-based social enterprise ▪ Creating spaces for workers to discuss issues and find common ground ▪ Farmer-worker forum 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women's participation in government and other organizations continues to be restricted 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Patriarchy in society continues to prevail 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investors and consumers have the power 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workers may use their collective power to influence corporations to adopt ecologically-friendly production processes 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women leaders must be developed 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishing trade unions to reinforce collective bargaining and demand-making 				

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Initiatives (continued)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home-based workers initiative 				
Challenges				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upscaling business and sustainability Lack of interest/ participation of community members Difficulty accessing capital Expensive product development Punitive taxation and restrictive policies of government Poor or non-compliance with social protection policies Diversity in the community (e.g., different beliefs, languages, etc.) 				
Undocumented children				
	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in documenting children in the Thai-Myanmar border, restricting their mobility and access to social services (especially for those who are poor and with poor social connections) Families not recognizing "statelessness" as a pressing issue (i.e., must prioritize survival) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both genders are vulnerable 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor appreciation of major stakeholders about the issue (e.g., parents, state, and international NGOs) 				
Initiatives				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative birth registration performed by NGOs 				

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Challenges				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Little support from community organizations ▪ Birth registration process is tedious and uncertain 			

Food security

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Farmers are going hungry due to detrimental rice importation policies▪ Consumers prefer imported rice because they are cheaper▪ Lack of access to farming technologies make competing with imported rice difficult			
Initiatives				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Crop diversification (in terms of varieties and types of crops)▪ Raising consciousness of consumers to patronize local products▪ Establish direct link to consumer groups▪ Partnership and network building▪ Organic farming and food as medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Women must be involved in training, capacity building, and market research.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Development of climate-resistant crops

Challenges

- Consumers prefer imported rice because they are cheaper
- Lack of access to farming technologies make competing with imported rice difficult
- Young people do not want to farm anymore

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Challenges (continued)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of comprehensive government support for organic farming 				

Health

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of access to universal health care service, healthcare professionals, and medicines Centralized healthcare system 				

Initiatives

- Making governments accountable through various demand-making activities (e.g., dialogues with government agencies, policy development)
- Adoption of alternative medicine and preventive health care practices
- Building knowledge and capacities of community members
- Bottom-up budgeting
- Community-based insurance programs (e.g., Damayan)

Challenges

- Government does not recognize community-based healthcare programs
- Government is more inclined to acquire medicines or are more inclined

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Challenges (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to invest in health equipment rather than community-based programs that are more effective Predatory politicians 			

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, Sexual Characteristics (SOGIESC) Justice

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invisibility: walang konsepto ng bakla o tomboy dahil hindi nakikita sa komunidad Men as leaders/ patriarchal Society Lack of legislation/ legal instruments for LGBTQI+ community protection and welfare Discrimination against LGBTQI+ within some IP groups Culture or mindset (e.g., "hanggang bahay lang sila") Homosexuals are expected to be breadwinners, but are treated very poorly when they do not provide 			
Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local ordinances on gender (i.e., GAD) that include the LGBTQI+ are in place in some localities in Rizal Leader of organization in Myanmar organized an LGBT group LGBTQI+ movements/ Strong presence of LGBTQI+ communities Women-led movements LGBTQI+ movements/ organizations within women's movements and other social movements Patriarchal system Educated people become leaders and strong personalities Economic power does not necessarily translate to decision-making power Representation (not all prominent LGBTQI+ personalities "automatically" represent the communities (e.g., Cong. Geraldine Roman) Taking on the agency and power of women to be the ones to address issues Local government units as vehicle to implement plans There may be initiatives as environmental defenders, but not as LGBTQI+ personalities or identities LGBTQI+ as environmental defenders 			

	Participation and organizing	Gender lens	Power analysis	Environmental/ ecological Lens
Initiatives (continued)				
	organizing in different sectors			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movements towards genuine acceptance • Using women's agency to minimize violent confrontations/ assaults 			
Challenges				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full acceptance of the LGBT community (i.e., some people will always reject certain beliefs and stick to traditional norms) • Lack of empathy from non-LGBTQI+ members • Religious institutions/church leaders • Engaging religious institutions by using their own teachings and values on humanity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small budget for GAD (may also include budget allocation or resource management of LGBTQI+ organizations) • How to make use of the GAD budget to include programs and initiatives for LGBTQI+ projects and social protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church as an institution 	

Discussion of Results

Reclaiming the Commons

Presenter: Venarica B. Papa

Additional points	Include in the documentation that the commons are not just tangible things, but also intangible things, including human rights
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Economic Alternatives and Social Protection

Presenter: Honey B. Tabiola

Additional points	<p>Zonita Narito:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Philippines, a law on universal health care was passed, but it did not clear out coverage for informal workers, especially because their income is seasonal. Another thing is to advocate for a Magna Carta for Workers that is more comprehensive. Unfortunately, this has not been passed into legislation. <hr/> <p>Prof. Maureen Pagaduan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need for capacity building in terms of finance, particularly in understanding the financial system. Alternative should not only be business, but also an advocacy. From their experience, challenges include understanding what market, profit, money, value, and capital truly mean for the people. <hr/> <p>Zeena Manglinong:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can we locate the informal sector? Are we amenable to helping them transition towards formal labor but also go beyond the neoliberal paradigm? <hr/> <p>Olive Parilla:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal sectors being employed by an organization transition from informal work to formal work to formalize their operation. But it is still difficult for these formalized workers to be absorbed by the formal economy. <hr/> <p>Maria Victoria R. Raquiza, Ph.D.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right now, the Philippines has laws. To be considered part of the "formal sector," one needs to be a part of an employee-employer relationship. They don't have to enter an employee-employer relationship because it is part of the neoliberal system.
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SOGIESC Justice

Presenter: Zeena Manglinong

Additional points	<p>Benny Capuno:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Para sa indigenous peoples (IPs), sinusuportahan po namin ang pantay na karapatan ng kababaihan at kalalakihan na nakasaad sa Section 26 ng Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) Task force for IP: Naimbitahan ako at nagsubok po na magpasa ng isang article. Noong August 8, 2010 ay dinala po namin iyon sa Congress, kay (Rep.) Baguilat. Isa po kami sa mga katutubong Ayta na sumusuporta sa pantay na pagkilala sa karapatan ng mga kababaihan at kalalakihan. I do not have the right to judge people based on their gender. Everyone must be respected and must be seen as human beings. <hr/> <p>Student from Bakwit school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noong nakapag-aral na kami ay nabuksan ang aming isip at nakita namin na ang LGBTQI+ ay bahagi ng lipunan. Tanggapin ang LGBTQI+ dahil sila ay bahagi ng lipunan. <hr/> <p>Representative from the Dumagat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alam po namin na ang mga tomboy at bakla ay sinusuportahan po namin.
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- Hindi po natin sila pwedeng itakwil.
 - Sinusuportahan po namin ang iba nilang pagkatao.
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Representatives from the Talaandig:

- May mga paniniwala na kapag may anak na bakla, siya ay may talento at kapag may anak na tomboy ay lasinggero, ngunit sa katunayan ay tumutulong siya sa kanyang ama.
 - Wala akong comment sa tomboy at bakla, pero nakikiisa kami sa kanila dahil sila ay ginawa dito sa mundo.
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Zeena Manglinong:

- A very important thing that we discussed earlier but was not expanded on is heteronormity. It is limited with the bakla and tomboy, but in the LGBTQI+, there are a lot more identities and expressions. The importance of this is that we need to unbundle and break the notion that there are different dimensions of gender identity, so this is why we call for breaking down heteronormativity.
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DAY THREE

October 25, 2019

Opening Address

The Struggle for Social Commons

Ana Maria Nemenzo
National Coordinator
WomanHealth Philippines

A new concept has come into recent discourse in the social movements. I refer to the term “commons.” It is not a new term, and it harks back to the 15th or 16th century, when pasture and grazing lands in England were called “commons.” These lands were owned and open to the common people who had access to them for their use and enjoyment. Later, these commons were taken over by kings and nobles who enclosed and divided these commons into “enclosures”—alienating these lands from the common people. This is a simplified explanation of the historical concept of the commons.

The term “commons” has been resurrected to refer to all the material and non-material things that belong to no one—this means that they belong to the people. We talk of “natural commons” when we



▼ Ana Maria Nemenzo of WomanHealth Philippines delivered the opening address for the final day of the conference



refer to the planet earth, the oceans, forests, lands, and even seeds. One can also refer to “cultural commons”—that is, knowledge and cultural heritage or people’s traditions and artistic achievements; perhaps also social media. Public services, education, healthcare, water, and electricity are generally referred to as essential services—they all belong to a system of social protection that is essential to life, to the survival of individuals and communities. We also refer to them as “social commons” and may involve or include human rights, social security, and peace.

It is the people who will define what they consider or want to consider as social commons. In this sense, these social commons come into being as a result of some activity or intervention among the people. For example, human rights and freedom do not become real and acquire meaning unless claimed and asserted. I have a favorite saying: “Freedom is, as freedom does.” So a right is not a right unless you are able to act on it.

What is emphasized here is that social commons is the result of a common or collective political decision about access, use, and monitoring of these services, or collective ownership through democratic and participatory processes. One could already point out that many of the alternative development initiatives that people’s organizations and communities have presented at this conference could be called social commons—they are services or programs defined by the community collectively in a participatory way to serve people’s needs. One might think that community initiatives may be undertaken independently through people’s community efforts using local resources with no interference from outside.

The question arises: Is there then a need for the state? It will be a delusion to think that we can ignore the role of government with regard to these independent people’s initiatives. Prices of goods are determined by the market. One cannot be self-sufficient unto itself. The distribution of goods is determined by the national government through laws and regulations. Work opportunities are created by the government. There is a crisis in employment. Wages often are no longer able to support subsistence.

In other words, to talk of social commons does not deny the role of government. Rather, it needs to redefine the role of the state and stress its regulatory and redistributive role in the way it determines taxes, programs, in guaranteeing human rights, in ensuring environmental protection and the security of communities and of the nation. The term “public service” means—literally and meaningfully—to serve the people. This redefinition of the role of the state is part of the struggle for social commons.

The struggle for social commons is a struggle against privatization that undermines and destroys livelihoods of people and promotes the drive for profit-making. Privatization of social services is a new kind of profit-making at the expense of people’s well-being. Hence, the struggle extends to resistance against neoliberal policies that destroy livelihoods of people, create inequalities, squander natural resources, destroy the environment, and promote individualism and competition. The struggle for social commons is a fight against inequality and discrimination. It is a fight for social justice and the common good.

Recapitulation of “Rethinking Cross-Border Regionalism: Conference on Alternatives in Southeast Asia” (2018)

Alternative Practices in Southeast Asia: Thirty Case Studies Towards a Model of a Peoples’ Regional Integration

Eduardo C. Tadem, Ph.D.

Convenor, Program on Alternative Development

UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies

The Program on Alternative Development (AltDev) of the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) is an outgrowth from the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN Peoples’ Forum (ACSC/APF). Established in 2005, the ACSC/APF has been continuously engaging in the official Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) process by drawing up and presenting to the ASEAN leaders demands for a genuinely people-centered ASEAN. Throughout the years, however, ASEAN has been deaf and blind to the proposals and initiatives of Southeast Asian civil society organizations, failing to meaningfully address the issues and concerns of Southeast Asian peoples. In that sense, ASEAN is a negative model of regional integration, as it is controlled and dictated by regional and national elite forces—the top one percent, political oligarchies, and probably mainly, by big corporate interests. Since the establishment of ASEAN in 1967, the development strategies it has followed has only widened social inequalities and has destroyed the environment of Southeast Asia, which is particularly relevant with respect to the indigenous peoples in Southeast Asian countries.

This highlights the need for alternatives—an alternative ASEAN, an alternative development paradigm, alternative theories of development to what ASEAN has been following. There is a need to challenge the ASEAN model of cutthroat competition, the insatiable thirst for profits, and the narrow kind of ultra-patriotism, which does not contribute to peacebuilding in the region. The alternatives can be found in what Southeast Asian peoples are already doing on the ground, especially among the grassroots. In contrast to the ASEAN model, the guiding principles are: cooperation, instead of competition; mutual benefit, instead of benefit for only a few; the commons, where natural resources of the region should be owned, managed, and controlled in common by the people; and joint development, especially with respect to territorial disputes. For instance, over the South China Sea or the West Philippine Sea, instead of each country claiming exclusive rights to the resources of the sea, those resources should actually be considered a common heritage of mankind. These alternative practices are already being undertaken voluntarily on the ground, in most cases, without any intervention from outside forces. This process results in new thinking and new social relationships built on trust, cooperation, and communalism. In addition, since these practices have been around for so long, they are often guided by the traditional indigenous wisdom of peoples that have withstood the



▲ UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development (AltDev) Convenor Dr. Eduardo C. Tadem recounts the highlights of the inaugural conference on alternatives in Southeast Asia

test of time, inherited and refined through the ages. It is these grassroots initiatives that will comprise the elements of a new civilization needed to build and foretell the configuration of a just culture of a future society.

However, there are certain gaps in these alternative practices—gaps that need to be filled that efforts in the past year are geared towards:

- These practices are spatially dispersed, largely disparate, disconnected, and spread out over a big area. In many cases, they are working on their own and are not able to access the experiences of other alternative practices in other parts of Southeast Asia.
- There is very little research and documentation of these practices. They need to be documented in order for these practices to be shared to other peoples in other societies. An important component of documentation is to include live histories of individuals who have been instrumental in setting up these alternative practices.
- They are marginal and confined to a small, sometimes insignificant, section of society. There is a need to scale them up, make them significant, important.
- These efforts need to be linked together into a new regional network through people-to-people exchanges. Efforts must cross borders—artificial borders between cultures set up by elites, oligarchies, and colonialism.
- There is need to develop a new theory/framework based on these practices, in lieu of the prevailing theory of development today, capitalism—which has produced increased inequalities and the

destruction of the environment. There needs to be a shift from the focus on economic growth that proves to be destructive to the environment and to the redistribution of wealth.

These alternative practices were looked into and divided into economic, political, social, and cultural alternative practices.

Economic alternative practices

The following are the types of economic alternative practices that the Program is trying to resurface: on the production side—production cooperatives and communities, social enterprises, solidarity economy-based initiatives; on food production and distribution—alternative trade, organic family farms, agroecology, biodiversity, zero-waste production, and indigenous agronomic practices (e.g., plant breeding); on power generation—community-based renewable sources (solar, wind, biogas, etc.); and on the marketing side—direct producer-consumer linkages, revival of local markets, fair trade, and mutual exchange.

Political alternative practices

Political alternative practices—what people are doing on the ground in terms of seizing control of resources—include networks of civil society organizations (CSOs), social movements, and people's organizations (POs); joint political advocacies and actions through mass mobilizations; alternatives to traditional political parties; direct actions by deprived communities; integrated socio-economic planning; traditional conflict-settlement mechanisms; and the use of social media.

Social alternative practices

Social alternative practices include self-help groups for social protection; community-based health care systems under primary care principles; “barefoot” health practitioners; the use of organic and generic healing practices; alternative learning in folk schools, non-formal centers, and lifelong learning advocacies; and alternative housing, people-oriented and directed shelter programs, and vernacular architecture (indigeneity).

Cultural alternative practices

Cultural alternative practices include: networks of visual artists and other performers that showcase the richness, diversity, and historical depth of Southeast Asian creative arts; cultural practices that highlight significant political, social, and economic issues of marginalized sectors of society; and cultural practices that lend a human spiritual face to political and economic dimensions.

The case studies

The thirty case studies were divided into eight categories, namely:

Access to justice

- Holistic approach to handling migrant cases (Philippines)
- Paralegal training for vulnerable sectors as a peace initiative (Pattani, Southern Thailand)

Ecology and food sovereignty

- Alternative land management (Surat Thani, Southern Thailand)
- Local food movement and sorghum farming (Flores, Indonesia)
- *Tara bandu* and farmers' unions (Ermera District, Timor Leste)
- Organic and sustainable agriculture (Sakon Nakhon, Thailand)
- Agro-ecology trends and seed banking in Southeast Asia (Focus on the Global South)

Gender justice and governance

- Empowering women-headed households (Indonesia)
- Women organizing for governance among the Ayta Mag-indi (Porac, Pampanga, Philippines)
- Peace House Shelter for victims of domestic violence (Vietnam Women's Union)
- LGBTIQ and the fight for gender equality (Arcoiris, Timor Leste)

Solidarity economy/social enterprises

- Building a people's economy (Freedom from Debt Coalition, Philippines)
- Collective action for achieving full life (Igting Mothers, Bulacan, Philippines)
- Renewed change and rise of Gaya-gaya sewers (Bulacan, Philippines)
- Trimona Multi-purpose Cooperative (Metro Manila, Philippines)
- Sustainable economy from the local level (KPRI, Indonesia)
- Collective enterprise as a workplace (PK-MPC, Isabela, Philippines)

Culture as alternative

- aMP3's Music for Change: Building a Village (Southeast Asia)
- Art for human empowerment (KSI, Indonesia)

Alternative healthcare

- Health in the hands of the indigenous Dumagats (Tanay, Rizal, Philippines)
- Community Health Watch (BPK, Bulacan, Philippines)

Right to housing and social protection

- Bamboo housing as pathways to alternative living (Philippines)
- Urban poor anti-demolition campaign and land acquisition (ASAMBA Sanlakas, Metro Manila, Philippines)
- Socialized housing for informal sector living in a danger zone (IPD, Philippines)
- Housing and social protection (P-Move, Thailand)
- Social protection as a human and democratic response to crisis (NTSP, Southeast Asia)

Alternative Pedagogy

- Education from the academe to a movement for caring spaces (WCCI, Manila, Philippines)
- Rural Internship Training Program (Sarawak, Malaysia)
- Education for sustainable development (PADETC, Laos)

- Education and lifelong learning (SPELL–Piglas Kababaihan, Philippines)

Activities for 2019

For the year 2019, the activities of the Program include:

- *Publication of 2018 case studies:* The case studies are now in the process of being finalized for publication.
- *People-to-People Exchange Program:* This was proposed during last year's conference and was conducted on July 22–27, 2019, with 31 participants from Thailand, Timor Leste, Laos, Indonesia, and the Philippines. This was co-organized by the UP CIDS AltDev and was hosted by Konfederasi Pergarakan Rakyat Indonesia (KPRI; Confederation of Indonesian Peoples Movement). Activities in the program included community tours and sharing of experiences of KPRI, such as agricultural practices (coffee and other crops), alternative schools, union organizing.
- *Documentation of additional case studies:* Additional case studies will be gathered from Myanmar, Thailand, the Thai-Burma border, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Philippines, Manipur, Northeast India, Chongqing, and Southwest China.
- *Second Regional Conference on Southeast Asian Alternatives:* This will be held in Quezon City, Philippines on October 22–24, 2019 and will include presentations and discussions of new case studies and planning for building a network on Southeast Asian peoples' regional integration as a peoples' alternative to ASEAN and regional integration from below.

In conclusion, the case studies are guided by the principles of solidarity, collectivism, social equality, cooperation, mutual benefit, and the commons. At the same time, there is a need to be mindful of the judicious and responsible use of human and natural resources and the need for a peaceful and harmonious relationship with other peoples and with nature. Nature must not be viewed as the enemy that has to be controlled, extracted, exploited, and utilized for peoples' purposes. The agenda for an alternative peoples' regional integration should be viewed as a pioneering effort, which may hopefully serve as a model for regional integration in other parts of the world. This entails that efforts must move beyond mere engagement with the state and state-led regional bodies, relying on trust in the collective wisdom and resilience of the peoples, understanding that this is a long-term vision that will take more years to realize and accomplish.

Planning Session

Workshop Mechanics

Assistant Professor Venarica B. Papa

UP College of Social Work and Community Development •

Project Leader, UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development

This part of the conference deals with determining ways forward. As discussed earlier, the first people-to-people exchange activity was conducted, where representatives of different organizations in the network made a visit to Indonesia. The intention of the activity was merely for exposure—to understand how the SPP was able to develop its community, establish governance frameworks, and strengthen its organizing strategies. The planning workshop aims to level this up by identifying specific agenda in the next people-to-people exchange to be organized the following year. The organizers had identified three agenda, but are still open to suggestions to be included in the planning proposal: (1) network building; (2) technology and knowledge transfer; and (3) organizing strategies and governance framework. Each cluster will propose at least three plans as a take-off point in order for the organizers to have options as to which activities could be developed. The plans should answer the following questions:

- Who? Which organization do we want to go to? And which organization will be going?
- Where?
- Why? (clusters could provide specific objectives for the plans)
- What? What do you expect to gain from the activity? What do you expect as results or outcomes?
- When?

The proposed plans will be consolidated and ranked according to feasibility, security, and availability of funding. The network targets to conduct at least three activities from the options that were raised during the workshop.

Network Building and Social Movements

Guided by the workshop questions, the planning workshop on network building and social movements was facilitated through a process of sharing of experiences, insights, and suggestions. After the discussion, the groups must come up with three proposed plans that will be presented to the participants. The plans are in relation with the next people-to-people exchange initiatives.

PEKKA's Women Headed Household Empowerment Program in Indonesia

PEKKA (Women Headed Household Empowerment) is an organization focused on building a social movement for single mothers in Indonesia. Marriage is considered as a socio-cultural norm in Indonesia, while

being a divorced woman or a single mother carries a social stigma. Women who do not have husbands are discriminated and oppressed and experience social exclusion in the community. These women have been the priority of the PEKKA for the past two decades. They are currently operating in 20 provinces in Indonesia with more than 30,000 women members. They have created informal schools for women geared towards training them as leaders in the community. PEKKA has also worked in improving the livelihoods of single mothers in Indonesia. They have established cooperatives in the community and promoted other economic activities for women such as small supermarkets of products produced by their members.

According to the representative of PEKKA, visitors can share their experiences in organizing. It can also be a way to express solidarity and support for the Indonesian women. The visitors can learn from the development strategies employed by PEKKA and the other way around. The best time to visit Indonesia is during July to September.

Women's social movement in Karen State, Myanmar

Myanmar is currently experiencing a civil war between government forces and ethnic armed groups. However, with a ceasefire agreement signed last 2015, there has been utmost peace in some of the states. One of which is the Karen State wherein women have formed a social movement focused on women's security and peace. Currently, they have 3,000 to 5,000 members in Karen State. They have advocated and lobbied for women's rights to different administrations. They have successfully pushed their advocacies and activities in which they have gained the support from these administrations. They were provided with land and machineries for farming.

Women started a community-based tourism that adopts a people-to-people exchange approach wherein visitors can also share their experiences with the hosts. Visitors can learn how to engage with the three forms of administration in Myanmar, namely the Karen National



Union, Ethnic Armed Organization, and the Military. Security is not an issue in Karen State for which the hosts have the authority over the place. Social solidarity economy is also practiced in the area wherein visitors can enjoy local produce and traditional food. According to representatives from Karen State, visitors can visit by January to March next year.

Save Our Schools Network and the Lumad schools in Mindanao, Philippines

Save Our Schools Network (SOS) is a network of NGOs, church-based groups, and other stakeholders advocating for children's right to education. SOS is currently engaged in advocating for the rights of Lumad groups in Mindanao wherein schools were forcibly closed down by the national government through militarization of ancestral domains. The SOS network invites everyone to visit the Lumad schools in Mindanao wherein visitors can witness and experience the traditional curriculum (IP curriculum) being taught in Lumad schools. It is also a chance to learn, understand, and experience the situation of IP groups in Mindanao. The people-to-people exchange aims to form solidarity towards the protection of their culture. According to representatives of SOS, visitors can visit anytime as planned next year. There is also a Lumad Bakwit school located in the University of the Philippines where Lumad children from Mindanao are currently continuing their education as militarization and Martial Law threaten their safety and security in their ancestral domains.

Other discussion points

Trinidad Domingo of HomeNet Philippines mentioned that HomeNet Philippines is a member of HomeNet Southeast Asia. They have members in Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, and other countries in Asia. Currently, there is a call to create an international HomeNet formation. Katrini thinks that what they are doing right now in HomeNet is similar



with what the group is planning. It is a planning process towards creating a network of partner organizations all over the Southeast Asian region.

Alfonso Obre of CAMP Asia Inc.–Philippines, on the other hand, raised a question to the group if the goal is to facilitate a network building endeavor in the future. He shared that upon hearing the experiences of the members of the group, he observed that they are lobbying different issues but somehow there are thematic points that can be discussed towards facilitating social movement formation. He agreed that it is significant to understand and know the different initiatives that are happening in each respective country. However, his concern is defining how these things can facilitate towards building a regional movement and how the partner organizations can move towards that direction.

Jan Melendrez of ASEAN SOGIE Caucus also agrees with the concerns raised by Al. He shared that in the context of LGBT advocacy in the Philippines, it is not only a single movement, but it is composed of different movements. He thinks that the group needs to start from the very basic. He observed that there are different priorities from different individuals/organizations from different countries that makes social movement building difficult. From ASC's experience, one of the things that they have been trying to do is to support in as many ways possible those small local movements with the assumption that when they are strong enough, they can move towards building networks across different countries.

Another challenge that the group should be wary of is that there are certain organizations, individuals, and groups that are trying to take all the spotlight and attention. All the resources go to them, and they are the ones that decide which group gets the support and where does it go. These kinds of individuals/groups try to hog all the advocacies as if they are the face of the movement and the network.

Joshua Sales of Sining Kadamay stated that for the art sector, they are trying to be flexible to different advocacies towards exploring broader issues. Joshua shared that it is only a matter of commitment. He encouraged the different IP/ethnic groups to have an exchange of different forms of art that they could both bring to the public. SIKAD provides art workshops to local communities and displays the artworks produced in public spaces making them visible to more people. He recognized the possibility of creating partnerships with different countries using art as a form of awareness-raising to surface different issues in the form of politically conscious artworks.

Ms. Angging Aban of the UP CIDS AltDev thinks that from the beginning of the conference, the participants are gearing towards a certain direction. Given the stories and the narratives, she personally observed that everyone is basically building a movement or a network. Either it prioritizes women, indigenous people, or urban poor, it can be expressed in different alternatives. She is assuming that the group will propose a direction towards forming a network or a movement that brings together those experiences based on the topic assigned to the breakout group.

Dr. Remedios Nalundasan-Abijan shared that we should also recognize the organizational diversity in the said conference. In terms

of maturity and level, some organizations have just been organized, and others are still in the think-tank level. She also observed that these organizations have different concerns and focus. The question is where do we come together, or rather, looking at possible entry points where organizations can meet in the middle despite their differences.

Trinidad Domingo of HomeNet Philippines added that whenever the organization is doing something, everyone learns from that experience. Similar to network building, given that some organizations are more mature than others, it is important to realize that it is also an opportunity to learn from each other. Learning through experience is important. Recognizing that social movement building is a space to learn.

Workshop Output

Organization	Where	Why	What	When
PEKKA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flores/Jogjakarta, Indonesia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social movement (women's organization) focused on the advocacy activities for single mothers Share our experience in organizing the female head of the family The need for solidarity, inspiration, and support for women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning development strategies, organizing, and lobbying Small supermarket of products produced by women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometime in July to September
TWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karen State, Myanmar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social movement focused on women's security and peace They have the authority in the place; security is not an issue Community-based tourism started by women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solidarity economy Traditional food Learning to engage/lobby with three forms of governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January to March 2020
Save Our Schools Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Cotabato or Tagum City, Davao del Norte, Mindanao (Lumad schools) Bakwit schools in UP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the current situation of the Lumads in Mindanao Forming solidarity in the protection of their culture Note the security issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn traditional curriculum of Lumad schools Experience/learn the current situation of Lumad schools and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anytime as planned



Technology and Knowledge Transfer

Participants were asked to provide a brief description of their organizations, what they want to learn from, and what they can offer or share with other organizations.

World Council for Curriculum and Instruction (WCCI)

The World Council for Curriculum and Instruction is an educational organization, locally involved in helping build schools and curricula for indigenous peoples. They are interested in helping IP participants (Aytas, in particular), and learning more about land, farming, and agriculture for curriculum integration and development for IP communities.

Katutubong Dumagat-Samahan ng Health Workers sa Tanay, Rizal

The organization of Dumagat health workers in Tanay has developed their own model of a community health system that they use to provide health care to their community, which includes herbal and indigenous medicine and practices, a community-based transport system, and health finance (Saknungan) which serves as their localized health insurance for their community. They are interested in expanding their knowledge and skillsets on involving more community members and capacitating them to become community health workers, aside from supporting other local organizations in lobbying for their rights to their ancestral land, at risk of displacement due to a development project.

Bantay Kalusugan Pampamayanan (BKP)

Bantay Kalusugan Pampamayanan (BKP) is a community health watch involved in health care training, health monitoring, and rescue for emergency situations. They are interested in learning about strategies to animate and involve the community to participate more in the program



so as not to be too dependent on doctors, health workers, hospitals, and clinics.

**Thai-Burma border health workers
(Back Pack Health Worker Team)**

The Back Pack Health Worker Team (BPHWT) provides primary care to many ethnic groups in the Thai-Burma border, working with the community by training them to serve as health workers for their community. Current challenges of the organization include depleting support from international organizations, getting the central government to recognize their health workers and “unregistered” community members, the sustainability of their own community-based health systems and practices, and advocating for bottom-up health care.

Ayta Mag-indi (Katutubo Village Tribal Council)

The Ayta Mag-indi group is composed of Tribal Council members from Katutubo Village and barangay council members of Barangay Camias, involved in reanimating indigenous knowledge, systems, and practices, particularly on farming, indigenous education, women empowerment, and gender equality. They are interested in further developing their indigenous varieties of rice and other products of their community, but are faced with the challenge of the lack of support mechanisms available to them. They are also advocating for strengthening and capacitating members, their leadership, especially women, on learning within the ancestral domain, challenged by private claimants taking claim on their ancestral land.

Bukidnon Farmers-Task Force Mapalad, Baclig Farmworkers' Association (BACFA), and Panalsalan Dagumbaan Tribal Association (PADATA)

BACFA and PADATA are organized groups of indigenous farmers, aided by Task Force Mapalad, with experience in lobbying for ownership of

their ancestral domain with community projects ranging from schools, reservoirs, to crop development resulting from their Community-based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA). Currently, they are focused on securing their resource tenurial instrument and planning for productivity improvement once the land is granted to them. With that, they are interested to learn from agrarian reform beneficiaries who are experienced in community-managed and controlled agricultural land. They also strive for their experiences to be documented to share their knowledge and best practices to help fellow local farmers enhance their technologies.

Organic and Sustainable Farming in Laos–Luang Prabang Green Organic Farm

The Luang Prabang Green Organic Farm is a sustainable farming organization that produces organic products served to local businesses and the community. They also provide training and educational visits to the farm on organic farming, sustainable planting techniques, and crop development that suits customers' and the community's needs. They are interested to know and share more about how to motivate more people, especially the youth, to explore sustainable agri-business.

Sustainability and Participation through Education and Lifelong Learning (SPELL)

SPELL is a network of communities where members, particularly mothers, learn to equip themselves with the skills needed to become teachers and manage their daycare centers—now with 23 community-owned daycare centers. They work with several partners on the development of the Alternative Learning System program of the government and its implementation at the local level. They are interested in learning about organizing and mobilizing strategies and approaches of organizations like SPP in Indonesia and the Mae Tao Clinic, particularly on eliciting a higher level of involvement from community members, while simultaneously documenting the process.

Igting Sewing Center—A Social Enterprise in Bulacan

Igting is a social enterprise owned and managed by a people's organization composed mostly of women that provides quality sewing products and services. They work with several civil society organizations (CSOs) and academic institutions on capacitating members to grow their community-based enterprise and reach out to and involve more community members. They are interested in partnering with groups and organizations for further trainings on business and livelihood management, access to available technology, and engaging with the government on complying with business requirements.

HomeNet Philippines

HomeNet is a network of people's organizations and community-based enterprises with their respective products and services, with knowledge and experience on how to design and upscale quality products, and opportunities on how to make a community enterprise competitive through additional skills development (e.g., rag-making, computer literacy training). They are also interested in learning more about how

to help organizations with problems on the marketing side, and about technology (e.g., machines and equipment) that are appropriate and affordable to local organizations. Also, they are eager to learn about how to expand and sustain their membership, especially with women members who have limited time for the social enterprise due to having to fulfill their respective roles in their households.

Other discussion points

Bilateral exchanges were identified during the planning session, namely:

- WCCI and Igting on computer literacy and other skills enhancement trainings;
- HomeNet and Ayta Mag-indi on marketing indigenous rice and other products;
- Myanmar and BKP on how to engage more community members to be involved;
- SPELL and Thai-Burma border community on migrant education; and
- Bukidnon farmers and Ayta Mag-indi on land struggle and indigenous farming practices.

It was raised that conferences provide a venue for different yet similar organizations and groups to come together and discuss issues and concerns across various dimensions, such as health, education, land, agriculture, livelihood, and social enterprises, among others.

Similarly, it was pointed out that exchanges provide learning, not just from each other, but towards building a community of people-to-people solidarity.

Workshop Output

Organization	Where	Why	What	When
Bukidnon Farmers (Task Force Mapalad, BACFA, and PADATA)	▪ Bukidnon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share experience in rights claiming ▪ Share ideas on tenurial systems/ instruments of land ▪ Learning about community building from within coming from a situation where land tenure is being questioned ▪ Using government and legal instruments to start and organize the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community building ▪ Land struggle ▪ Products to share and learn from 	▪ March 2020
LP Green Organic Farm	▪ Laos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learn and share about organic farming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Farm business technology ▪ Organic and 	▪ October to November 2020

Organization	Where	Why	What	When
		techniques, knowledge in composting and insect protection • Help promote farm as learning center to engage youth in agri-business • Near Thai-Burma border so visits could be done at the same time	sustainable farming technology • Challenge youth to explore sustainable farming	
Thai-Burma border community (Back Pack Health Worker Team)	• Thai-Burma border	• Learn about strategies on engaging the whole community • Indigenous health practices • Learn about how they were able to organize migrant community	• Learn about strategies on engaging the whole community • Indigenous health practices • Learn about how they were able to organize migrant community	• October to November 2020

Organizing Strategies and Governance Frameworks

Assistant Professor Venarica Papa facilitated the planning workshop. The discussion started with all of the members of the group participating in an icebreaker wherein they gave a short introduction and a brief background of their organizations and advocacies. The members then proceeded by sharing their own advocacies, organizing strategies, and governance frameworks, giving focus on the strengths of their own organizations.

Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia (KPRI; Confederation of Indonesian Peoples' Movement)

The Confederation of Indonesian Peoples' Movement is composed of national federations from different sectors such as peasants, labor, women, fishermen, and indigenous peoples. The KPRI's Indigenous Peoples Sector has similar experiences, challenges, and lessons learned with SPP but it is more focused on indigenous peoples. IPs from different parts of Asia can learn more about the culture and traditions of IPs from Indonesia, and in return, they can also learn the best practices of IPs from other countries. According to Irwansyah, it is the best place for knowledge-sharing for IPs but is not limited to as there are also other organizations in North Sumatra which is focused on other sectors such as women.

HomeNet Indonesia

HomeNet Indonesia is a member of HomeNet Southeast Asia. Similar with its network organization here in the Philippines, HomeNet Indonesia is focused on social solidarity economy and women's organizing and empowerment. They have conducted trainings for women in different parts of Indonesia such as Jakarta and Mala.



Different strategies on organizing and governance can be learned from knowledge sharing and immersion activities in their communities. The group that will visit HomeNet Indonesia would not just learn about organizing locally but also establishing networks with other countries.

POINT (Indigenous Peoples Organization in Myanmar)

Dr. May Shi Sho of Karen Development Network recommended POINT, an indigenous peoples' (IP) organization in Myanmar that is focused on preserving the culture of the indigenous peoples in Myanmar and organizing to address the struggles and challenges of the IP community.

Amano y Negros Cooperative, Philippines

Amano y Negros (AMANO) is a workers-managed/workers-controlled sugar plantation in Negros. It currently has 31 members. Located in the rural areas of Negros, it is one of the workers-managed/controlled sugar plantations in the Philippines. Despite the high mortality rate of cooperatives in the Philippines, AMANO has managed to survive for 19 years. AMANO has been able to produce, manage, and control products including *tubo* (sugarcane), livestock, piggery, carabao, and vegetables. Participants that will visit AMANO can learn how to manage and engage in cooperatives as well as the strategies to maintain its sustainability.

Worker's Information Center, Cambodia

Worker's Information Center (WIC) is the women garment workers-based association which seeks to empower garment workers by "organizing and providing safe space where workers can gain knowledge and power, access counselling, peer networks, training, basic healthcare and legal advice," plan collective action, and seek a broad range of services and support. They mainly focus on organizing women in the labor sector and providing safe spaces. They have established drop-in centers near factories which provide different recreational and learning

activities for women. These include the use of different art forms such as visual and performance art as a way to express and advocate about issues concerning women's rights. They also have an art festival initiated by women workers. They also design and teach the process on how to analyze and write the research.

Other discussion points

Joseph Purugganan linked some of the suggestions with the numbers of proposals involved with KPRI. He suggested to formulate a people-to-people exchange focused on women-led organizing by merging and incorporating KPRI with HomeNet Indonesia. He also stated that an activity can be designed to cater the discussion of strategies of peasant organizing with sub-topics that tackle women organizing.

Irwansyah noted that rather than focusing on SPP, the group can coordinate with the KPRI so that the scope of the visit can be broadened. He also suggested to decide on agendas to be discussed and call upon fellow federations to join the visit.

Venarica Papa added that there is a need to coordinate with KPRI before the visit and to present them a core agenda. This way, the group can help the KPRI in the preparations and in involving different unions. The KPRI will find the right combination of unions and will plan out where they will bring the participants depending on what agenda they have. She also noted that the visit can have multiple agendas.

Sophorth Touch expressed that the Worker's Information Center and HomeNet can have a direct partnership as the two have similar advocacies involving women's rights and livelihood and women's participation.

Workshop Output

Organization	Where	What	Why	When
KPRI	▪ Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women organizing ▪ Cooperative strategies and governance ▪ Agriculture best practices ▪ Livelihood ▪ Sectoral involvement with IPs, laborers, peasants, and women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PMOVE – Kridsakorn ▪ Learn more about good leadership and governance for women ▪ Organizing strategies and how to motivate participation of women 	
KPRI in North Sumatra, Indonesia or POINT in Myanmar	▪ Indonesia/ Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social protection and women organizing can also be addressed ▪ POINT in Myanmar ▪ 2 in 1 ▪ Women leadership and something ▪ KPRI in North Sumatra Indonesia for IPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social protection and women organizing ▪ Women leadership 	

Organization	Where	What	Why	When
AMANO Cooperative	▪ Negros sugar plantation, Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workers managed and workers controlled sugar farm ▪ Cooperative Strategies and Frameworks ▪ Invite those who wish to see their strategies in cooperative development and how it survived for 19 years 		
Worker's Information Center	▪ Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Drop In" Centers for workers ▪ Focused on well-being ▪ Activities such as art making and yoga ▪ Safe space for workers ▪ HomeNet partnership with other organizations 		
Center for Women and Development	▪ Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women organizing ▪ Address domestic violence and women's social protection strategies ▪ Which we could dovetail to the next ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC 2020) 		

Closing Remarks

Eduardo C. Tadem, Ph.D.

Convenor, Program on Alternative Development

UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies

I am at a loss for words, overwhelmed with happiness and gratitude, and my revolutionary spirit rekindled or kindled further. From private conversations with the participants, it wouldn't be presumptuous to say that my feelings are shared by participants from this conference. I don't think I need to do any more lectures or explanations or rationale for this conference because I think that our vision is quite clear, with the caveat that this is going to be a long process. Our vision for regional integration of peoples across Southeast Asia is going to be a long process. There will be challenges along the way, not only from outside but also from within our different organizations. But I am confident that we can overcome these challenges because we are all somehow united both materially and spiritually by the principle that development must come from below. I am referring to grassroots organizations and their support groups—CSOs, NGOs, including networks that are already existing and are already regional in scope. The opportunities are extremely good; the situation is excellent. Some philosophers have said that heaven and earth are in great disarray, but the situation is excellent. By disarray, I am referring to ASEAN. The global capitalist system is in crisis, and that's good. Whereas people's movements are growing, although there are challenges from right-wing populist groups, but that is transitory. That has been the history of populist governments—they don't last. But people's movements, grassroots organizations have been around for hundreds of years. There are ups and downs, but the future is bright and excellent for us. We will continue to network and interact with each other, with the help of our excellent program staff.





▲ The participants and organizers of the 2nd Conference on Alternatives in Southeast Asia

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Conference Organizers

Eduardo C. Tadem, Ph.D.
Maureen C. Pagaduan
Karl Arvin F. Hapal
Venarica B. Papa
Nathaniel P. Candelaria
Jose Monfred C. Sy
Honey B. Tabiola
Ananeza P. Aban



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DOCUMENTERS

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