

PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

# rethinking cross-border regionalism

27 TO 29 NOVEMBER 2018 | MADISON IOI HOTEL + TOWER, QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES



TAIWAN FOUNDATION  
for DEMOCRACY  
財團臺灣民主基金會



ASIA REGIONAL EXCHANGE FOR NEW ALTERNATIVES



UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



FREEDOM FROM DEBT COALITION



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# Conference Background

For many years within their own borders, Southeast Asian communities have been engaged in alternative, heterodox, non-mainstream practices that tackle economic, political, and socio-cultural issues. However, these practices remain obscure in development discourse and receive little support compared to their mainstream counterparts. Moreover, these practices continue to be disparate, marginal, and isolated. Despite their relative marginality, these practices have been credited for contributing to a change agenda that is pro-poor, just, and empowering. Drawing from the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) 2017 statement which argued for the development and adoption of a new vision for engagement that is “based on greater people-to-people interactions,” the Program on Alternative Development (AltDev), together with various scholar-activists and civil society groups, affirmed the need to surface and articulate these practices to “expand and strengthen a new people’s regional integration” within the ASEAN region. By gathering 60 to 70 grassroots organizations, advocates, and scholar-activists, the conference will serve as a platform for organizations and individuals to share their alternative development practices, learn from one another’s experiences, expand networks, and reinforce solidarity based on common histories, issues, and experiences. The conference will culminate in a collective planning process to build a framework for a people-centered model of cross-border cooperation. This publication is a collation of notes from the documentation of the conference.

## Conference Organizers

- Ananeza Aban
- Nathaniel Candelaria
- Karl Arvin Hapal
- Angeli Fleur Nuque
- Maureen Pagaduan
- Venerica Papa
- Eduardo Tadem

## Conference Volunteers

- Anna Asunto
- Jason Asunto
- Ina Balagtas
- Eugene Balbas
- Byan Bocar
- Marian Castillo
- Micah Magaro
- Fe Manapat
- Jette Roldan
- Alpha Rodriguez
- Yasmin Soriano



# Opening Remarks

**Maria Cynthia Rose Banzon Bautista, Ph.D.**

Vice President for Academic Affairs  
University of the Philippines System

It is my pleasure and honor to open the second day of the *Conference on Alternatives in Southeast Asia* organized by the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS).

In yesterday's sessions, we heard various organizations from Thailand, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, and the Philippines talk about their own initiatives to address access to justice, ecology and food sovereignty, and gender justice and governance. Today we will continue our fruitful discussion on alternative development in the region particularly in the thematic areas of solidarity economy, culture as alternative, alternative health care, and right to housing and social protection. We will look at these practices as guides that can help us formulate or improve on our own paradigms, strategies, and targets.

Because the alternatives to mainstream development largely support utopian models, they are also often branded by realists as mere fantasies. My dissertation adviser 35 years ago, sociologist Erik Olin Wright, himself acknowledged that, indeed, such alternative visions can sometimes remain in the realm of fantasy—becoming utopian fantasies which, as Wright says, “encourage us to embark on trips that have no real destinations at all or worse still, which lead us towards some unforeseen abyss.” For him, while it is important to sustain our “deepest aspirations for a just and humane world that does not exist,” it is also necessary that we open ourselves to practical realities. He calls this reconciliation of the contradictory nature, the tension, between dreams and practice as “real utopias.”

The idea of real utopias is founded in the belief that “what is pragmatically possible is not fixed independently of our imaginations, but is itself shaped by our visions.” In other words, real utopias are, in Wright's words, “utopian ideals that are grounded in the real potentials of humanity, utopian destinations that have accessible way stations, utopian designs of institutions that can inform our practical tasks of navigating a world of imperfect conditions for social change.”



This conference is precisely about such alternative pathways rooted in the discourses of everyday life and in which human potential is key to transforming society. All these diverse, micro 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 peoples are not only potential beneficiaries or recipients of development efforts but are themselves primary sources of knowledge and experience that should significantly define, using Wright's term, the destination as well as the process towards that destination. In documenting these practices, we are able to show how intensified participation can effectively generate multiple localized actions, and hence multiple pathways to development.

In fact, the United Nations itself recognizes how alternative development can help realize the Sustainable Development Goals “on many levels” and “ultimately improve the livelihoods and well-being of people.”<sup>1</sup> It is truly important that we bring out of obscurity these marginalized people-centered practices and give them more space and a louder voice in development discourse, especially with their successes in implementing integrated development approaches.

The University of the Philippines, through the CIDS Program on Alternative Development, will continue to support grassroots organizations, advocates, and scholars working in alternative development to enrich the discourse and in doing so, hopefully contribute to greater and better alternative development initiatives.




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1 “Alternative Development and Its Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2016/April/alternative-development-and-its-role-in-implementing-the-sustainable-development-goals.html>.

# Day One

November 27, 2018

## Facilitators:

Karl Arvin F. Hapal (Co-convenor, UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development) and Devralin T. Lagos (UP College of Social Work and Community Development)



## Introduction and Welcome Remarks

09:00 AM

Kontra-GaPi (Kontemporaryong Gamelan Pilipino), the resident performing arts group of the University of the Philippines (UP) College of Arts and Letters (CAL), opened the three-day conference with a ritual and cultural performance. This was followed by the welcome remarks of Professor Teresa S. Encarnacion Tadem, Ph.D., Executive Director of the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS).

This was followed by a keynote speech, *Alternative Practices in Southeast Asia: Towards a New Model of Regional Integration*, delivered by Eduardo C. Tadem, Ph.D., Convenor of the UP CIDS Program on

Alternative Development. Professor Sylvia Estrada-Claudio, MD, Ph.D., Dean of the UP College of Social Work and Community Development (UP CSWCD), also delivered 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), it is a great honor to welcome you to *Rethinking Cross-Border Regionalism: Conference on Alternatives in Southeast Asia*, organized by the UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development (AltDev), in cooperation with partner institutions and organizations from civil society and the academe from all over Southeast Asia.

The UP CIDS is the policy research unit of the University of the Philippines System. It was established in 1985 by then UP President Edgardo Angara. The Center is currently under the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the UP System.

Since its inception in 1985, the UP CIDS has sought to encompass various perspectives, methodologies, and ideologies in its conduct of basic and policy-oriented research. 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 discussion papers, policy briefs, monograph series, and the forthcoming *Philippine Journal of Public Policy: Interdisciplinary Development Perspectives*. The Center's eight programs and the Local-Regional Studies Network (LRSN) are committed to addressing the nation's critical problems and are geared to enhance and popularize policy research in their respective fields.

The objectives and the themes of the presentations in this conference, which are consistent with the UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development's main thrust, provide a relevant and robust contribution to the exploration and adoption of alternative practices and to decentering development discourses from mainstream and conventional perspectives and paradigms. While alternative and heterodox development practices have remained disparate and marginal, these practices are instrumental in addressing various economic, political, and socio-cultural issues. Today's conference aims to unpack, discuss, and integrate these practices in order to enrich alternative development discourses and to forge a new regional integration that is founded on people-to-people interaction and solidarity.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development for organizing this conference and for inviting grassroots organizations, scholar-activists, and advocates from different parts of Southeast Asia to share their experiences and expertise in a wide



range of topics and issues such as food sovereignty, solidarity economy, access to basic social services, and alternative pedagogies, among others. I would also like to thank all of the presenters, organizers, and attendees for your support and participation in today's event.

I hope that *Rethinking Cross-Border Regionalism: Conference on Alternatives in Southeast Asia* will be a valuable platform for sharing and learning alternative development practices across sectors and countries and that we will all have a fruitful and meaningful conversation aimed at building solidarity and cooperation among peoples in the Southeast Asian region.

Thank you very much and good morning!





## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

## Alternative Practices in Southeast Asia: Towards a New Model of Peoples' Regional Integration<sup>2</sup>

**EDUARDO C. TADEM, Ph.D.**

Convenor

UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development

### Introduction

The perceived failure of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to meaningfully address the issues and concerns of Southeast Asian peoples is viewed by the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) as rooted in ASEAN's being locked in a market-centered and state-supported process that was conceived by regional and national elites to perpetuate their control over the region's natural resources and productive capacities.

Under the mantra of "profits before people," ASEAN's decisions are made without the participation of the marginalized and disenfranchised peoples of the region and are accountable only to the narrow vested interests of economic elites and political oligarchies. This has only further widened the gap between rich and poor within and between countries and caused unparalleled debasement of the environment. ACSC/APF notes that ASEAN's continued adherence to a neoliberal model of development prioritizes corporate interests and elite groups over the interests of the people.

### Need for Alternatives

This dire situation brings up the need to search for an alternative model of regional integration that challenges the ASEAN paradigm—one that is based on what Southeast Asian peoples are already doing on the ground and is guided by cooperation, solidarity, mutual benefit, the commons principle, and joint development; not cutthroat competition, the insatiable thirst for profits, and narrow patriotism and chauvinism.

Everywhere in the world, particularly in Asia, there are a large number of spirited individuals and communities and projects and programs, proving through action and achievement that there are other ways of doing things. These undertakings are not merely economic.<sup>3</sup> Being made voluntarily by (highly) motivated people, these efforts are also creating new social relationships in which practitioners are empowered socially, economically, and culturally, eroding and undermining the basis of maldevelopment, thus foretelling, if partially, the configuration of a just culture of a future society.



<sup>2</sup> Excerpted with some revisions from *Beyond Boundaries: Solidarities of Peoples in Southeast Asia: Draft Vision of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) 2017 and Beyond*, December 2016.

<sup>3</sup> These succeeding three paragraphs are excerpted from the Preface to *Integrating Alternative Development Efforts in Asia* (1997) by Muto Ichiyo, Eduardo Tadem, and M.P. Parameswaran.

It is important to note that, in many cases, the traditional wisdom of Asian communities is inherited, rediscovered, refined, and successfully applied—defying the (dominant mode) that destroys the basic eco-cyclical linkages of human activities with nature for the sake of immediate profits and efficiency. In these, efforts are identified which articulate vibrant elements of a new civilization that we need to build.

Southeast Asian peoples and communities have, for many years and on their own, been engaged in alternative, heterodox, and non-mainstream practices that encompass economic, political, and socio-cultural aspects. In some instances, people-to-people relations and networks for various purposes have also been set up.

Yet, these models are still spatially dispersed, and many of the efforts still localized. To cope with the dominant systems managed by transnational corporations and transborder “free market” mechanisms, there certainly should be linkages among the diverse models so that they may eventually grow into alternative systems that can sustain themselves, and eventually take over the dominant system. This is what an alternative peoples’ regional integration is all about.

### **Economic Alternative Practices**

On the production side, social enterprises, producer cooperatives and communities, and solidarity economy-based initiatives engage in exchanges on the technologies of sustainable food production systems that are environment and people friendly. At the same time, they promoted productivity and import substitution for food crops. Examples are:

- alternative trade
- organic family farming
- agro-ecology
- biodiversity
- zero-waste production
- indigenous agronomic practices (e.g., plant breeding and production)

In the power generating sector, bright prospects exist for community-based renewable energy systems such as solar, wind, and biogas technologies.

In the marketing aspect, there are direct consumer-producer linkages via the media of alter-trade organizations and producer and trading cooperatives. The goal is to strengthen cooperation between farmers and consumers and to revive local markets. These people-to-people trading patterns are founded on the principles of fair trade and mutual exchange and can take the form of countertrade arrangements such as barter trade.

In the matter of financing, there are credit cooperatives and alternative currency systems.

### **Political Alternative Practices**

Politically, informal and formal networks of civil society organizations and social movements have been operating for decades on issues related to environmental issues, women's rights, workers' and peasants' rights, human rights, social inequality, rights to natural resources, human security, and many other concerns.

Joint political advocacies and corresponding actions have been undertaken via mass mobilizations during international gatherings as well as lobbying with states and multilateral organizations. Alternatives to traditional political parties have also emerged such as the party-list system. A recently revived phenomenon is that of direct actions undertaken by peoples' organizations or spontaneously by marginalized and deprived communities through the unilateral occupation of land and housing projects.

Communities have also engaged in integrated regional socio-economic planning and have practiced age-old conflict settlement mechanisms. Social media with emancipatory messages has also been utilized extensively.

### **Social Alternative Practices**

In the social aspect, self-help groups have long existed and local networks have coordinated their social protection activities. Examples are community-based health systems guided by primary health care principles, "barefoot" health practitioners, and the development and fine-tuning of age-old healing practices including the use of organic and generic medicines.

In education, we have seen alternative learning practices such as folk schools, non-formal centers, and lifelong learning advocacies. In the provision for a people-oriented and directed shelter program, there are initiatives using vernacular architecture/housing principles that utilize indigenous designs, technologies, and construction materials. As in other practices, peoples' empowerment is a guiding principle and primary goal.

### **Cultural Alternative Practices**

On the cultural aspect, visual artists and other performers have been networking through regional events that showcase the richness, diversity, and historical depth of Southeast Asia's creative arts. More significant, political, social, and economic issues of marginalized sectors of society

are also highlighted and represented via these cultural interactions and presentations. While it has often lagged behind other aspects of society, culture is essential in lending a human and spiritual face to political and economic dimensions and should therefore be nurtured and developed.

### Filling in the Gaps

If the above practices are already existing, what would be the role of any initiative in crafting an alternative regionalism model, especially by civil society and movement-based networks? The answer to this question lies in looking at what these popular initiatives lack or are deficient in. First, they are still largely disparate and somewhat disconnected. Many local and national groups are unaware of similar developments in neighboring societies or if aware, are unable to reach out and connect with other groups and programs. Regional solidarity is based on groups and actions in countries being able to know each other, exchange information and knowledge, enhance their capabilities and expertise, and work together. This is a networking gap that needs to be strengthened and filled.

Secondly, research and documentation and constant monitoring of these popular initiatives are also lacking. This is important in order to build a database of practices, examine each one, identify the best and model features, and point out the inadequacies and deficits. Thorough research and meticulous documentation are skills that grassroots organizations and practitioners pay less attention to. This is understandable as their lives are taken up by the day-to-day demands of organizing, mobilizing of resources, and production. Research studies of this type will provide the service needed by the grassroots in order to further develop and scale up their pioneering activities. This is the second gap that needs to be filled.

Thirdly, these practices are generally viewed as marginal and confined to an insignificant section of society, some even being dubbed as “elitist.” At best, they remain at the pioneering stage with scarce attempts to scale up and advance to higher levels. Some of them eventually fold up and cease operations. The task, therefore, is to mainstream these innovative practices in order to challenge and eventually supplant the orthodox models of production, marketing, and distribution. To do this requires the coming and working together of grassroots organizations, local communities, civil society groups, and social movements in massive information and advocacy campaigns. This is the third gap to be filled.

Fourth, and probably the most important of all, is making sense of everything that is taking place. Popular practices constitute a rich trove of empirical data that need to be distilled, subjected to the rigorous test of comparisons, and finally, conceptualized and developed into a paradigm, a narrative, a framework, a theory, and a guide to action. This is a reflexive process, one that is continuous and never-ending. As human actions continually evolve and change and new practices emerge, so too

must our concepts, perspectives, and philosophies change and evolve. This is the fourth and most crucial gap that needs to be filled.

### **Towards an Alternative Peoples' Regionalism**

In looking at an alternative model of regional integration, the project should take on a prominent role in filling these four gaps and any others that may arise and require regional interventions. By doing so, it will pave the way towards developing an alternative model of regional integration and peoples' solidarities that transcends boundaries, borders, and nationalities. It can do these by undertaking the following activities:

- Researching and documenting the practices and building a database;
- Coordinating the interactions between the alternative practices;
- Convening and organizing conferences and workshops of the groups and communities involved in alternative practices;
- Conducting alternative learning and training programs based on grassroots needs;
- Conceptualizing and making sense of the practices and developing new paradigms and strategies of development;
- Mobilizing the entire universe of alternative practices, regional interactions, and the communities and organizing joint actions and initiatives;
- Promoting the replication of the alternative practices in order to mainstream them;
- Developing a model of regional integration that is based on the interactions and cooperative practices among these alternative practices; and
- Conceptualizing alternative regional structures that are decentralized and creative where different tasks and responsibilities are distributed throughout the region and rotated regularly.

### **Preliminary Case Studies of Alternative Practices (30)**

- **Panel 1: Access to Justice**
  - (1) Holistic approach to handling migrant cases (Philippines)
  - (2) Paralegal training for vulnerable sectors as a peace initiative (Pattani, Southern Thailand)
- **Panel 2: Ecology and Food Sovereignty**
  - (1) Alternative Land Management (Surat Thani, Southern Thailand)

- (2) Local Food Movement and Sorghum (Flores, Indonesia)
  - (3) Farmers' Union (Ermera District, Timor-Leste)
  - (4) Organic and Sustainable Agriculture (Sakon Nakhon, Thailand)
  - (5) Agro-ecology Trends and Seed Banking in Southeast Asia
- **Panel 3: Gender Justice and Governance**
    - (1) Women Organizing for Governance (Indigenous Ayta) (Philippines)
    - (2) Empowering Women-Headed Households (Indonesia)
    - (3) Peace House Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence (Vietnam)
    - (4) LGBTIQ and the Fight for Gender Equality (Timor-Leste)
- **Panel 4: Solidarity Economy (Part One)**
    - (1) Building a People's Economy (Philippines)
    - (2) Collective Action for Achieving a Full Life (Bulacan, Philippines)
- **Panel 5: Culture as Alternative**
    - (1) aMP3's Music for Change: Building a Village (Southeast Asia)
    - (2) Art for Human Empowerment (Indonesia)
- **Panel 6: Alternative Health Care**
    - (1) Health in the Hands of the Indigenous Dumagats (Philippines)
    - (2) Community Health Watch (Bulacan, Philippines)
- **Panel 7: Right to Housing and Social Protection**
    - (1) Bamboo Housing as Pathways to Alternative Living (Philippines)
    - (2) Anti-demolition Campaign and Land Acquisition for Urban Poor (Metro Manila, Philippines)
    - (3) Informal Sector Living in a Danger Zone (Philippines)
    - (4) Housing and Social Protection (Thailand)
    - (5) Social Protection as a Human and Democratic Response to Crisis (Southeast Asia)
- **Panel 8: Alternative Pedagogy**
    - (1) Education from the Academe to a Movement for Caring Spaces (Philippines)
    - (2) Rural Internship Training Program (Sarawak, Malaysia)

- (3) Education for Sustainable Development (Laos)
- (4) Lifelong Learning (Philippines)

- **Panel 9: Solidarity Economy (Part Two)**

- (1) Renewed Change and Rise of Gaya-Gaya Sewers (Bulacan, Philippines)
- (2) TriMona Multi-purpose Cooperative (Metro Manila, Philippines)
- (3) Sustainable Economy from the Local Level (Indonesia)
- (4) Collective Enterprise as a Workplace (Isabela, Philippines)

## Agenda for 2019

- Generate more case studies especially from other Southeast Asian countries.
- Bring in other countries in Southeast Asia, including Myanmar, Cambodia, Singapore, Brunei, and peripheries of Southeast Asia (Southwest China and Northeast India).<sup>4</sup>
- Initiate people-to-people visits and exchanges across the region—start with the 30 case studies of alternative practices.
- Sharpen and elaborate on the concept of an alternative peoples' regional integration.
- Coordinate with the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) with Thailand as host country for 2019.
- Hold an end-of-the-year conference to formalize the alternative peoples' regional network.
- Conduct fundraising (collective effort).

## Conclusion

In many ways, our agenda for an alternative peoples' regional integration based on the alternative practices on the ground is a pioneering effort. Previous initiatives along this line have primarily been confined to engaging the state and the state-led regional bodies, hoping against hope that the political oligarchs and their allies in the corporate world will listen to the demands of the marginalized and deprived sectors. We have seen that hope disappear in the mists of indifference, apathy, and outright resistance to meaningful and lasting change.

It is time to take our future into our own hands, rely on our efforts, and trust in the collective wisdom and resilience of our peoples and their ability to overcome all obstacles. We have a challenging task ahead of us. It is a long-term vision that cannot be accomplished overnight. It will

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<sup>4</sup> The Northeast Indian states are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. The Southwest Chinese provinces are Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangxi, and parts of Sichuan.

take years of perseverance and commitment to realize an alternative regional system and implement it.

With the principles of solidarity, cooperation, mutual benefit, and the commons behind us, and the judicious and responsible use of human and natural resources and the peaceful and harmonious relationship with other peoples and with nature and the environment, together we shall forge a new Southeast Asian peoples' movement, one that will serve as a model for all other peoples and societies in other parts of the globe.





## Opening Remarks

**SYLVIA ESTRADA-CLAUDIO, MD, Ph.D.**

Dean and Professor

UP College of Social Work and Community Development

In behalf of the College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD), I welcome you, especially our foreign participants, to this conference on “Rethinking Cross-Border Regionalism.”

We share with UP CIDS and all of you here an interest in ending oppression and inequality. We therefore share with all of you as well a critique of prevailing development theories and policies.

We all know that for all their high ambitions and noble intentions, development theories have failed repeatedly. Poverty and hunger remain as global problems; women remain the poorest of the poor; countries in what some development theories have called “the periphery,” that includes most of Southeast Asia, have remained poor.

As a student of women and development theories, my own view of these is that early formulations failed because they aligned themselves with the drive of the developed nations for capitalist expansion and accumulation. Indeed, as an aside, we should ask ourselves why developed countries call themselves developed. Consider that in an unjust world economic order, to be developed merely means that you have extracted more wealth from the poorer nations through various forms of domination. In other words, “developed” means economically wealthy but morally backward.

But even these women and development theories that have included a critique of capitalism still have not managed to put an end to the problems they are meant to solve. Perhaps we should not blame the theories or the theorists.

Capitalism today in the form of globalization has proven itself resilient, transcendent, and hegemonic. When I say hegemonic, I mean it also to mean that we accept that we have to work within it, because there is no “outside” of hegemony.

Concretely in our own work whether this be in issues of migration; basic needs like housing, health care and education; art for the people, etc.—we need to deal with capitalism or globalization as an enemy, a necessary evil, or sometimes a tool. As I said, there is no outside of hegemony.

But how does one move so that we change what is collectively possible? In other words, how does one move from globalization to more equitable economic, social, and cultural systems? Where do we look?



We look at what already exists. At what can survive in a hegemony but which does not grow too big because it is too different or even threatening.

We look at what already exists but is managing to hide itself from the forces that are threatened by its existence. In short, we look to alternative projects that are by definition small, diverse, and different.

Many times we have been derided for not being uniform or being united enough. As you can see, I do not believe in uniform, big or united.

Instead I believe in making separate webs with nodes that unite when needed, work separately when needed, empower certain threads of connection by joint action or empower the whole web when moments of greater transformative potential occur.

This too is what I find lacking and in many development theories: failing to understand our pleasures, in this case the pleasure in the work we do. There is a failure to understand too that we recruit more people to our cause because they see sense in it not merely from a logical way but also because it affects their being. Development theories must understand that the webs we weave are underpinned by human desire and the endpoint of development is a fulfilment of those desires. Not goals, but desires.

Today begins a wonderful three-day period where we will build together our web of desires. Or rather we will connect our webs. Small webs that may seem fragile but actually ones which have survived, which have swayed with the winds, that we have rebuilt with each assault or storm.

Webs of desire and power and webs of alterity. Again, may I thank UP CIDS and all of you and welcome everyone.





## Introduction of Participants, Objective Setting, and Orientation

10:00 AM

Karl Arvin F. Hapal, co-convenor of the Program on Alternative Development of UP CIDS and Assistant Professor of Community Development at UP CSWCD, recognized the participants by calling the country that they represent. Thereafter, he discussed the objectives, goals, program of activities, and house rules.

- **Share:** In this conference, each participant will have the chance to share his/her experiences. During the sharing, it is hoped that everyone will talk about the issues they are facing, their aspirations and dreams, the actions that have been taken to address them, and the successes or continuing challenges.
- **Listen:** While each will have the chance to share, this also goes that each will have the opportunity to listen to other's experiences. By listening to the presentations, it is hoped that everyone will learn and enrich each other's perspective and practice in the process.
- **Solidarity:** In the process of listening and active interaction, it is expected that everyone will realize that all his/her issues and aspirations are interconnected. By the end of the conference, it is hoped to affirm this perspective towards an equitable and just future. This is to emphasize that, beyond distance, lives the spirit of solidarity among and between countries and communities.
- **Goal:** At the heart of the process of sharing, listening, and building solidarity between and among friends and colleagues is the aspiration to plant the seeds of a regional movement—one that is not based on governments, but on their peoples.

## PANEL 1

# Access to Justice

November 27, 2018 · 10:35 AM



## Kanlungan's Holistic Approach in Handling Migrant Cases: Best Practices Using Direct Service and Development Program in Case Management

**ERWIN PUHAWAN**

Kanlungan Center Foundation, Inc.  
The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** Since the early 1970s, millions of Filipinos were deployed to many parts of the world by both private and government entities for the purpose of generating foreign exchange for the Philippines, and to fill-in the need for cheap, exploitative foreign labor in many developing countries in the Middle East, Asia Pacific, Europe, and the Americas. The catch phrase at the time was "Katas ng Saudi." In response to the worsening situation of the Filipino migrant workers, of women in particular, the foundation identified the need to strengthen the support services for migrant workers, especially those victims of illegal recruitment, contract violations, and other forms of sexual discrimination and exploitation. Over the past 29 years, Kanlungan has assisted the legal and counseling needs of thousands of cases of Filipino migrant workers, women and men, who encountered problems and crisis situations as a result of migration. Such problems range from illegal recruitment, recruitment violations, contract violations, racial discrimination, deportation, and other security risks.



Kanlungan Center Foundation, Inc. was founded in 1989 as a Crisis Intervention Center. It developed a program called the "Direct Service and Development Program" to assist migrant workers and their families. It utilizes a holistic approach in case management in order to mobilize migrant workers and their families in resolving their cases. They also use the Rights-Based Approach and the Developmental Legal Advocacy as Legal Framework, perceiving these as valuable efforts to contribute to a social movement. The participatory actions of the program are presented. In the program, migrants are recognized not as passive actors but as active partners in resolving their challenges. They, together with

their families, are able to actively participate and eventually empower themselves.

The objectives of the Direct Service and Development Program is to respond to the immediate needs and problems of returning and departing Filipino migrant workers and their families through legal counseling, shelter, and other welfare services; to conscientize and organize the migrant Filipinos and their families into self-help and pressure groups toward collective resolution of cases and advocacy of migrant issues and concerns; to pursue impact cases and launch campaigns to influence jurisprudence and effect changes in policies; and to tap and mobilize a network of professionals, volunteers and various community, regional, national, and international agencies (GOs and NGOs) to assist in the delivery of services and in advocacy of migrant issues in general.

Puhawan presented the three (3) cases that Kanlungan handled. The first case was the Sorsogon Illegal Recruitment Case where the Developmental Legal Advocacy was practiced. Additionally, Kanlungan also taught migrant rights to the local government unit (LGU) of Sorsogon. The second case, entitled *Going Back–Moving On: Economic and Social Empowerment of Migrants* (an ILO–EU Project) focused on the victims of human trafficking who returned from countries under the European Union and its neighbouring countries. Looking into the development of the local economy, Kanlungan assisted through the introduction of the social and economic reintegration of the victim-survivors. The last case presented was *Balabal*, which concerned organizing migrant women. One of the activities they conducted under this program was a photo exhibit entitled *Through the Lens of the Migrant Worker*. It encouraged the migrants to speak up for themselves through the photos they took.

Kanlungan also faces potential challenges—one of which is the issue of sustainability. The depleting resources of NGOs, either working on migration or trafficking, is a potential challenge; Kanlungan needs to be self-sustaining. For the past five years, Kanlungan does not have foreign funding. It solely relies on volunteers and migrants themselves who would donate their time and resources in order to continue the services and programs of the foundation. Both the migrant worker and Kanlungan face security threats because both file cases against illegal recruiters and human traffickers who have the capacity and resources to harass and impede the foundation's work. In addition to this, the political divide sometimes is a hindrance to secure solidarity among migrants. The foundation needs to raise migrants' consciousness by not being paternalistic, but by providing them a safe space where they can harness their skills and capabilities.



## Paralegal Training for Vulnerable Sectors as a Peace Initiative: 15 Years of Armed Conflict in Pattani, Southern Thailand

**DON TAJAROENSUK**

People's Empowerment Foundation  
Thailand

(Case presenter for the Nusantara Organization, Pattani, Thailand)

**ABSTRACT** In the southern part of Thailand, where decades-old ethnic conflict is entrenched, interventions have been implemented by organizations to mitigate the impact of violence in the region. The Muslim society in Pattani, composed of different peace advocates and organizations, aims to promote the well-being of Pattani people despite the ongoing conflict. One of the projects of the organization is providing paralegal training for the vulnerable sectors such as women, children, and the youth. The organization also organizes strategic activities to educate the youth about peace and their role in conflict resolution. One of the key events they have organized was holding a football game between the military and the community youth. Since football game is integral to contemporary Thai sports, the game allowed the military and the youth to interact with one another, and somehow provided an opportunity for the military to understand the local Pattani situation.



Don provided a background on the Province of Pattani in Southern Thailand: its demographics, situation, and the timeline of the conflicts in Pattani. He presented a framework on the Structure of Conflict with three (3) parts: structure conflict, cultural conflict, and direct conflict. Structure conflict concerns centralization and having an unstable democracy; cultural conflict encompasses language, lifestyle, and identity; and direct conflict is individual conflict.

In the past 13 years, the Province of Pattani has a breakdown budget totaling 9.3 billion US Dollars. Additionally, from 2004 to 2018, there are over 20,000 individuals who are affected by violence, either wounded or deceased. The Peace Process in the Deep South between the Thailand Government and the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) was initiated in 2013 where Malaysia served as the facilitator. Its timeline was until 2017 and Malaysia does not serve as facilitator anymore. Civil Society Organization (CSO) movements in Thailand started in 2004; its key actors are students and CSOs/NGOs who help people affected by Martial Law.

The Nusantara Organization provides paralegal training for CSOs and local people in the Narathiwat Province. It trains local people to be attorney-assistants in collecting pieces of evidence and monitoring torture cases committed by government officers. The organization also assists child victims who are not categorized by the State (Government, Police, Local Government) and could not get compensation from the





**Don Tajaroensuk (People's Empowerment Foundation, Thailand):**

Actually, I'm not sure if I can answer the question, but what I think is that the problem is a cycle. We have different backgrounds. I hear many CSOs talking to local people about the law in a complex manner. Law itself is difficult to understand. So I think the way to communicate about the law, especially international law, with the local people is to interpret it in a simpler manner that they can easily understand.

**Iram Saeed (Arcoiris, Timor-Leste):** I understood that they are working hard to reduce the migrant population. In our country, they have initiatives on how to make people rather live in their country. But in spite of that, many still choose to go out through the legal way. Do you have any connection with some of the popular countries where migrant Filipinos are going or probably going to work? Is there a connection with CSOs there to make them understand more about their lives? And how do they address if they have a problem? What is the approach?

**Erwin Puhawan:** Yes, we have a network for the migrant poor in Asia—it's a regional organization. We connect the others, especially Filipinos in other destination countries, for example, if there is a need to repatriate a migrant worker. But first things first. It is the duty of the state to repatriate the migrants, based on our law and I think even international law. However, we do not rely on our government nowadays so what we do is networking. Sometimes this is done by the migrants themselves because they have experiences. "We are all migrant workers who belong to one class. Whether you are an Indian migrant, Nepali, Malaysian, Indonesian, Bangladeshi, we suffer the same thing, the same treatment. So, we have to help each other." Now we have this idea of "migrants helping migrants." Actually, this is not an idea. This is long-standing but it is not being discussed. Most of the time it is the NGO saying, "We are the Superman." But this is not true. We have learned from that mistake. We are saying now that the migrants are in the best position to help their fellow migrants because of their own experience, and they have a lot of strategy and tactics on how to survive overseas.

**Raquel Castillo (Sustainability and Participation thru Education and Lifelong Learning (SPELL), The Philippines):** Which have been the more effective strategies? Is it more on finding how the difficult system can work for you and the marginalized or is it more effective to actually change the laws that we have for a more just law? Which one should we keep our efforts on because we are looking for alternatives, right? We are trying to find what elements of your case study could be picked up and given more emphasis on. Please clarify. Is it using the law so you teach them what the law means or is it for you to accept that they try to change or try to think about a law?



**Erwin Puhawan:** I think it is not either-or but both. We understand that we have some laws that are designed to oppress, and not really to protect peoples' rights. Of course, we will not use the law that least favors us. In conjunction, we propose law amendments or a new law. However, this is difficult. In our experience, this is a case-to-case basis, knowing that we need to also maximize the democratic space.

For example, in the past, there are ordinances where all migrant workers are required to remit a certain amount of money to their family. We have a problem with that because it penalizes a woman domestic worker by compelling her to send money to her husband back home who is a drunkard or a womanizer.

**Al Obre:** Are you developing new plans so that all of the issues and concerns that we want to forward will be more solid? Do you think people will continue what you have initiated? For example, are the people able to mobilize? This is a challenge for the longest time among civil society movements. Have you foreseen this situation?

**Erwin Puhawan:** We had that discussion two (2) years ago in Kanlungan as we reach 30. Apparently, if you are still continuing what you do for the last 50 years, it only means that you are not making an impact. You are not influencing people. Kanlungan contemplates that if no funds arrive next year, it needs to stop. Nevertheless, it has contributed something to the social movement and there are experiences that helped form peoples' organizations such as the one in La Union which continues the work of Kanlungan. I think that is our reason for being. The most important thing is the fact that migrant workers stand up and continue our legacy.

**Benjamin Quiñones (Asian Solidarity Economy Council (ASEC)/RIPESS Asia, The Philippines):** We are talking about alternatives. Have you thought of the question—"alternative to what"? Because the governance that we are confined in right now are not answering these problems. If you are thinking that what you are doing is just charity, you will come up and say, "That's it, I'm not leaving anymore." So, the question is: alternative to what? What are you doing in such a way that you are providing an "alternative to"? The second question is: How do you sustain what you have initiated? Do you pass it on to those who would try to follow your footsteps? If we are only going to focus on what we are doing, we forget the bigger picture of how we are going to set up an alternative to a system that is not providing services.

**Erwin Puhawan:** Based on our experience, I think we are an alternative to the mainstream legal practices. About the second question, I am still thinking about that because we have to be honest. Although we have turned 30 in the migration field, I think we have not gotten the exact formula. There are a lot of Filipinos migrating to other countries every day, and we can only do so much. There is a larger

picture that needs to be changed and that is the system. We are just part and parcel of that system.

**Benjamin Quiñones:** It is important to remember that we are alternatives to the market-oriented mechanisms. The works that we are doing here are really not common because in a market-oriented education, let us say, to become a lawyer, they will teach you how to make money using your skill. They do not teach you compassion. But we are not doing that. We are doing this because we want to have an impact. This is an alternative way of life. If we can promote this kind of mindset that is not taught in the universities, then this is the alternative way of life. It is very important to address this kind of concept from the very start because at the end of this conference, the only thing we ask is, “How can we become an alternative?” I do not know where you are coming from or whether because you are called to serve. Whatever the case is, at the end of the day, we have to address the question: What are you doing in order to create an alternative? Because this is what we are going to build on.

**Erwin Puhawan:** I agree with the mindset as an important element because this is attached to the system. We are always told by our professor, “The law may be harsh, but it is still the law.” But the questions are: Why should it be harsh? Why can it not be compassionate? Why can it not protect the oppressed? Why can it not question oppressive and unjust authorities? Migrants initially approach us like we are their saviors, so we have to remind them that we are their equals. In the process, the mindset is slowly changing. I think doing alternative practices is also changing the system. Unless we have a strong social movement in Southeast Asia, governments will not listen.

**Aimee Santos:** Similarly, with feminism, we are looking for solutions to the system. We have been thinking about practices that form a spectrum of solutions; those that are resisting, challenging, disobeying, defying, and really transforming. For instance, we really want to grow forests because this is what we want to live in.

I want to follow-up on this question about mindset. We think about cultural beliefs that we really need to shift, such as why profits come before people, etc. There are particular beliefs that have been passed on to institutions that we really have to transform. The institutions, the programs, will follow once we have been there. But what is the cultural belief that we need to transform?

**Cora Fabros:** Since we are talking about mindset, it is very common when we approach lawyers. The lawyer would say, “What is your problem?” We are trying to disrupt that with alternative lawyering or what we call people’s lawyer. Oftentimes, it is very difficult to talk to lawyers who are already seasoned to or already making money. One direction of alternative lawyering is that we try to organize or talk to

them while they are still students because it is rather too late if we do it once they pass the bar. I still remember what the late Senator Diokno told us, “Look for the gray areas in the law.” That is where you try to shift the advantage to your client—that it is their fight and we can only help them. Usually, these are marginalized sectors, the laborers or peasants. One of the difficult parts for a lawyer is to shift the mindset. It is not very common among lawyers to really share the knowledge because oftentimes they want to make money. This also applies to other sectors. Sharing knowledge is something that’s not very easy.

**Karl Hapal (Co-convenor, UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development):** I would just like to pick up the word “mindset” because in the case of our friends in Bulacan, the word is also very starved. We are not talking about lawyers changing mindset, but rather, in their case, we are talking about projects or people living in housing projects of the government. We try to change their mindset that, “We do not have to be poor. We can build an organization and we can work together.” One of the struggles of our group is to change the mindset—that we are not just poor people, but we can do more. So, the word “mindset” really resonates with me when it was brought up. It is something that we can think about later on, referring to the cultures that we wanted to change which can form part of our alternative.

## PANEL 2

# Ecology and Food Sovereignty

November 27, 2018 · 01:10 PM



## Alternative Land Management in Thailand: A Case Study of the Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand (SPFT)

**SUPATSAK POBSUK**

Focus on the Global South

(Case presenter for the Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand,  
Surat Thani, Thailand)

**ABSTRACT** The existence of inequitable land distribution has endured in Thailand over the years because of the concentrated land management of the Thai state which is legitimized by its legislation and forces. In addition, the sway of capitalism aims to commodify land to serve a capitalist market economy. In Surat Thani Province, South of Thailand, landless and small-scale peasants have employed alternative economic, political, social, and cultural practices to counter state-centric land management. They have applied the idea of community land title deed underpinned by the concept of community rights to land and natural resources management. Alternative practices of land management employed by the Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand (SPFT) community members call for participatory development and governance.



Supatsak gave a brief background about land governance in Thailand and explained how land management is unilaterally centralized by the Thai State as well as by the dominant development discourse that aims for economic growth within the frame of neo-liberal capitalism.

The state owns all the lands and has the authority to identify lands as belonging to any individual through formalized documents. The Agricultural Land Reform has generally been inefficient. Through a Land Titling Programme, land tenure is either state-owned or private. Generally, landless and small landholder peasants have been hindered from having access to land as a means of production. A graph was shown representing the changed scale of agricultural land in Thailand from 2007 to 2016. It showed a significant decrease of farmers

who are tilling their own land compared to those farming the land of others.

The situation gave birth to the concept of Alternative Development: (1) Community Rights and (2) Community Land Title Deed. Community Rights concern self-determination, people-centered development, participatory development, and democracy. Community Land Title Deed is about the complexity of rights and communal land tenure.

The concept of community rights on land management was discussed. Its three types are Alternative Land Management, Individual Rights on Land, and Collective Land. Examples of Alternative Land Management are collective ownership and the complexity of rights. For the Individual Rights on Land, these are residences and lands for agriculture. Finally, Collective Land is a “public-used” land such as communal farm lands for economic and food crops, livestock, fish pond, among others. Communities have shown their alternative land governance and management by utilizing land into different types such as residential, agricultural, communal, public-used, and reserved forest land, etc.

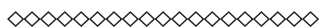
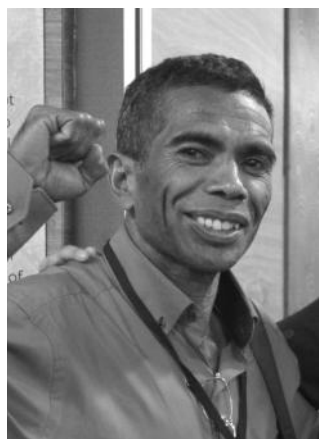
Continuing a land reform movement, the Southern Peasants’ Federation of Thailand (SPFT) gathered a group of landless peasants and workers in Surat Thani in 2008. Its rationales are based on the three (3) critical rights of landless peasants and workers: 1) the right to land reform for a just society, 2) the community rights to land and natural resources management, and 3) the right of landless peasants and workers to new community settlements.

SPFT’s short-term goal is to achieve equitable land distribution. Its mid-term goal is to have community rights to land and essential natural resources management, and its long-term goal is to realize a democratic society and create new peasant cultures. SPFT’s community members are those who have been left behind by the socio-economic development in Thailand. Many members worked in urban areas and migrated to Surat Thani to seek economic opportunities in this province. For them, land is the foundation of life and their means of production. Land is essential for their subsistence and livelihoods and serves as their safety net.

For the Economic Alternative Practices, community members participate in establishing regulations of land utilization within their community. They established an Agricultural Cooperative and a Land Fund for the benefit of the community members. Political Alternative Practices center on a democratic society, community constitution, political school, checks and balances mechanisms, and forms of resistance such as public demonstrations, petitions, and negotiations. An example of their Cultural Alternative Practice is sharing labor, and examples of their Social Alternative Practices are encouraging women participation in community development and having committees handle coordination, registration, finance, agriculture, development, healthcare, women and

youth, and security and culture, all for the welfare of the members of the community.

Community rights have been employed to legitimize people's struggle for land. The struggle also includes rights for landless peasants, human rights, democracy, and food sovereignty. Land management has also been contextualized—local people have been empowered to manage their resources based on their interests and knowledge. Moreover, they demand to be involved in decision-making processes of development and bargaining power with the Thai state.



## Ermera Peasants Union and the *Tara Bandu*

### ALBERTO MARTINS GUTERRES

Uniaun Agrikultores Munisipiu Ermera (UNAER)  
Ermera District, Timor-Leste

**ABSTRACT** From the time the Portuguese colonized Timor-Leste followed by the Indonesian occupation, the Timorese local communities were denied or at least discouraged to perform their own management, conservation efforts, as well as in maintaining social cohesion. The Indonesian occupation, in particular, not only depleted the resources but also weakened the social structure that puts importance on communities' capacity to manage and protect their land and natural resources. The effects of bombings and forcible resettlement during the time of the occupation also contributed to the changes in the environment and social structure.

In post-conflict Timor-Leste, the centuries-old customary practice known as the *tara bandu*, achieved strong resurgence for local decision-making, collective action, enforcement system, and most importantly to protect agrarian reform implementation. It was rather observed that community-based actions using the *tara bandu* were more effective. Instead of putting up signages which is the practice of the government authorities, communities organized rituals, built altars, and hung natural objects that signify a certain law such as prohibition of harvest of natural resources in protected areas. Ermera, the country's largest area for coffee production, has become a model because the implementation of *tara bandu* is district-wide.



The Ermera Peasants Union (UNAER) was established by coffee farmers that were affected by land conflict in Ermera District. There are currently 24,000 peasants from Ermera District who are union members. Their main strategy is to fight and defend peasants' rights for popular and genuine agrarian reform policy and to defend and promote sustainable agriculture policy or model. The union's vision is "to obtain a just agriculture society and sovereignty, live in the spirit of collectivism, social solidarity, and sustainability from generation to generation."

*Tara bandu* is a customary/traditional law that existed from ancestral times and is still practiced from generation to generation until today. It is a practice to preserve and protect the land struggle, aiming to respect each other and respect nature. The objectives of the union are to promote *tara bandu* practices as part of Timorese cultural identity; to strengthen solidarity, fraternity, and unity within people as individuals and groups; and to raise community awareness and consciousness to care and protect the environment and nature.

To regulate the relationship between people to people, people and nature, and people and animals, the *tara bandu* has two dimensions: the socio-cultural and the socio-natural. The socio-cultural highlights the relations of people in a community or the social relationships of people while the socio-natural focuses on protecting and preserving nature and environment and all its biodiversity, including relationship between people and animals living in nature.

Before *tara bandu* was practiced in Ermera, there were complex problems with traditional habits as the people commit themselves to obligations that cost much money. Alberto shared that although tradition is not always good because many problems can emerge from it, tradition also has its own potential solutions such as the *tara bandu*.

In Ermera, coffee production is costly. There was high level of suicide because of too many unpayable loans. Children are taken out from schools because of rising school fees. Discrimination against women and domestic violence were prevalent because of financial needs. Residents were in poor living conditions with substandard houses, lack of access to drinking water, poor health, and malnutrition. There was high incidence of conflict among the local communities according to police statistics.

As an impact, *tara bandu* was able to provide comprehensive benefits to the community. Social benefits include reduction of conflicts within the community, people respect each other, solidarity, reduction of people's spending on traditional ceremonies.

In terms of economic benefits, the community can save money because monetary limits are placed on local bride prices, funeral ceremony, and other traditional ceremonies. Money has been more intended for sending children to school.

In terms of political benefits, there was community stability by reducing social conflict, strengthening grassroots democracy, and recognizing the roles of the *kableha* or the popular police. The community has found critical importance in finding local solutions that take into consideration cultural traditions, beliefs, and capabilities at the local level.

In terms of cultural benefits, *tara bandu* has transformed the local community to putting money for productive activities and has



strengthened local culture for a positive communal life. Meanwhile, in terms of environmental benefits, the local people see the need for the preservation of forest, water resources, land use, and the protection of sacred places (*lulik*).

Paying attention to the process towards community transformation, the *tara bandu* methods promote community organizing and awareness. Before its implementation, it undergoes a long consultation process with the stakeholders: traditional leaders, church, local administration, elected village chiefs, veterans, and the Ministry of Law for the formalization of the Tara Bandu Code (to convert it from oral to written and to establish a formal monitoring committee).

The *tara bandu*, however, still faces some challenges. There remains the threat of the exploitation of natural resources for economic benefits such as tree cutting that leads to deforestation. Some communities feel that *tara bandu* threatens their rights. The perils of globalization are immanent as young people show lack of faith in *tara bandu* practices (traditional versus modern).



## Sorghum and Local Food Movement in Flores Society

**MARIA LORETHA**

Perhimpunan Petani Sorgum untuk Kedaulatan Pangan  
NTT East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia

**ABSTRACT** Local farmers in this island of Flores are reviving the production of the many indigenous varieties of sorghum for food security, cultural preservation, primary health care strategy, and biodiversity conservation. This eastern part of Indonesia has a vast dry unproductive land, unsuitable for rice cultivation, especially the hybrid varieties that require much water. This was the result of the green revolution that was prioritized by the Indonesian government during that time.



The green revolution in the island of Flores is perceived to be not beneficial for those who are residing in these dry zones of the country. Farmers are building their local food movement in response to the widespread poverty, hunger, including malnutrition of children in the island that has been an effect of the rice-centered agriculture development program during the Suharto administration. Through the cultivation of sorghum, this case emphasizes the importance of local identity and knowledge towards the cultivation of their own food in the community.

Maria Loretha first presented a short video about their sorghum production and promotion in the province. She further provided an overview of Indonesia and highlighted the province of East Nusa Tenggara (also known as Nusa Tenggara Timur—NTT—in the island of Flores). Indonesia currently ranks 5th in malnutrition in the world while East Nusa Tenggara Province ranks the highest in Indonesia with 33 percent of its population malnourished.

In Nusa Tenggara Timur, sorghum is a key traditional food in local cultural identity. The province provides an optimum environment for producing sorghum as the crop is broadly adaptable and tolerant to drought and excess water. It is a great source of nutrition and promotes optimization of people's business participation and development. Aside from sorghum being a staple ingredient to their day-to-day food, it has also become a vital ingredient to their cultural identity and economic struggle. The island of Flores is in a volcanic region, making the land fertile and perfect for agriculture. However, climate change poses a huge threat to food security in Indonesia as it induces loss of soil moisture, reduced groundwater, and reduced rainfall water.

As one of the key traditional food, sorghum is cultivated on the island of Flores as the climate provides the conducive setting for production. Further, sorghum production also promoted the restoration of the ecological system as it has converted dry and barren lands into

productive ones which has benefited not only the sorghum production in their province but also the community as well. Sorghum cultivation also promotes women empowerment and encourages agricultural opportunities for them as women in the communities helped each other in cultivating sorghum. It was only when they realized that behind the dried patches of land and weeds lie a promising land which holds the key to helping them economically and culturally.

Maria Loretha proceeded by showing examples of how sorghum is processed and the innovative culinary products that can be prepared out of it.

## Sustainable Agriculture Activities: Hom Dok Hung Community-based Enterprise

**BAMPEN CHAIYARAK**

Hom Dok Hung Community-based Enterprise for the  
Preservation of Native Rice Varieties  
Sakon Nakhon, Thailand

**ABSTRACT** The Sustainable Agriculture Foundation (SAF), Alternative Agriculture Foundation (AAF), and BioThai are a consortium of farmers and activists working for organic and sustainable agriculture in Thailand. The group is working on alternative practices in agriculture in response to the negative impacts on farmers and the environment of the green revolution that was implemented on a national scale in Thailand. The consortium works to preserve their culture and agricultural heritage. They conduct research on the impact of conventional technologies on agriculture. They have also trained people to promote sustainable agriculture that is independent from the dictates of the global market. Based on their observation, farmers implementing sustainable agriculture practices earn more than those who continue to use capital-intensive technologies.



Na Khok is an agricultural area in Thailand where cultivation depends on the rainfall as the only source of water for annual plantation. Their ancestors founded a village called Ban Noi Lerng Hung which is adjacent to the stream Huai Toei. They turned “Khok” which is characterized by high plains, brooks, and hillocks into “Na Khok,” a small plot of land for growing rice surrounded by dense forest ecosystems. Rice cultivation is rain-fed, thus only done once a year.

The people in the area initially had over 30 native rice varieties. But in a span of 30 years, these varieties gradually started disappearing. Given this problem, the farmers gathered together to establish a community-based enterprise named Hom Dok Hung with the goal to preserve the native rice varieties. It aims to seek, learn, rehabilitate, and develop the rice varieties inherited from the Na Khok area.

With the imminent risks of climate change, they are learning to adapt through an ecological approach. Bampen further presented the meticulous process of planting and cultivating, and monitoring the harvest of rice in Na Khok. She showed how the community forest with its rich flora (especially medicinal plants) and fauna was beneficial to the farmers' community. Hom Dok Hung highlights the link between natural and ecological agriculture. It also has local branding productions of aromatic rice, soaps, shampoo bars, and others.

The community also utilizes their family/community forest valued over millions, even reaching billions in Thai Baht in 25 years. But the Thai Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives determined the area as

infertile and not suitable for growing rice, despite the local people being able to cultivate rice for decades. Members of the community believed that such pronouncement is nothing but a ploy to build a sugar mill and a biomass power plant project for sugarcane waste. This will not only take them away from their productive land but will exhaust natural resources from their community forest. In 2017, the sugar company sued 21 villagers for opposing the projects. As an expression of resistance, the villagers filed in 2018 a counter suit before the Administrative Court to stop the construction of sugar mills and a biomass power plant.



## Agroecology Trends and Initiatives on Seed Banking in the Southeast Asia Region: The La Via Campesina Experience

**RAFAEL BALADAD**

Focus on the Global South  
Philippines Programme

**ABSTRACT** In the name of development, rural areas are being transformed into arenas where various actors and interests clash to assert claims over land, water, and territories. Among them are small farmers and peasants in the historical struggle for rights, recognition, social justice, and protection as food producers. In a period where financial capital, transnational corporations, and private investments hold significant power to establish control over resources, rural social movements, on the other hand, have devised campaigns such as Food Sovereignty to defend rural spaces and define food and farming systems for peasants. Food Sovereignty, coined by an international peasant organization called La Via Campesina (LVC), is globally gaining traction along with Agroecology and Seed Banking as expressions of resistance to industrial-led food production and the corporate capture of food. The paper looks into how Agroecology and Seed Banking is promoted by social movements in Southeast Asia as well as its adoption in communities. The paper also explores the initiatives and experiences of four member peasant organizations of LVC in Southeast Asia: Alliance of the Poor in Thailand, Panggau in Malaysia, Paragos-Pilipinas in the Philippines, and Serikat Petani Indonesia in Indonesia.



Rural areas are being transformed into arenas where small farmers and peasants are in the forefront of the historical struggle for rights, recognition, social justice, and protection as food producers. Financial capital, transnational corporations, and private investments pose significant threats to small farmers and peasants, from resource grabbing to control over the means of production such as land grabbing for mega projects, and industrial mono-cropping. But the larger question is, “Whose development?” Neoliberal economic policies that govern trade and market systems for agriculture lean towards corporate interests rather than reducing rural poverty.

The term “food sovereignty,” coined by La Via Campesina in 1996, is the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods. It also includes their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. Besides contending trade liberalization, initiatives under food sovereignty aim to promote smallholder farming and to transform farming systems back to its traditional roots in order to counter the impacts of Green Revolution technologies. Agroecology and seed banking are expressions of food sovereignty. They are promoted by social movements to resist industrial-led food production and the corporate capture of food. Agroecology incorporates social, cultural, and political principles and goals into ecological processes applied to agricultural production systems. This is in a period where “organic agriculture” is already captured by transnational corporations. Seed banking, on the other hand, is where seeds hold a special place in the struggle for food sovereignty, particularly against genetic modification towards homogeneous industrial production.

The underlying issues on food sovereignty are the free trade agreements sanctioned under the World Trade Organization (WTO) which threaten the survival of family farms. Further, various researches undertaken by Focus on the Global South have shown that member countries under the ASEAN Economic Community favor industrial mono-cropping by subjecting rural areas to regional value-chain systems despite the fact that 70-90% of the world’s food comes from small food producers. The lack of government support and extension work also has adverse impacts on food self-sufficiency which makes low production capacities and make importation and industrial mono-cropping a better option. Other notable issues are: neoliberal market-led production which uses competitiveness and profits as indicators for development but sacrifices the right to food of communities; the dwindling participation in agriculture plus the persistence of poverty in the countryside make farming a less interesting profession among rural youth; land (and resource) grabbing where corporations view small food production as an under-utilization of the profitability of land; and failure of agrarian reform. In countries where agrarian reform is implemented, governments have failed social justice and redistributive reform from eradicating rural poverty to feudal land based social relations. Other countries have no national agrarian reform programs at all. Lack of policy reform is also an issue. These are policies that are supposed to support local small-scale food production and protect and promote traditional farming techniques and cultures. Another is climate change which entails mitigation and adaptation efforts in reducing the vulnerabilities of small farmers/peasants, followed by the emergence of disaster capitalism.

Rafael presented case studies of farmers’ initiatives across Southeast Asia—Serikat Petani Indonesia: “Agroecology as Resistance and Seed Banking”; Paragos Pilipinas: “Agroecology for Posterity and Seeds for Survival”; Alliance of the Poor: “Agroecology within Struggles and Seed Protection against IPs”; and “Rural Development and Agroecology and Seeds, Revitalizing Farms, Forests” in Panggau, Malaysia. Agroecology



implementation. So we are using our voices to make a different strategy. We want to have a seat in government. This year, we are trying to have a government seat for our member so we can have power in the government.

**Rosario Encarnacion Tan (Architect, The Philippines):** For the sorghum, is it commercially viable? Are you producing only for local consumption at the moment or do you intend to produce for a bigger patronage? I understand you said it can be a substitute for rice, and I saw on your slides that we can also grow it in less fortunate areas.

**Maria Loretha:** Because our food supply is a lot, we want to sell to the neighbouring island. But for the long term, we want to sell to other ASEAN countries to be able to contribute to food security in the region. But for the moment, we are still focusing on our communities.

**Question:** For Bampen, what kind of organic matter is used to enrich the soil, and how many members are there in the community enterprise? Also, what is the total population of that community?

**Bampen Chaiyarak (Hom Dok Hung Community-based Enterprise for the Preservation of Native Rice Varieties, Thailand):** There are 150 households and 40 family members involved in the enterprise, but it can be more. Rice is suitable to grow in our fields and we use 50 sacks of organic matter.

**Question:** How do you empower? In my experience, it is more difficult to empower communities especially farmers to use organic matter because they have been using the chemical matter. How do you motivate?

**Bampen Chaiyarak:** Actually, our product is not all organic. We do not put the “organic” branding. We do not pay attention on that at all. While we do not use pesticides, some of the community members use chemical fertilizers. However, we try to change the way we handle it in our area like what I have shown you in the picture. So, we motivate through product pricing. We are not all organic but we have participants in the enterprise.

**Alicia Teves:** Let me confirm. Do you only plant during the rainy season? If so, is the harvest enough to cover your dry months? How do you organize alternative livelihoods during the dry season in order to sustain the needs of all families in the community? There was a statement from the government that the land is no longer fertile. The second question is: how did you address that? Is it really not fertile anymore?

**Bampen Chaiyarak:** We do rice planting during the rainy season, but we do other production like gardening during the dry season, and



livestock raising because we have 50 buffalos. We also have shells and mussels that grow. My community is not far from the city, so some of us also go to the city. But the good thing is that the people own the land. Part of its ecosystem provides them other livelihoods. People are supposed to benefit from the natural resources, but the government promotes the sugarcane project.

If you have money, you can buy the land. In the province, there is another government policy that identifies this city as “Herbal City.” Government wants this to be the herbal capital in the region. Ironically, they also want to be the top sugarcane seller in the world. So, we try to negotiate. This issue is not where the local people would like to focus on, but let us see.

**Sastro Maruf (Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia (KPRI), Indonesia):** How do we stir the corporation within Asia or ASEAN? How can we compete and have impact on the fishers, on the farmers, and on other people? How could the economy improve? We have much potential, but how do we stimulate the ASEAN people and push the movement forward, such as the food movement? We are very good in our advocacy work, in our resistance. But how do we really transform economic systems so that they become sustainable and can feed societies?

**Rafael Baladad (Focus on the Global South–Philippines Programme):** I think some of the older leaders in the movement know that it requires power to challenge the system. Some of the organizations here have that power, but in terms of engagement, for example, with the government, the method varies. It is a very hard question actually. I think that is the purpose of this entire thing—cross-border regionalism and alternative. A lot of social movements offer reforms, but they do not offer alternative. I think this is what we have to figure out.

**Pastor:** I heard something about indigenous knowledge, systems, and practices. And I ask if La Via Campesina already reached out to indigenous peoples and has really maximized using this IP knowledge, systems, and practices in its advocacy and work?

**Rafael Baladad:** I’m sorry, I cannot speak on behalf of La Via Campesina because we are not really part of them. But from what we have observed from the outside, La Via has always been actively promoting linkage with indigenous communities and their practices. We are trying to link them to farmers, whether they are indigenous peoples or not. This has been practiced in South Asian countries. As part of its agricultural framework, the IP knowledge, systems, and practices are actually recognized as something viable in enhancing food production across specific countries. So, has it reached that level of knowledge? I guess, I cannot say for sure, but there is knowledge being transferred across La Via Campesina organization members.



But in terms of promoting indigenous practices, I think La Via Campesina has reached that level of awareness.

**Eduardo Tadem:** The question regarding the indigenous community, that is exactly why we are gathered here today in order to share experiences, to share knowledge, to reach out to other groups and organizations not only in the Philippines but to other countries in Southeast Asia. So, you are actually asking something that we will try to look at as we embark on this quest to set up a new network across Southeast Asia of peoples' organizations, communities, other initiatives from the grassroots, and all other marginalized sectors in society. That is exactly what we are trying to do—to reach out and to learn from one another. This is only the first day and we are learning so much, am I right? There are 23 more case studies in the next two days where we will gain more knowledge and information that will inspire us to work and develop what we are doing on the ground and learn from other experience.

Second, there is actually a big debate between those who say, "Let's wait for the seizure of power. Let's seize political power first. And only when we have gained political power can we undertake the true economic transformation of society." That's the old line. The other line says, "You can actually do something. You can actually improve your conditions, your economic life even before or without the seizure of power." The problem is that some social movements even try to suppress alternatives like this by saying that it is reformist and can prevent people from being politicized as if there is a dichotomy between economic programs and political programs. We have some case studies where they would combine political goals with economic goals while they are also becoming politically empowered at the same time. There's no contradiction between economic development and political empowerment—they go together.

Thirdly, there is actually a theory that says, "In any society, whether it is an underdeveloped country or a developed society, there are what they call 'non-state spaces.'" These are spaces in society where the state is weak, or where the state does not really care about such things. So, these non-state spaces are where the poor and the marginalized are in. The government neglects these spaces so these are the spaces that you can actually take over, even if the state is still there, and you can implement your own programs, your own vision for alternative study, and be successful. I wrote a paper on this called "Grassroots Democracy." We could mull or think about these, not only in the next three days, but even after we leave. As I have pointed out on my keynote speech, we have an agenda for 2019 already. We hope that you could still be part of that agenda of serving for alternatives, linking these alternatives together across the region, learning from each other, and forming a new network across Southeast Asia that will challenge the neoliberal, capitalist, dominant development paradigm. It is up to us to make this happen. Otherwise, it will

continue to be neglected, marginalized, divided, because that is what the elites want. What the oligarchy wants is to keep us divided and separate from one another so that we will not have cooperation. I am not saying that we already have the answer. But the terms of that answer are already there. What we are doing is really just a matter of surfacing this and developing a new development paradigm or theory that will replace the capitalist, neoliberal, corporate globalization type of strategy that has been imposed to us by global forces.

**Devralin Lagos:** Let us reclaim those spaces or make new spaces. These five case studies show us counter-stories—alternative stories that counter the prevailing neoliberal, dominant, monopolistic, unsustainable productive systems in land management, natural resource management, and that inspired different strategies and actions. I became inspired by the land occupation struggle of the SPFT, the alternative production system of sorghum, the customary practice that was highlighted in the case of Ermera, reclaiming of native rice varieties from the case of Hom Dok Hung, and finally, Southeast Asian cases here in La Via Campesina.

## PANEL 3

# Gender Justice and Governance

November 27, 2018 · 05:00 PM

## Empowering Woman-Headed Households— Road to Dignity: Women Head of Family Movement in Indonesia

**ROMLAWATI KAMAD**

Perempuan Kepala Keluarga (PEKKA)  
Indonesia

**ABSTRACT** PEKKA (Women-Headed Family Empowerment) is a women-led NGO that helps empower women-headed households in Indonesia. Women as solo-parents face the stigma in Indonesian society that PEKKA is trying to address. It aims to promote the rights of women and their role in advocating social change. As a way of improving the status of these women, PEKKA helps them secure pertinent documents such as divorce papers and birth certificates for their children, which are essential for them to be able to access government and financial services. The organization provides leadership training and helps women mobilize at the local level for their confidence building. It also engages with other organizations, the Indonesian government, and international organizations to help promote the welfare of women in Indonesia in general.



Romlawati explained that with its current population at 250 million people, the Republic of Indonesia is multi-ethnic and multi-religious, but majority of its population are Muslims. The country has undergone 33 years of dictatorship and now has a democratic system since 1998. It is described as a fast-growing economic country, but its Gender Inequality Index based on UNDP is the 8th among ASEAN countries.

PEKKA was established in 2001 during post-1998 economic crisis—the time of conflict and reformation in Indonesia. PEKKA covers 2,500 grassroots groups, 1,200 villages, 77 districts, and 20 provinces. One in every four families in Indonesia is headed by women. Social exclusion and discrimination are some of the social problems faced by these women-headed families. Notably, PEKKA has 47% of its members belonging to the poorest of the poor. PEKKA started organizing women-

headed families into groups to facilitate them to have their own financial resources and to move them out of stigma and become empowered. It conducts savings and lending activities in order for these women to get access and control over financial resources and overcome their poverty. Through their savings and lending cooperatives, they exercise power sharing system, leadership, democracy, accountability, and social responsibility. These cooperatives have actually become effective tools for their empowerment. Lifelong learning activities are also conducted including literacy classes and early childhood education.

Romlawati explained that PEKKA develops grassroots women head of family for leadership and organization as their collective political power. Their organization Serikat Pekka (Pekka Association) has been federated at the national level where the strength is in their numbers in order to increase political bargaining power.

The women leaders are trained to actively engage in the process of decision making. They also receive paralegal training for legal empowerment to assist community members' access to justice especially in dealing with family law matters. They also undergo Grassroots Cadres and Leaders Development which is an important aspect for the sustainability of their organizing process. PEKKA also helps develop a Community Learning Center where the women organize all their learning activities, have a safe space, and pilot different livelihood projects. KLIK-PEKKA, a mobile clinic for consultation and information services, is developed for legal and social protection. To end her sharing, Romlawati presented a short video about PEKKA's work.

## Women Organizing for Governance: Ayta Women Addressing Conflicts and Violence in Indigenous Peoples (IP) Community

**AYTA-MAG-INDI MEMBERS OF PORAC, PAMPANGA WITH  
VENARICA PAPA, DEVRALIN LAGOS, LISA ROSEL, AND THE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT 202 CLASS OF UP CSWCD**

## The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** The women of Ayta-Mag-indi in Porac, Pampanga delve into culture-based women organizing in order to address emerging accounts of gender-based violence and to contribute to their people's ongoing struggle for self-determination and culture sensitive governance. The Ayta-Mag-indi is a peace-loving people. And while they have struggled to preserve and pass-on their culture from one generation to the next, they have become vulnerable to the influence of outside cultures with the many accounts of development aggression and multiple displacements.



This presentation documented: (1) the context of the Ayta Mag-indi people—the cultural, structural, and symbolic forms of violence and how these translate to gender-based domestic violence; (2) the processes that Ayta women have undergone towards awareness raising and core group formation; and (3) their envisioned contribution to the strengthening of their community in ending gender-based domestic violence and upholding Indigenous Peoples’ Rights and the Ayta culture.

Community members of the Ayta-Mag-indi indigenous group from Porac, Pampanga, together with the Community Development 202 (Development Theories) Class of UP CSWCD, provided a video presentation of the community's situation, struggles, and experiences. Community members themselves narrated their struggle for their ancestral domain over a mining company and the dreaded Pinatubo Volcano eruption and how they confronted and addressed these conflicts, sufferings, and violence. Marivic said, "*Lahat ng meron sa baba, meron ding counter[part] sa lupaing ninuno*. (Everything in the lowland has its own counterpart in the ancestral land.)" Benny uttered, "*Kasi kung nawala [ang lupaing ninuno], parang pinatay na rin kami*. (If our ancestral land is gone, we are as if put to death.)" The Ayta-Mag-indi participants stressed the importance of collective power to fight for their land against corporate vested interest and the important role that indigenous women play in the council of leaders.



## Peace House Shelter for Victims of Gender-based Violence: A Comprehensive Model Supporting Victims Experiencing Gender-based Violence

**HIEN THUY NGUYEN**

Vietnam Women's Union and Center for Women and Development  
Vietnam

**ABSTRACT** The Peace House Shelter provides comprehensive and long-term support for the rehabilitation and reintegration of women and children who were victims of gender-based violence (GBV), mainly domestic violence and human trafficking. Established in 2007, this was set up when there was a significant gap for providing holistic support for the trafficked women. At that time, there was no similar center in the country. The Shelter provides safe accommodation for six (6) months for women who experienced domestic violence and 18 months for trafficked women and girls. While these women are in the Shelter's custody, they received medical treatment, psychological care and counselling, and are engaged in indoor and outdoor activities. Social workers responsible in the counselling use diverse and creative approaches in order to raise awareness about gender equality, reproductive health, and human rights.



The Center for Women and Development (CWD) is a subordinate unit of Vietnam Women's Union established in 2002 to support comprehensive development of Vietnamese women. CWD provides training, counseling, social services to women (particularly disadvantaged women), and supports women who are interested to engage in business by giving them vocational training. CWD also conducts researches related to gender and women issues and helps prevent Gender-Based Violence through specific strategies. CWD established Peace House Shelters (PHS) to contribute to the implementation of Vietnamese legislation related to domestic violence and human trafficking, to provide emergency and comprehensive services to support the victims to recover their physical and mental health, and to protect their rights and reintegrate them to society safely and sustainably.

CWD currently has three PHS, one counselling room, one kindergarten, and one call center for connecting with counselling rooms of eight Provincial Women's Unions. They follow an ethical code, use a rights-based approach, and is client-centered. Their target groups are victims of gender-based violence in Vietnam. The victims have three basic needs categorized as urgent, short-term, and long-term. Some of their urgent needs are basic personal needs, health and psychological support, safe accommodation, and legal support. Their short-term needs are health care, legal aid, psychological support, and reintegration support. Their long-term needs are continued support of legal aid, healthcare, financial and education support, job placement, and family support.

From 2007 until 2018, CWD has handled 8,794 cases at the counselling room, 1,140 cases in PHS, and has served 16 ethnic minorities from 49 provinces and cities. However, the community continues to face challenges as victim-blaming and victim-discrimination persist and that some local authorities are not willing to cooperate with the Peace House Shelter to support the victims.

## Timor-Leste LGBTIQ and their Fight for Gender Equality

**IRAM SAEED**

Arcoiris  
Timor-Leste

**ABSTRACT** The activism of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ) in Timor-Leste has been heavily influenced by HIV/AIDS programs since the early 2000s. In 2017, the public witnessed the first-ever Pride parade, with a televised endorsement by no other than the country's Prime Minister. It was organized amidst the continuing struggle for acceptance against marginalization and discrimination in this country where Roman Catholicism is an important part of its history. Behind this historical march are hard-fought lives, some are even part of the struggle of the country's independence. Raising awareness on SOGIE and human rights remains a primary focus.



Iram provided the context of Timor-Leste and its rights-based constitution. Any discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation is prohibited and consensual sex regardless of gender is not criminal under the law. Timor-Leste is the only country in Southeast Asia which has signed the United Nations treaty on gender-related violence and discrimination. These facts presented would make Timor-Leste a progressive country when it comes to gender equality. However, the reality is totally different. There is a significant lack of data and information. There is still a strong patriarchal system with church restrictions, resulting in LGBTIQ members with no spaces to express themselves freely and live openly.

Arcoiris is the first lesbian, bisexual, transgender organization in Timor-Leste. The organization conducted a Participatory Action Research on LGBT persons in Timor-Leste. Its findings concluded that most members have poor socio-economic status; most are school dropouts; they underwent clear rejection and violence from family; they feel unsafe and non-supported; a significant number are in hiding; and they have poor knowledge on health and well-being. Arcoiris established a safe house for LGBTIQ members, aiming for family re-bonding and education.







**Raquel Castillo:** So, there are no similar programs provided by the government?

**Hien Thuy Nguyen:** We have a ministry where they have a safe center for protection. In cases of domestic violence, if women need a safe place, they go to the center. But this center attends to different kinds of subjects and many people of different societies.

**Al Obre:** We are talking about actions countering the dominant perspectives. I just want to share my observation. I think the issues about the struggles of women and LGBT is a good example of how we put forward new perspectives.

I was first exposed to the issue of women, how the women's movement took different courses of action so that they could raise their issues and concerns and how it has evolved through the years. Before talking about alternatives, maybe it is also good to discuss and know their history or their stories of struggle. For example, for our Ayta women, it is also good to know where their passion is coming from. Is it because they are women or because of their situation? I want to express that through the years, I am moved by how LGBT and women present themselves in terms of proving alternatives in society. This is something valuable for everyone to look into as we engage ourselves in this transformational change.

**Question:** To our Ayta leaders and women, do you also have ties with the government to support your initiatives or to strengthen some of your accomplishments or some of the activities you have?

**Ayta-Mag-indi Members:** At the village level, there is a village-level government. At the provincial level (Pampanga) and at the regional level (Central Luzon), there are several IP villages and they have successfully instituted or elected an IP government official. The government official, who turns out to be an indigenous person, recognizes the customary law. So, the local government cannot decide without consulting the Council of Elders. This is how very intimate local governance is at the village level. Similar to what Romlawati said about accessing a child's birth certificate through the parents' marriage certificate, the Aytas do not have marriage certificates because the wedding is done through the traditional ceremony. But nowadays, they have forged a partnership with the local government which can officiate tribal weddings. While they undergo traditional wedding rites, their children will still be given birth certificates with the recognition of their tribal cultural members.

**Flora Assidao-Santos (Alyansa ng Maralita sa Baesa (Alliance of the Poor in Baesa) (ASAMBA)–Sanlakas, The Philippines):** Usually, it is always the politician in position who decides what should be done. This represents the local power building where the people assert

their rights to decide for themselves. This represents the power of the people. It should be they who will decide because it is their lives after all. I saw this governance issues in the IPs, urban poor, and different sectors. I saw the power that the IPs have. This is what we want to happen. The challenge now is how to culminate these localized strategies into broader perspectives or from local issues to the bigger society. We should have an alternative system that would challenge the dominant political-economic system, the very reason why we are here. And we want this to happen in the entire Philippines.

# Day Two

November 28, 2018

## Facilitators:

Venarica B. Papa (UP College of Social Work and Community Development) and Karl Arvin F. Hapal (Co-convenor, UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development)



## Introductory Activity

09:15 AM

To begin the second day, Asst. Prof. Venarica Papa facilitated a getting-to-know activity titled *Kumusta Ka, Magpakilala, Umikot at Umikot, at Humanap ng Iba* (How Are You?, Introduce Yourself, Go Around, and Find Others) for the participants to introduce themselves and get to know one another. After the activity, Ms. Alyssa Peleo-Alampay delivered an opening message on behalf of UP Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Maria Cynthia Rose B. Bautista. Solidarity messages were given by Frances Lo, Coordinator of 11.11.11 Asia Desk (Coalition of Flemish North-South Movement), and Dr. Rene Ofreneo, President of Freedom from Debt Coalition–Philippines.



## Solidarity Speech

### FRANCES LO

Coordinator

11.11.11 Asia Desk (Coalition of Flemish North-South Movement)

*Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat!* Good morning, everyone!

I would like to thank the organizers for inviting us to give a message. I will give a speech today. This is the first time. We find this conference and the cases that have been and will be presented aligned to our work at 11.11.11 as we have decided to explicitly give focus on the prevalence in the South. Our intention is to provide support, even as a small organization, to help service these ongoing work and practices, with the objective of being together and practicing alternatives and workable solutions to help us reach our different aspirations as a community and as a nation.

In 11.11.11, we have been sharing the work and duty with our partners, those who are outside our focus countries who continue to inspire us to work better. Asia has set to popularize its contribution in its homeland in its growing movements of alternatives. We hope that through this, we will find a way to do this together. We are also optimistic that this partnership, academia, grassroots organizations, and advocates, would bring about changes where they matter. It is not commonplace to find such a gathering of groups talking of these things and standoffs. Each of us could learn from one another's experience and knowledge.

Beyond just government aid, the work has been done or ongoing in Southeast Asia. Our hope is that these could bring about strategic partnerships, flourishing grassroots movements which are able to organize and mobilize.

While this conference will only be short-term, these alternatives should also contribute and give structural and sustainable change. We hope that we continue to grow this together and be consistent as we work. Thank you again.



# Solidarity Speech

**RENE OFRENEO, Ph.D.**

President

Freedom from Debt Coalition–Philippines

Hello and good morning!

I would like to express our gratitude to our organizers, especially CIDS, and of course, Dr. Ed Tadem. He is the busiest person in the Diliman campus. He has been posting a series of lecture discussions, would you believe, on Karl Marx.

*Rethinking Cross-Border Regionalism.* This is a very good topic. Why? Because these are self-serving times, confusing times; and I am reminded of Antonio Gramsci. He said, “In these difficult times, a new world is struggling to be born.” These times, when monsters emerge... I think you know what is happening in the last few years. We see the rise of strong men and strong women and perceived the selected as another strong. You see Donald Trump trying to create troubles all over, and I can go on and on. But that is why the topic is *rethinking*. We are clarifying the situation where we are, and it is very important.

That is why in the case of the Freedom from Debt Coalition, the coalition has been there for 30 long years against unjust debt policy. And we see there that the debt threat is rising, and we are afraid that what happened to us in the 1980s might recur. I do not know whether to talk positively today for this rising debt we paid for three long decades.

So in trying to address this never-ending problem of debt, we in FDC are now discussing whether to push for an alternative economy.

We will now proceed to our concept of Peoples' Economy.



## PANEL 4

# Solidarity Economy (1)

November 28, 2018 · 09:45 AM



## Biggest War Facing the Nation: Building a Peoples' Economy

**RENE OFRENEO, Ph.D.**

Freedom from Debt Coalition

The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** For over seven decades of the Philippine economy, the Philippines has an industry-less, agriculture-less, jobless, and future-less economy. It is unequal, mal-developed, and unsustainable; such that an overhauling of the nation's development strategy and an alternative blueprint for a Peoples' Economy is imperative. There are three compelling reasons: first, the need to arrest an industry-less, agriculture-less, and jobless growth pattern; second, the need to save and renew the environment for the sake of the present and future generations; and third, the need to empower the people in shaping an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable Philippines.

The Freedom from Debt Coalition, as the longest debt watchdog and social movement in developing alternative economy, has been at the forefront in successfully campaigning for policy alternatives that led to successfully influencing more than five administrations, since the Marcos downfall in adopting pro-people economic and fiscal policies.



According to Art. II, Sec. 9 and Art. XII, Sec. 1 of the Philippine Constitution, "Eradicating poverty and ensuring the welfare of every citizen is a bounden State duty."

Rene briefly discussed the situation of the Philippines 120 years after the Philippine Revolution, 72 years after Liberation, and 32 years after EDSA I. The Philippines remains as an archipelago of poverty and the present economy is mal-developed after four decades of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs). The economy is a service-led economy. The agricultural sector is collapsing. The industry sector is stagnant instead of having an industry-led economy with strong agriculture.

Around two-thirds of the country's labor force are in the informal sector with 1 out of 5 unemployed and 1 out of 2 Filipinos poor while majority in the other half are “near-poor.” Given this, the challenge is now to overhaul the economy, make it balanced, progressive, and sustainable—economically, environmentally, and socially.

Rene discussed the failures of neo-liberalism and that of SAPs. Neo-liberalism in the country's economy was instituted in the 1980s at the height of the debt crisis. It underwent an all-out economic liberalization via SAPs from the World Bank through trade liberalization, deregulation, and privatization. Utilizing SAPs was initiated by Former President Ferdinand Marcos and was continued by post-EDSA administrations: Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada, Gloria Arroyo, Benigno Aquino III, and now, Rodrigo Duterte. The export processing zones in the country have no linkages with the local economy. There is no industrial upgrading program, no industrial visioning, no agricultural modernization. Agriculture collapsed under agricultural deregulation and import liberalization (tariffication) plus corruption and the overall failure of agrarian reform implementation. He stated that the Philippines is only surviving because of the OFW phenomenon supplemented by the rise of call centers or the BPO sector.

The Philippines has an elitist political and economic system—of the elite, by the elite, and for the elite. Hence, policies favor land accumulation by the rich, monopolization of basic services, regressive taxation in favor of the rich. The culture of corruption is endemic, resulting in the sense of nationhood being eroded. As witnessed in the past decade, the country also faces environmental crisis and climate change risks. Rene gives “triple sustainability challenges: of an economy standing on two legs, of the environment given general degradation, and of society given widespread poverty and inequality.”

On establishing an Alternative Economy, component programs for “A Peoples' Economy” were presented: rebuilding the economy through genuine structural reforms (rebuilding agricultural and industrial sectors and building a low-carbon economy), rebuilding the economy by going green, unleashing the people's productive capacity, building a grassroots-based economic movement (solidarity economy), establishing an Activist Pro-People Government. The people must unleash the nation's productive capacity towards a “People-Public Partnership,” build a grassroots-based, women-led solidarity economy network, and raise capital for the people's economy through mobilization of all sectors and progressive taxation.





## Collective Action for the Achievement of a Full Life: The Experience of Igting

### IGTING

#### (ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS OF TOWERVILLE)

Bulacan, The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** Ma-Igting na Samahan ng mga Panlipunang Negosyante ng Towerville (Association of Social Entrepreneurs of Towerville) is a peoples' organization composed mainly of mothers living in Towerville, San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan. All the members were once informal settlers in Metro Manila. Between the years 2000 to 2010, they were relocated to Towerville as part of the government's plan to remove informal settlers from so-called danger zones or due to an impending development project. Once relocated, they faced the harsh reality of the relocation sites—the absence of basic services and livelihood opportunities. Through the help of a Korean NGO, Igting was formed to address the lack of livelihood in Towerville. Drawing from the principles of social enterprise and community organizing, Igting has since become a sustainable sewing business providing livelihood to its 40 members.



Members of Igting shared about their life in Towerville: their experiences and situation as relocatees in a resettlement site. Initially, there was lack of basic social services in the site: water and electricity, livelihood, education, and health services. A Korean NGO, CAMP Asia helped the community and provided livelihood, education, and health programs. They facilitated livelihood trainings for the community members to build a social enterprise. But in 2014, the project ended and the financial support was terminated, compelling the community members to stand on their own feet in order to continue the social enterprise.

It was the students of the UP CSWCD's Field Instruction Program who facilitated community organizing concepts to the members of the community. Rowena Osal said, "*Ang mga estudyante ng Community Development (CD) ang nagturo sa amin sa salitang 'samahan.'*" (It was the CD students who introduced us to the concept of an 'organization.') Thereafter, they applied the concepts of Community Organizing (CO) and Community Development (CD) in the management of their Social Enterprise (SE). An Igting member shared, "We want to prove that we value the support we got from other people... We want to show them that we will continue to strengthen our organization and social enterprise." For the members' capacity building, orientations on SE-CO-CD were conducted, as well as values formation and team building activities. In addition to this, members of Igting also underwent business training on Operations Management, Finance, and Marketing.

Collective leadership is witnessed through policy-making, systems development, and product development. Rowena shared that one of her co-members realized, "In order for a community-based social enterprise





we must have a new and real management, that of the workers. As humans, the workers must also be the owners.

**Rene Ofreneo:** On the issue of professionalism and management of social enterprise, that is a very good point because I remember well how the first cooperative fund collapsed. This was in Basilan (Philippines). First, there was an assumption by everybody there that they are all co-owners and they should have equal pay even if their outputs are not the same. It is the same story of that in Eastern Europe. This is an absolute concept of equality—“each according to his own.” You are all members of the collective. You are all equal even if you are a ground guard.

**Benjamin Quiñones (Asian Solidarity Economy Council (ASEC)/RIPESS Asia, The Philippines):** Solidarity economy, as Prof. Rene is saying, is different from enterprise. When you look at economy, it is a collection of enterprises. And I fully appreciate Sastro because he is always raising his concerns. How do we raise the enterprise mentality to the economy mentality? Before we do that, it is very crucial to understand the struggle of the informal, market-deprived or poor to establish a business. Establishing a business, an enterprise, is a big struggle. That is why they do not think of the economic because that is so focused on business.

Now, let us go to the state's economy. You must be very receptive when I tell you that you have to establish an alternative governance system because managing the economy is different from managing an enterprise. You must have a lot of technical assistance agencies. That is why we have those providing alternative services.

Yesterday, I asked, “Why is it an alternative?” The answer I wanted to hear was: because the governance system that we have right now does not provide the kind of assistance to the social enterprises that you are developing. So, you see, that is the bigger challenge. How do you set up the governance mechanism outside the movement mechanism? Why does it have to be that way? Because in my mind, there are three basic sectors: the economy/government, the private which is managing the market, and the people. The people do not belong to these two sectors. They are excluded. You should set up institutions in order to support the social and the market enterprise. Without those, the question will not be answered. So, the next challenge is: Are you prepared to establish an alternative governance system that will establish institutions to help the social enterprises? I know how to set that up and that is my contribution to this group. But you need technical assistance. You need marketing. You have to have the whole value chain.

**Venarica Papa (UP College of Social Work and Community Development, The Philippines; translating the answers of Igting members):** *Nanay* (Mother) Weng said that the mindset is something

that cannot be taught to individuals. In fact, it should start from within. A person should have the result in order to create that change within. However, she also attributed the changing of the mindset to the experiences of each individual upon joining the organization. It is in that stage when the individual committed into the organization and promised to make the organization work, that those changes happen. She added that this is somehow a challenge.

And to end this panel, I think there are certain concepts that we need to hold on to and bear with them until the culmination of this conference. When we talk about solidarity economy, we should give importance or real attention to each transition, transformation, sharing, caring, governance, professionalization. We should really put this in mind because like any other issues in terms of development and addressing poverty, solidarity economy is multifaceted, multidimensional. It cannot be just economics, nor just political.

## PANEL 5

# Culture as Alternative

November 28, 2018 · 11:00 AM



## Art for Human Empowerment: When Expression Changes Society

**AQUINO WREDDYA HAYUNTA**

Koalisi Seni Indonesia (KSI)  
Indonesia

**ABSTRACT** KSI is an NGO that seeks to promote the value of culture and arts in Indonesian society. The formation of this coalition is a result of the call to provide more attention to culture and the arts for these to flourish. While the pursuit for cultural work as a source of livelihood is less recognized as a valuable profession in Indonesia, KSI tries to confront this challenge by implementing initiatives to promote arts and education altogether with the youth. Various arts and cultural projects are implemented at the regional and local levels. KSI engages the national and local governments through dialogue about the role of arts and culture in social transformation.



Generally, authoritarian regimes around the world actively control expression through censorship, and in the case of Indonesia, there is the Kopkamtib (Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order) which actively censors expression that they deem are against the New Order. Under the New Order, the regime has its own official art. Presentation of Chinese culture and arts is banned; there is movie censorship; even comic books need to be registered; and the wearing of long hair is prohibited. However, this did not stop people from criticizing the regime through movies, theatre, and poetry reading.

Art can either be used to perpetuate human rights suppression or it can be used to understand and promote other human rights. It is used in perpetuating human rights suppression through regulating and limiting forms of expression and other human rights, promoting uniformity of thinking, manner and perspective, and controlling people. On the other hand, it can be used to understand and promote other human rights

as it can free the peoples' expression and contribute to fighting against uniformity and subjugation.

Arts and human rights can be interrelated. An artist may speak up about human rights issues through his or her artworks and bring up human rights issues through his or her activities as a human rights activist. The artist may also implement human rights principles in the art creation process or by using art methods while working with his constituent to create social changes based on human rights.

Aquino presented several case studies in Indonesia wherein art played a vital role in empowering people. The *Sanggar Anak Akar: Conflict Among the Children* integrated performing arts such as music wherein lyrics are used to reflect their situation. These are children from poor communities who instead work to earn a living, dropped out, or are irregularly going to school. As a result of their performance, children negotiated with their parents that they should attend school. Parents on the other hand agree after seeing their children's presentation. On a bigger scale, the consistency of the performance creates trust from the society. Children gained dignity, self-esteem, and appreciation for their skills from the society.

The *Lab Teater* in Depok, West Java, Indonesia is a work with communities that is geographically close to the central government but are neglected. These people tend to forget about their culture and have become pragmatic by just working and living. Lab conducted oral history in the community to collect old stories/folklore, songs, myth, culinary and traditional arts, and sports. The initiative involved the local youth residence. The collected stories were transformed into arts performance such as theatre, songs, and sports. Additionally, women inmates in a prison in Tangerang participated in the performance. The entire performance eventually evoked the local government to pay attention to their advocacies.

The *100% Yogyakarta* was a cultural show in the City of Yogyakarta which is known for being pluralistic, a city of students, arts, and heritage, and notably, a place where a sectarian radical group is quite active, and the place where the "Yogyakarta Principles" was born. These Principles are a set of international principles relating to sexual orientation and gender identity. The show which is a sort of polling on stage, allowed the audience, and performers to see and understand peoples' diversity within a population. What happened in the process: the radical met the LGBT; ex-political prisoner of 65 had a chance to show up in public; the children could express their opinion; everybody can be him/herself and be acknowledged. The value of art was that there was a dialogue by learning and accepting other people's opinion and position in a relaxed manner.

*Teater Satu* is a community theater in Sumatera, Indonesia, which uses theatre for conflict resolution between migrants and natives.

By expressing the problems in performances, it provided reflection and dialogue among these two conflicting groups. This initiative also empowers female theater artists, directors, and groups.

Photography workshops are also conducted in the communities. It is used as a medium to see, to feel, and to record social facts. It eventually facilitated reflection, social analysis, expression towards the problems, and social campaign.

Tanoker is a learning and activity house for the people of Ledokombo village in Jember, East Java, where many work as migrant workers overseas. It promotes human rights education for children and parents through songs, theater, and a traditional sport called *egrang*. Some of the positive outcomes are: the women and children got their representatives in the village's development plan council, and underway is an endorsement for a local pro-migrant worker policy.

In Central Sulawesi, the *Komunitas Pedati* encourages young people to establish art groups. Central Sulawesi is known as a hot zone for many village brawls but very rich in cultural resources and talents. Pedati highlights the cultural resources. The strategy made was to invite groups from other villages, including opposing villages to do performances. The output rather forged friendship and unity among the different villages. *Mari Berbagi Seni* (Art for Sharing)"conducts art programs for students, teaching diversity through art.

The case studies show that by working through expression, artistic practices can endorse diversity, creativity, authenticity, and freedom. This way, art can help society develop itself. Indonesian society is divided into two groups. Currently, there is this Bill No. 5 of 2017, The Right to Art and Culture in Indonesia. For his concluding statement, Aquino said, "It is difficult to speak about democracy and human rights, so use art instead!"

LEONARD REYES

**ABSTRACT** Across Southeast Asia, musicians are using their music to raise public awareness on their sectoral and community issues and to influence public perception and social policy. The Asian Music for People's Peace and Progress, a loose network of alternative and socially engaged musicians, have started to work together as the aMP3 to speak about these issues of development in the ASEAN. This video provides an overview of the social issues in each social context and describes how music plays a role in presenting a vision of a more just and humane future.



The Asian Movement for Peoples' Peace and Progress (aMP3) presented a case study entitled "Songwriting and Performance as an Alternative to Development Practice in Southeast Asia" through a video presentation showing what the organization does, the life in their village, and how music is used as an instrument for change. Leonard explained that artists can bring peoples' issues to the public through music. "*Gamitin ang musika sa pakikibaka ng bayan.* (Use music as an instrument for the peoples' struggle.)"

**Flora Assidao-Santos (Alyansa ng Maralita sa Baesa (Alliance of the Poor in Baesa) (ASAMBA)–Sanlakas, The Philippines):** I believe that culture played a very important part in community organizing. Music and art can be seen in many social movements, actions, and collective actions. I hope that someday, at the community level, there will be rich and dynamic cultural/art groups that would take up music and art as a form of resistance.

**Question:** This is for the first presenter and also a challenge to culture as alternative. Culture reflects what is already here. The common notion is when you have art and music, you are talented. However, the grouping of the most talented people has the tendency to create elitism. If you are not schooled, you only look up to these artists and musicians and feel excluded. How do you address this?

**Aquino Hayunta (Koalisi Seni Indonesia (KSI), Indonesia):** This is because we consider art as only performance, something outside



of us. But actually each of us is an artist within. There are good artists that want to empower the people by arousing those talents and expressions. In my study cases, the artist groups come from society, from many types of people. We can also do anything to express through the arts or any other media. Everyone can have any expression and that is very important.

**Leonard Reyes (Asian Movement for Peoples' Peace and Progress (aMP3), Southeast Asia):** The Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says, "Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community" is often overlooked. To enjoy the arts and to share the scientific advancements and benefits is a right. So, everyone, either with an innate talent or not, has a basic human right to express oneself through art. Also, when we say "Peoples' Music," it challenges the elitist creation of art because the content itself comes from the people who are affected by many issues in society.

**Venarica Papa (UP College of Social Work and Community Development, The Philippines):** Leonard reiterated Article 27 which states that we all have the right to art expression. Hence, everyone should enjoy that regardless of whether one has a talent or not. So, do not mind if you sing and anyone tells you that you are not in the proper tune. Tell that person that it is your right and that is guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**Sastro Maruf (Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia (KPRI), Indonesia):** I hope the social encounter we have about language and culture, about our unity, our solidarity be produced and become a symbol. How can we have a new symbol of our movement that reflects our economic, political, and social solidarity? If we have this one, maybe we can share. We can use music, for example.

**Venarica Papa:** He (Sastro) does not yet have a clear idea of how to do it. But he thinks that it can be done. Music can serve as a unifying element or factor for all of us, encompassing all the issues that we bring with us in this struggle.

(Translating Benny Capuno's statement) Pastor Benny says that now he is beginning to realize the meaning of our title *Rethinking Cross-Border Regionalism*, and he realizes the implication of the discussion of music for their ancestral domain. He says that we must understand that their musical instrument and music itself actually come from the indigenous peoples. Unfortunately, this was commodified for use of the capitalist and this is a reason for them to continue the struggle.

(Translating Alicia Teves' statement) Ate Alicia says that she was triggered by the video presented. Immediately, it reminded her of their ongoing threat of displacement because a dam is going to be built on their ancestral domain. In fact, with the many struggles that



they have gone through, it is in their history that songs have been composed about their experiences. One is “On Potok” (“The Land”), and there are two more. She hopes for everyone to sing this. She also calls for everyone’s solidarity because they intend to organize a big protest against the dam that will displace them. She also talked about national government policies that are anti-people and these include the TRAIN law and policies or programs that are anchored on PPPs or Public-Private Partnerships.

## PANEL 6

# Alternative Health Care

November 28, 2018 · 01:30 PM



## Health in the Hands of the Dumagats: The Case Study of Community-Managed Health Program (CMHP) in Tanay, Rizal

### MARIA FATIMA VILLENA

Representing the Integrative Medicine for Alternative Health,  
INAM-Philippines and the Samahan ng mga Community Health  
Organizations sa Tanay (SCHOT)  
The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** In 2010, nine (9) barangays (villages) in the Municipality of Tanay, Rizal Province, began their journey in developing community-managed health programs (CMHPs). Forty-seven (47) were chosen by their respective communities to undergo the Philippine Integrative Medicine (PIM) Level 1 training, the first of the three (3) ladderized courses offered by the Integrative Medicine for Alternative Health Care System, Inc. or INAM-Philippines, a non-government, non-profit organization providing assistance to community through facilitation of the establishment of community health programs and hopefully an alternative health care system.



All the trainings the Dumagats received, including their learnings from the Community Health Financing and Organizational Management, led them to organize their very own federation of community health organizations in Tanay, Rizal and develop their community health insurance known as the *Saknungan*, the goal of which is to help sick Dumagats seek medical attention.

The 28,000 of over 33,000 hectares of land in Tanay, Rizal is identified as ancestral domain of the Dumagats, a group of indigenous peoples from the same tribe of Negrito ethnicity who often live in the hinterlands. They prefer to live in these places to sustain their daily food needs, shelter, and protection. The main priority of the tribe is food security. With that, not much attention is given to health. In fact, most are not aware of the various health services available in the Barangay Health Station or in

the Rural Health Unit. The Dumagats have their own traditional ways and practices in maintaining health such as delivering babies, family planning, and treating diseases. Some of these ways are *buga*, *hilot*, and herbal medicines. They have their own health practitioners who maintain the indigenous knowledge on health.

The main challenge with the Tanay Municipal Health Office is service delivery, being in a remote area/GIDA (Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Area). Health services are not patronized because of financial constraint and geographical limitations. As a result, the Dumagats prefer their own means of healing. Their health issues are deaths from preventable and curable diseases and neonatal and maternal mortality. Other issues determinant to health status are lack of access to facilities: potable water, transportation, livelihood, and building of mega dams. It is believed that the customs, beliefs, and attitudes of Dumagats are hindering the full implementation of health care delivery services. These attitudes and behaviors include avoiding interaction with other people, lack of trust in others, migration to various places, fickle-mindedness, and the tendency to rely on fast and instant remedies.

Fatima discussed that the Philippine Integrative Medicine (PIM) began when the Tanay Local Government-Municipal Health Office, through the DOH Regional Office, collaborated with INAM Philippines to provide training for the indigenous peoples to help them establish their own health program, a rather sustainable health care system.

PIM's aim is to empower the IPs through capability building to eventually become community organizers, community health workers, and community health program managers. The main goal is to educate and capacitate the IPs in order to access government health services and establish their own community health programs that will make health services accessible to IP families. The long term goal, on the other hand, is to improve the health conditions of the IPs and provide a platform for IP community participation and collective decision making towards engagement with local government.

PIM has 3 levels. Level 1 is Community Organizing, the process where IPs analyze community problems and solutions, and thereafter produce a Community Action Plan. Level 2 is Community Health Worker Training which is educating family members and mobilizing the community to collectively address health-related concerns. Another is providing Basic Health Skills Training. Level 3 is Community Health Program (CHP) Management. This is the application of the rights-based approach to the health care system. It integrates the knowledge and skills in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the CHP and in facilitating a reflection process.

Through PIM, community health workers are able to bring very significant contribution to the healthcare delivery and referral system among IP communities. In particular, the Dumagats have increased



their access to basic health services, preserved their traditional health practices, and empowered their leaders and health providers to participate in other health programs for the benefit of their community. Generally, a gradual change in the health-seeking behavior among the IPs was evident through immunization, pre-natal check-ups, to name a few.

Health care services currently include treatment of the sick, health education, referral to barangay health stations, rural health units, INAM clinic, among others. They have also established a two-way referral system involving both the local government and community health units with their own guidelines, benefit package, policies, and procedures. There are currently 106 families with 402 beneficiaries (from April-December 2014) and have a total contribution of PHP22,900.



## Sowing the Seeds of Hope – Break Free: The Experience of the Community Health Watch

### MEMBERS OF THE BANTAY KALUSUGANG PAMPAMAYANAN-BKP (COMMUNITY HEALTH WATCH)

Bulacan, The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** BKP began as a health program sponsored by a foreign NGO. The health program was situated in the context of a relocation site where health services were lacking, if not non-existent. Drawing from years of being recipients of services and various forms of support, BKP has transformed into a group of community-based health advocates. Currently, it boasts more than a thousand members from various sectors and communities in San Jose del Monte City, Bulacan. At the center of its success is its intense organizing activities and popular education among the residents. BKP's community organizing serves as the platform for popular education sessions and recruitment of potential health advocates to address common health issues and demand for better services from the government.

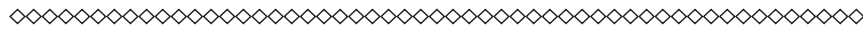
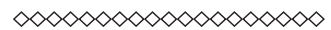
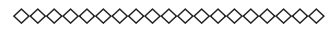


Marivic Atacador shared the situation of their resettlement site in Brgy. Gaya-Gaya, Towerville, and their experience with CAMP Asia, their partner NGO. While they come from different areas, this did not stop them from coming together and organizing themselves to address their health issues. Although they started from the external funds of their NGO partner, BKP tried to become eventually independent and maintain a sustainable health care program through their own organizing efforts.

Bantay Kalusugang Pampamilya (BKP) and CAMP Asia collectively produced and presented a video that further illustrates their experiences

and situations through personal testimonies. Most of their homes were forcibly demolished in the name of so-called “development.” The question however is: “development for whom and at whose expense?” The presence of CAMP Asia introduced the convergence of two cultures (Korean and Filipino) working towards development of the people. UP CSWCD’s field work students also contributed to the organizing work of BKP.

When BKP was introduced, there was an unexpectedly overwhelming turn-out of peoples’ response in support to its projects. As a relatively new organization, BKP believes that the journey continues through empowerment sessions among members, mobilization of members, activating the BKP leadership, and pushing the community health agenda to the government.



## Open Forum

**Andrew Aeria (ARENA, NTFP EP Malaysia, and CIVICA Research, Malaysia):** My observation is that there is a lot of solidarity and cooperation in these groups, but in my experience of working with indigenous peoples in poor parts of Malaysia, their family groups are very prominent; and they do not cooperate so much. They are also very dependent on government subsidies. My first question, what special recipe do you have in community organizing for these kinds of people: who are very autonomous, do not cooperate, and are very dependent on government subsidy? If there is no government subsidy, they would rather do nothing. Second, there is a problem of alcohol in IP communities. There is a major issue of alcohol. How do you deal with alcohol addiction in IP communities?

**Fatima Villena (The Philippines):** There is respect for the elders, of what they say or tell them to do. This is something really different because it is not just following, there is respect. Perhaps, the Dumagat elders are keen in helping people so this is what they share to their youth who in turn pays them respect for that. The elders as well, have this kind of mindset that there should be respect even outside the community and to others outside their community. For the second question, they have not identified alcohol as a problem, just occasional drinking.

**Al Obre:** Based on my personal experience, before I started organizing in that community, CAMP, the NGO which I belong to now, already provided services to the community. These are mostly dole out services. The program later shifted to organizing instead of providing direct services to the people. Those who have been beneficiaries of

this NGO were at first very reluctant because they think the NGOs are there to give and they are the recipients. That was the mentality instilled in them. So, we confronted the situation. We said, “CAMP will not be here forever. There is no forever for us. The only forever in the community is you, because you are from here. If you want to address your situation, you have to do and take your part.” If I may answer your question, the recipe is to confront the situation head-on, if it is necessary.

In the urban poor setting, alcohol is rampant and a concern in the community. How can you prevent people even when the government increases the sin tax? It is everywhere, side by side. There are lots of stores selling liquors and cigarettes even if people are aware of the negative effects. This is really challenging for us. I think we can only do so much. But I think it is not only about us. When we talk of alcoholism, it is also about the government, about the business.

**Karl Hapal (Co-convenor, UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development; translating Pastor Benny’s statement):** Regarding the issue of autonomy, although they might be autonomous in terms of geography, what keeps them together is their indigenous political structure. So, the elders from the different tribes must be present when they exchange different issues pertaining to their tribe. With regard to alcohol, in their tribe, they have 256 families and at the center of it is a videoke bar. So, when people drink, the elders always remind them, “You may drink, but do not break the customary law. Otherwise, you will be held accountable and penalties can be imposed.” They recognize that alcohol is not part of their culture and they always remind their people to be conscious of that.

**Andrew Aeria:** I do not want to be difficult, but you are all very lucky with this because I am dealing with elders who are all drunk every other week. So, the elders are not giving any rules, any examples because they are the ones who are drunk and everybody else follows.

**Meanne Manahan:** Actually, alternative healthcare systems do not really capture what was presented because we are talking about organizations of people, institutions, resources, in terms of the alternative to the system that we have. So, that is actually one of my comments. The other thing that I find quite common to both is the principle of subsidiary, using charity as an organizing principle. You basically propose solutions at the lowest level where it actually happens. I actually appreciated the comment of Kuya Al because it is a critical reflection on the NGO situation of services and delivery. These issues are not only in Southeast Asia. We are dealing with the whole NGO situation of healthcare which actually has two sides, positive and negative. What I found quite interesting in the Philippine Integrative Medicine as a framework is how the tribe challenges the state to recognize additional indigenous systems of health. I was wondering what kind of method or advancements have

you done that allow indigenous peoples in the country to become practitioners and get state recognition. The other question, Kuya Al, I was just thinking, in your framework of alternatives, what do you think would be the processes/mechanism for this kind of alternative method and what is needed to be done for it to be sustainable?

**Fatima Villena:** For the traditional birthing methods and traditional birth attendants, you have to understand that the government, the Department of Health (DOH), and the World Health Organization are claiming that birthing-at-home is one of the contributing factors why our maternal mortality rate is high. But we have yet to see evidence of that. I have not touched any literature saying that it was because of birthing-at-home. Second, what they did in Tanay, Rizal was a compromise. What the LGU (local government unit) did was establish a facility, some kind of a “halfway home.” It provides a space for Dumagats about to give birth, and they bring with them their traditional birth attendants (TBA). However, the TBA only acts as an assistant to the midwife, doctor, or nurse. Otherwise, they get penalized if they perform the birthing process since that will violate an ordinance in the area.

The traditional healthcare system in the Philippines still needs advancement even though DOH institutes the traditional and alternative healthcare. The Traditional and Alternative Medicine Act should be amended. It still needs more recognition and acknowledgment from many medical societies in the Philippines. So, I think one of the reasons is because research and evidence is quite lacking here in the Philippines. And it should also be supported by the government. Our tradition is oral. Alternative systems are not written most of the time. For example, the *sinuob* or *tinawas* can only be learned from anthropologists and they do not quite freely share their indigenous-seeking knowledge. This is why it is creating noise among medical doctors who are saying that these are not evidence-based systems. This makes our push difficult. Hence, we need more studies.

**Al Obre:** I do not know if I have the answer to that question. But anyway, when we tried to facilitate or organize the community, part of that is their vision and goals formation as an organization. So, maybe to endure this task is to continue facilitating them until they have realized what they have agreed upon as an organization.

Second, I told them that CAMP and myself will not stay forever. I suggested that we have to maximize the time we are together and learn from one another so that when the time to do our own thing comes, at least we can always go back to our learning discussions and apply them to our own initiatives.

Before, all tasks of facilitating a community activity are our load in the NGO. But at present, we coordinate with BKP members. Our role is



just to facilitate, to create the conditions for the people to surface and to share their bright ideas. Our former approach is just to implement the project. But this has transformed because of the consciousness on our part to help them organize and establish an active organization. We then shifted our approach as partner organization. I do not know if this explanation is good enough. These are the things that I think helped us in our work with the community.



## Right to Housing and Social Protection

# The Bamboo House as a Pathway to Alternative Living: One Architect's Experience

## The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** The bamboo house is the quintessential exemplar of peoples' architecture in the Philippines. It has existed for at least 2,300 years and survives to this day for several reasons: it is eminently suited to the tropical climate of the Philippines, being cool in summer and resilient in the face of seasonal typhoons and other natural calamities; it is relatively inexpensive and sustainable because bamboo can be cultivated if land is available; it can be built by the people themselves with simple tools and traditional construction techniques that are easily learned; it compares favorably with more conventional building materials in terms of strength and durability if properly harvested and treated.



According to Fernando Zialcita, Ph.D., one of the country's foremost anthropologists, traditional bamboo architecture has existed in the Philippines for at least 2,300 years.

Rosario stated, “To flourish, bamboo has to be planted by man and was done so by our forefathers. And through vernacular architecture, I can contend that building with bamboo is actually embedded in the Filipino’s DNA.” Knowledge in designing and working with bamboo has been passed down through generations in an oral tradition that has manifested itself as vernacular or “People’s Architecture.” Through trial and error, the design of the bamboo house has evolved into forms that are best suited for the Philippine climate, unpredictable weather patterns, social and cultural norms, and aesthetic sense. Bamboo fulfills all the criteria for sustainability; even on subsoil, bamboo grows quickly and reforests, locks carbon, registers negative carbon footprinting, is totally recyclable, and goes back to the earth. Rosario believes that when

bamboo invokes people's tradition, the bamboo structures become more economical.

According to the leading bamboo botanist expert Elizabeth Widjaja of Indonesia, bamboo species around the world number to 1,030 and Southeast Asian bamboos are about 203 species. The Philippines currently has reduced its bamboo resources to 100,000 hectares from 4 million hectares at the turn of the century. However, she believes that reforestation is possible, as witnessed in the forests of Maasin, Iloilo. Through political will, Maasin was able to plant more bamboo and it now numbers to 9,000 today from 6,000 15 years ago. The leadership attracts a lot of bamboo enthusiasts and government initiatives which can help in flourishing the market for bamboo harvest.

Rosario explained how to source bamboo to prevent irresponsible sourcing of bamboo that contributes to this significant decrease in land area with bamboo. She then proceeded to explain the process of properly harvesting bamboo and presented examples of structures made of bamboo which she has worked on. With her projects, she realized that bamboo is stronger than concrete in compressive strength and stronger than steel in tensile strength. She believes that bamboo is not just a survival material, but more; and that bamboo architecture can definitely revolutionize housing.

Bamboo has gained more and more acceptance in mainstream architecture as a building material. More and more architects in the Philippines and in other Southeast Asian countries are integrating bamboo into their designs. This is especially true in resort architecture where bamboo blends well with tropical architectural models. Today, bamboo architecture is part of an alternative lifestyle. We must realize that bamboo architecture has been around for centuries and survives to this day because it is wholly appropriate to our way of life and our environment, then it is possible that a paradigm shift will occur, and what was once alternative will become mainstream.

## The Urban Poor Struggle for On-Site Development: ASAMBA Experience

### FLORA ASSIDAO-SANTOS

Alyansa ng Maralita sa Baesa (Alliance of the Poor in Baesa) ASAMBA–Sanlakas  
Metro Manila, The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** The struggle of more than 500 displaced urban poor families from Sitio Mendez, Brgy. Baesa organized under ASAMBA–Sanlakas has resulted in their return to their community under an on-site, in-city relocation supported by the Quezon City Government. The families camped out for one and a half months at the Quezon City Hall, staged daily protest actions, held lobby activities and regular dialogues with city officials, and won the broad support of various sectors including the religious and local officials. This resulted in their return to Sitio Mendez marked by the more than 6-kilometer Martsa ng Tagumpay (March of Success) which was participated in by 5,000 urban poor. The “victory” of Sitio Mendez was claimed as a victory by the urban poor sector in their fight for land tenure. Nevertheless, the families have been continuously subjected to illegal demolition and eviction.



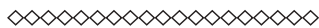
Flora presented Sitio Mendez, Quezon City of circa 80s and 90s as the face of poverty where poor people reside in a 6.2-hectare land owned by the Aranetas. Their main sources of income are vegetable and *palay* (rice) farming, employment in the garments industry, and construction industries. Then President Ferdinand Marcos declared Sitio Mendez as an Area for Priority Development (APD). The settlers organized under San Martin de Porres Homeowners Association, Inc. in the early 80s. The first tripartite agreement had 243 family-beneficiaries under Quezon City (QC) Mayor Adelina Rodriguez, but no relocation was made. The second tripartite agreement had 199 family-beneficiaries under QC Mayor Brigido Simon. Amortizations were paid to Araneta, but there were again no relocations. Instead, there has been a series of demolitions from 1991 to 1997.

Flora, as the community organizer, identified the following tactics in their urban poor struggle for on-site development: camp out and vigil at the Quezon City Hall of more than 500 families for more than one and half months; lobbying the City Council for a resolution authorizing the City Mayor to purchase the lot in favor of the settlers; lobbying for the conduct of a congressional inquiry; series of picket, mass actions, and assemblies; human barricade around QC City and Sitio Mendez; media advocacy by tapping support of tri-media (television, radio, and print); negotiations with the Quezon City Government and Araneta (the landowner) for land acquisition, and Habitat International for the housing construction; winning broad mass support from church groups, NGOs, other Peoples' Organization; daily membership assemblies

and tactic sessions with leaders; and massive propaganda materials distribution.

Homeowners Association and Day Care Centers are established and are efficient. Most community members have acquired a land title and have paid the house with complete facilities. ASAMBA is managing its own livelihood project and cooperative. Flora claimed that the victory of ASAMBA reflects the victory of all urban poor. The combination of tactics they have used has also been replicated in other communities having the same struggle. However, the struggle should also go beyond housing to political, social, and environmental issues because the vision should not only be for the community, but for the society. Currently, those who were part of ASAMBA's struggle still continue their activism.

ASAMBA realized that unity and active, informed involvement of affected residents are key elements in the success of the struggle. Consistent and sustained consolidated activities are crucial in boosting the morale of the affected community. There should be careful and methodical planning and execution of plans. There should be close collaboration with partner movements, church groups, NGOs and POs as well as media and government allies. Organizing the struggle is equally important. This is where the role of bigger organizations like Sanlakas comes to play.



## The People's Plan: Experience of the Informal Sector Living in Danger Zone

**ENRIQUE E. VILLANUEVA**

Institute for Popular Democracy  
The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** The National Housing Authority (NHA) is building more than 100,000 socialized housing units off-city for informal settlers in danger zones, but only 30,000 families have so far relocated to these resettlement sites. The settlers resisted and pushed for "the people's plans," a proposal that they will design, build, and manage the resettlement sites themselves. Relocation to off-city resettlement sites is the option least preferred by the urban poor mainly due to the lack of access to water, power, and basic social services; lack of access to jobs; and high transportation costs to access livelihood opportunities in the cities.



According to the 2017 World Bank Philippines Urbanization Review, current statistics reveals that the Philippines has a total of 2.2 million informal settlers. More than half of it (1.3 million) are in Metro Manila and 40 percent of them are in areas identified as danger zones.

Enrique explained that in response to this urban housing problem, the NHA builds 100,000 socialized housing units in off-site resettlements only to be resisted by the urban poor themselves due to the lack of access to water, power, and basic social services; lack of access to jobs; and high transportation costs in order to access livelihood opportunities in the cities. More importantly, the poor are pushing for a policy instead that allows them to design, build, and manage their own settlement, aptly called “the People’s Plan.”

Kilos Maralita organized informal settlers living along the waterways and danger zones. Large sub-city and inter-city coalitions were formed, coalescing in marches to support the “people’s plans” and oppose NHA relocation policy. However, NHA did not grant this, claiming that they have already spent the allotted Php50 million budget. With constant pressure on the government, 10,477 informal settler families from danger zones in 14 Kilos Maralita-affiliated associations have successfully secured financing approval for their in-city and near-city housing projects while 17,343 families in 22 Kilos Maralita-affiliated associations with fully prepared proposals are looking for financing. Around 5,000 more are in the process of completing their housing project plans, while there are more than 32,000 families resisting the NHA relocation policy by developing their own housing projects.

## Housing and Social Protection

### JUMNONG NUPAN

People’s Movement for Just Society (P-MOVE)  
Thailand

**ABSTRACT** P-MOVE is a coalition of different sectors of Thai civil society who are fighting for their right to own land. Most of its members come from the rural and urban poor communities across the country. Despite the strong presence of the military in Thai politics, P-MOVE has recently held a huge mobilization in Bangkok for land rights. Members of P-MOVE have been invited by the Thai government in different meetings to address their situation.



Jumnong explained that his organization has helped urban poor dwellers in Bangkok secure their relocation within the city. It has also helped communities purchase the property which gave them a sense of ownership over the land that they fought for as a collective.

The People’s Movement for Just Society or P-MOVE is comprised of different members from different networks. Its strategies include: supporting and creating a democratic society by de-legitimizing the powers of authoritarian government; capacity building for leaders and



members and its successors including women and youth; collecting and analyzing of databases for the movement; empowerment of community-based land management by supporting community rights on lands and natural resource management (community land title); negotiation with state power on human rights violation, advocacy on land law and policy; and networking and alliance building through expanding to other networks and raising public awareness on land rights and habitat issues.

Some of P-MOVE's notable achievements so far are the appointing of their Resolution Committee comprised of nine (9) sub-committees and committee at the provincial levels, Legal Aid Fund Act of 2015, the Land Bank Administration Institute (Public Organization), and the Collective Housing Program. The next steps that they aim to pursue are policy recommendation and implication for political parties, civil governments after the next national election, and people's initiative on the land law and policy.

The Baan Mankong Program started in 2003 where their original target of 1,500 houses actually reached 200,000 houses. Jumnong explained the situation and demographics of the urban poor in Bangkok, how they re-blocked the houses to have a more organized settlement arrangement, practiced land sharing, relocation and reconstruction, as well as shifted from using informal building materials to concrete houses. This program was able to accomplish numerous projects not only in Bangkok but all over Thailand.



## Social Protection: Human and Democratic Response to Crisis – Advancing Transformative Social Protection

**MARIS DELA CRUZ CARDENAS**

Network for Transformative Social Protection–Asia

**ABSTRACT** Addressing widespread poverty and inequality in the Philippines has consistently been in the government's development agenda. Yet for decades, despite poverty-reduction programs, the number of people in precarious living conditions has remained high, if not increased—without regular jobs or livelihoods, receiving poverty-level income, hungry, lacking access to essential social services, and without social security in times of contingencies. Vulnerable groups have thus long been struggling to break free from intergenerational poverty, to get protection from falling into poverty, and to realize their right to a life of dignity. The “ninety-nine percent” in society can be vulnerable to the harmful impacts of continuing global economic and ecological crises. Together with other human rights and social justice activists, marginalized groups in the country believe that pursuing transformative social protection can be a tool for gaining political, social, and economic power to change their lives and achieving social justice—from poverty and exclusion to a life of dignity for all. In 2010,





## Open Forum

**Maria Loretha (Perhimpunan Petani Sorgum untuk Kedaulatan Pangan, Indonesia):** I want to share something in relation to the presentation about bamboo because in Flores, there are a lot of bamboo and my house is made of bamboo. We have local wisdom in planting and cutting bamboo. We do not use any chemicals. After harvesting the soft bamboo, you float them at sea for one week. Thereafter, you put it in smoke.

**Khampoui Saythalat (Participatory Development Training Center (PADETC), Laos):** In Laos, we have such vast areas of bamboo but the people do not really know how to use them. We believe that bamboo is easily damaged by termites or wind or others. Therefore, we just cut the taller ones and export them. So, this is kind of a promotional lifestyle and housing. Now we risk losing our bamboo plants. How do we prevent this kind of lifestyle we have now?

**Rosario Encarnacion Tan (The Philippines):** What I can say or contribute to this is that, I think, if you can network, for example, with people in Indonesia and Thailand to tell people in your country about bamboos. Even in the Philippines, we have the same problem. Vietnam is sort of organized in terms of how they do the bamboo.

We have that thinking that bamboo houses are low-quality, but not so in Vietnam and not so in Indonesia, especially. Now, she (Maria Loretha) was saying that she lives in a bamboo house? That is really fantastic. Now, we saw that the award-winning house of this 23-year old Filipino who won over 1,200 entries all over the world is a bamboo house. The thing is, the NHA (National Housing Authority) is now directed to build 500,000 of this. Whether it would work or not is a big question. But now, this man has £50,000 or Php 3 million to build that house and to show that it can work.

To answer your question, I think what should happen is you can show the examples from the neighbouring countries which is Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam. I remember when I visited Vietnam, we were exporting bamboo houses one-half or one-third the cost of how we were exporting bamboo houses. In the Philippines, when you live in bamboo houses, one-half of us says it is a good thing and the other half says it is a very poor thing. So, maybe we have the same problem as Laos. We live in houses, but we look at it as a poor thing, but not in Indonesia. The nicest part is this young man who won the contest can do it for PHP5,000/square meter, so NHA is really forced to look at him because he can also build the house in just five days. And I think this is where it is crucial that we help each other.

**Karl Hapal (Co-convenor, UP CIDS Program on Alternative Development):** For P-MOVE, it seems that, in Thailand, land is an



issue. Do people in general not have land? And what is the difference of the land issue in an urban setting versus rural setting? Do you still have problems with regard to agrarian reform?

**Don Tajaroensuk (People's Empowerment Foundation, Thailand; translating Jumnong Nupan's statement):** Actually, he is saying that the poor people in the city and those outside the city have different strategies to solve the problem. Solving the problem outside the city is quite easier because they have big areas of land. So, it is really easier to organize the land. Inside the city, there are many restrictions.

**Karl Hapal:** So, in rural areas, is it for only housing or also for agrarian reform?

**Don Tajaroensuk (translating Jumnong Nupan's statement):** It is not only housing because they also try to aim for job opportunities both inside and outside the city.

**Karl Hapal (translating Alicia Teves' statement):** What she said was that she is proud of the Thai urban poor because even if you know that the land is not yours, you still fight for it and you are able to succeed in some ways to acquire the land. However, in their case, they know that since time immemorial, their ancestral land is there. Even if they know that it is theirs, they are still removed or dislocated from their ancestral land. What they want as IPs is not to be disturbed. They know that if there is no land, if there is no mountain, there will be no more IPs. "Our life is simple. We cannot live like you. You dislocate us. Now, what do we do?"

**(Translating Enrique Villanueva's statement):** There was nothing that the government has done to the advantage of the IPs. In fact, the urban poor must pay for the housing that they receive. The point of removing the urban poor from the lands that they occupy is to prevent the situation that could heighten their vulnerabilities. And this is indicated in our law and we advocate for it. Regarding the bamboo housing, he thinks that this is a good idea but we must not trust the NHA. Instead, we should look into the urban poor organizations that might need it. It is difficult if the NHA would simply build bamboo houses and we would just relocate people there. It might also be updated in the city because we need medium-rise buildings and there might be limitations with bamboo.

## Solidarity Night

07:50 PM

The second day of the conference was concluded by a Solidarity Night.

# Day Three

November 29, 2018

## Facilitators:

Venarica B. Papa (UP College of Social Work and Community Development) and Matt Wamil



## Introductory Activity

09:00 AM

To start the third day, Matt introduced a morning exercise.

## PANEL 8

# Alternative Pedagogy

November 29, 2018 • 09:30 AM

## Education for Compassion: From the Academe to a Movement for Caring Spaces

**PROF. REMEDIOS NALUNDASAN-ABIJAN, Ph.D.**

World Council for Curriculum and Instruction  
Manila, The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** This paper discusses my initiative for education for compassion through community engagement as an integral part of my course program in the graduate school of education. My academic approach for addressing development issues in the courses that I teach is reaching out to the marginalized sectors of our society and leaving no one behind. With the multiplier effect of the volunteers' work, we could only imagine how many lives have been transformed at different levels. The feedback from both the volunteers (the givers) and the beneficiaries (the given) is overwhelmingly life-transforming. Indeed, this educational practice is becoming a transformative praxis for changing lives—both for community dwellers and for young professionals who have the capacity to lead and give. From this experiential learning beyond the classroom, I have evolved an emerging people's movement I aptly call ACAPMO Caring Spaces. The acronym stands for "Accompanying a People's Movement" for compassion. I have defined the framework of this movement based on what my students and I have realized from our community engagements in the last eight years. Basically, we realized that each of us has the capacity to give and we have the innate desire to uplift our less fortunate brothers and sisters in so many ways not only materially but also socially, emotionally, and spiritually.



Remedios presented an alternative pedagogy which she practices to enhance the graduate school curriculum in teacher education by tapping the professional expertise of graduate students to deliver community engagement services using the identified targets of the UN's MDG 2015 and SDG 2030. Teaching educational leaders in integrating research, action, and experience through student-led collaborative efforts can be achieved by an alternative pedagogy. She initiated the Project I4CE



(Initiative for Community Engagement) as an alternative strategy where she sends her graduate students in groups to different marginalized communities. An approach which complements conventional teaching, I4CE promotes education for wholeness and balancing the brain and emotion. It also builds on the principles and processes of education for wholeness and connectedness.

She believes in moving beyond the classroom as learning becomes more meaningful in the real world, saying “*Lumabas kayo, kasi dun ang tunay na pag-aaral.* (You have to go out where genuine learning can be experienced.),” as she identified the classroom as often a contrived reality where learners are held hostage. Community engagements are meant to deepen the understanding of the global issues relating to development and how it affects local communities.

The primary goals of the project are to sensitize the learners to the plight of community dwellers who are marginalized by economic or cultural issues and to foster education for wholeness by using a different learning process of intellectual engagement in classroom through AIC (Awareness, Involvement, and Commitment).

ACAPMO or Accompanying a People’s Movement is where volunteers contribute in creating caring spaces: warm, loving, and caring hugs to poor families from pre-selected marginalized communities through a one-day program experience of social, spiritual, physical, and cognitive nourishment. The main objective is to allow both the teachers and volunteers to experience and demonstrate compassion as an act of duty through socialization, conducting empowering seminars to deliver knowledge, skills and attitudes, gift-giving, and feeding programs.

## Rural Internship Training Programme

**ANDREW AERIA, Ph.D.**

ARENA, NTFP EP Malaysia, and CIVICA Research  
Malaysia

**ABSTRACT** The Rural Internship Training Programme (RITP) began as a response to the overly market-oriented teaching programmes of Malaysian universities which presently focus on preparing students of all academic disciplines to serve the market and to be servile to market values. Started in 2015, the RITP aims to expose social science students to the diversity of livelihoods, cultures, and value systems in rural Sarawak as an alternative to the market. It also trains students to be good social science researchers in the real world even as it aims to develop a sense of empathy, solidarity, and belonging between the students and the rural communities that they live with for a full eight (8) weeks of their internship. Upon graduation, the RITP student-interns are also channeled towards joining NGOs working with marginalized peoples.



As a professor at the Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Andrew questioned, “What are we training social science students for?” He taught the Rural Internship Training Programme to nurture social science students to respond to real social issues instead of the market. The programme’s aims are to expose and immerse social science students in the diversity of non-market livelihoods, cultures, value systems and living environments; to train students to be good social science researchers in the real world having a sense of empathy, solidarity, and belonging with marginalized communities; to channel students towards NGOs working with marginalized people; and to help students to get in touch with themselves and realize different “alternative” values.

Particularly, the rural internship is a 12-week immersion experience in social realities where students live in a very remote village in Sarawak, far away from their comfort zones and technology access such as wifi and phone signals.

During their internship, they have to learn the language of the people through their engagements and to research and document the village's demography, food culture, flora and fauna, cultural resources, environmental resources, language, genealogy, among others. Their output will have to be written in their notebook or daily journal. As a result, most of his students who took the rural internship programme have gained a new perspective in life, and most are now working for NGOs.



## Education for Sustainable Development: Grassroots Education for Young Civic Groups

**KHAMPHOUI SAYTHALAT**

Participatory Development Training Center (PADETC)  
Laos

**ABSTRACT** The mission is to build Lao society into becoming a holistic learning society through an integrated development process with the participation of all civic sectors that will support Laos in becoming a sustainable and livable country. With this, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a key concept which elaborates that learning is a lifelong process, that is, it does not only occur in schools or at school age. Rather, learning should be in a variety of places from different people—at school, at home, and in the community.

In all projects, the young people are involved first to learn, then to participate, and then to lead. Youth volunteers who are grouped into teams are trained with basic community development concepts, problem identification and analysis, mobilization skills, and leadership skills. Learning is then applied through school and community activities.



The Participatory Development Training Center (PADETC) was formally established as an official training institution in 1992. From 1996, when PADETC was founded, until 2008, it streamlined its work with human resource development for sustainable development and poverty reduction. Its founder Sombath Somphone was a recipient of the 2005 Ramon Magsaysay Award in the Philippines. From 2009-2016, PADETC started organizational change by engaging in academic collaborations with different universities in different countries and by transforming learning centers into a college.

Laos is a country with a small population of 7 million and a small economy resulting in poorly developed infrastructures surrounded by countries with much larger population and economies. Laos' economic base is mainly community-based subsistence agriculture. Given this situation, PADETC committed to make unique and distinctive contributions to the development of Laos through collaboration with other organizations, service delivery, and leadership with the aim of balancing culture, environment, and the economy.

PADETC initiates projects in collaboration with the European Union-funded international NGOs such as Oxfam, Helvetas, and Consortium. It runs a 4-month course on Capacity Development where the cycle of learning is used to guide the trainer in all pedagogical consultations and meetings. The learning process is then transferred to the academe for research. On the other hand, the academic curriculum, will likewise base its knowledge on practices on the ground. Theory,

practice, and participation are upheld. Thereafter, all learning feedbacks will be consolidated in a Participatory Action Research (PAR) and document findings in communities.

However, PADETC still faces challenges in integrating field practice in mainstream academic curriculum. Khamphoui stated that, “I’m not yet convinced by the new findings generated by these students through field surveys that this could contribute to mainstream education.” It requires further exploration and longer cooperation between academic institutions and civic groups through a better integration of theory and practices. Long-term support for targeted schools and communities is critical and needed.

The opportunities seen so far are new ways of inclusive collaboration with development stakeholders that can contribute to sustainable development. PADETC has initiated the cooperation with Busan University and National University of Laos (NUoL) to develop academic student exchange projects.

Khamphoui shared that, “Education is [a] critical component of human development worldwide. It strengthens people’s creativity and problem solving skills that are [an] important part [in] the ability to successfully improve the quality of life.”





## An Alternative Learning Framework: Women-led, Community-Owned Lifelong Learning of PINASAMA and Other SPELL Members

**RAQUEL CASTILLO**

Sustainability and Participation thru Education and Lifelong Learning  
(SPELL)  
The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** As an Alternative Concept of People's Capacity Development, SPELL is a coming together of communities of learning that continuously sharpen thinking on what it means and what it will take to have inclusive lifelong learning and quality education in a globalized and climate-challenged 21st century and beyond, resisting the concept of Human Capital Development. To contribute to the lifelong learning, there is a joint SPELL-Piglas Kababaihan-PINASAMA ECCD knowledge sharing and materials development for preschool teachers. Lifelong learning from womb to tomb posits that education walks on two legs, everyone is a teacher, and there must be a focus on People's Capacity Development. SPELL's aim is "lifelong learning towards a culture of solidarity and resistance!"



Members of the Sustainability and Participation thru Education and Lifelong Learning (SPELL) shared their stories and experiences on their urban poor struggles throughout the years. Raquel presented a photo of Quezon City which showed the areas of the most populous villages in the Philippines. The beginnings of SPELL are rooted in urban poor struggles: housing and demolitions, community's need for a safe place for their children during mass actions, and experiential learning of mothers to teach. In 1986, they were federated as PINASAMA by the children of the mass leaders. They grew from having 5 to 20 daycare centers. They believe in the journey to lifelong learning where students, teachers, and even mothers learn and where special children can be mainstreamed. They also provide haven to victim-survivors of Violence Against Women (VAW) through para-legal non-formal learning. They organize the Youth for Safe Cities to attend to the gap in the life cycle approach. The long-term aim is "having communities of lifelong learning."

Raquel shared that SPELL is now running in its 32nd year. It has parents' active involvement. Teachers are organic community members who practice participatory decision making such as in determining socialized tuition. PINASAMA becomes a CSO that provides organizing element.

Their alternative pedagogy is founded on choosing what the community wants/needs. SPELL applies its own quality education standards versus the prescription of government institutions such as the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Social Welfare





student, “You want to drop the course right now or you want to go back to the community and re-study what you are telling me about?” This is because five months for us is not enough to say that we have empowered the people. In fact, the learning is two-way. People may be learning from us, but we learn more from them. If we want to see these alternative practices succeed, we do not have the monopoly of expertise, we do not have the monopoly of knowledge.

**Al Obre:** They are identifying members of the community as part of the learning process of the students, but Andrew, you said there is no exact takeaway for the community. So, is this a defined goal, that the people in the community consciously accept their role in the learning process of the students? In that case, how has this helped the growth of the community? Because I think, as you said, we can get a lot of things in the community, but it is important for them to realize that they have this role in the learning process of the students.

**Andrew Aeria:** The answer is there is no defined role of the community. The students stay there in the community and tell them they want to learn. Individuals have taken on the role by saying, “I’m going to be your supervisor.” The only role of the community is to teach them how they live, their language. All do what they usually do. And I expect the students to do everything to repeat after them.

**Aimee Santos:** In all the stories, where are the men? What is the role of the men in all these? What kind of learning is also being changed in terms of, for example, addressing Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) and addressing the special children’s concern? But in our culture, all these are generally taken care of by the women; the men are not there. So, being part of changing alternatives, how was this addressed? Is an alternative a way to radicalize learning outside of the standard? Meaning, how do you say that what you are imparting with children is actually, in a way, the right direction for countering the tales of society?

**Raquel Castillo (Sustainability and Participation thru Education and Lifelong Learning (SPELL), The Philippines):** Where are the men? I think half of our women are already widows. I do not know. Maybe you can tell us. Some of them can just be ordinary members of the community. And we do not attempt. I think this motherhood intervention cannot attempt to take on all the challenges and different issues of the social relations in the community and the roles of different community members. We have to understand that even the community itself needs to understand how they would be changing on a higher level. But these would be, as I said, one side on resisting the dominant part of the human capital development that would also include the men.

**Venarica Papa:** I would like to highlight three main points of this session. I think the language will be taught as one—that education would

be a point to pursue alternative strategies in terms of developing the practices, model building, and disseminating the information and knowledge. And as such, there is a need for us to maximize the available mechanisms and institutions that provide such spaces. You also have to appropriate resources. There are resources available, an entire channel to where they are most needed. Secondly, we assert that education is a right. So, we keep asserting. We still demand it to the duty-bearers. The third point and the most important is we do not stop at assertion. We do not stop at complaining. We take active roles and this was clear in the case study of Raquel.

## PANEL 9

# Solidarity Economy (2)

November 29, 2018 · 01:00 PM



## Renewed Change and Rise of Gaya-Gaya Sewers

### GAYA-GAYA SEWERS

Bulacan, The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** The Gaya-Gaya Sewers is a similar formation to Igting. It was founded in 2015. The group has mothers in Gaya-Gaya as its main members pursuing sewing as a business. Like their counterparts from Igting, the mothers of Gaya-Gaya were once relocatees. They also experienced the adverse living conditions in the relocation site. Most recount the days when there was no electricity, water, and any livelihood opportunities. While the Gaya-Gaya Sewers has established their business, it has continually faced challenges in terms of making its enterprise viable. Among the issues that the group encountered was the lack of market access or unfavorable business deals and the lack of participation from its members. Currently, the members of Gaya-Gaya sewers are pursuing the consolidation and development of their group by using techniques drawn from community organizing. In the future, the members of Gaya-Gaya sewers aim to grow and sustain their business to reach other mothers and help their community.



Milagros Parayo, a member and supervisor of the Gaya-Gaya Sewing Center spoke on behalf of the Gaya-Gaya Sewers. She shared their story of how most of the community members originated from an urban poor settlement along BIR road in Quezon City but were displaced due to a road widening project of the government. When they were relocated in Towerville, government only provided short-term support: groceries and their housing units. Thereafter, more issues surfaced and became prominent: lack of social services, political work, and income opportunities. Jiji Gevero expressed that life in the relocation site is even worse than what they had before. In an attempt to address their needs, government and NGOs provided them livelihood trainings.

The Gaya-Gaya Sewing Center is a product of CAMP Asia Inc.'s Livelihood Program. It supported the community by donating sewing

machines and a livelihood center. The women took TESDA Dressmaking Training in 2015 before establishing a social enterprise or a *panlipunang negosyo*, similar to Igting. The sewing center is conveniently located inside Towerville Relocation Site which benefits the women as it serves as their nearby source of income. The sewing center initially started with 20 trained mothers. The organizing process was initiated in 2015. Their first client was a sub-contractor that was referred to them by Igting. They hired an external Production Supervisor, one who had an experience in the sewing factory. That same year, their expectations were not met. There was low motivation among the sewers to strengthen their organization. Having false hopes, production slowed down and they only had a low weekly income of PHP250. The number of sewers consequently decreased from 20 to 5 women. For the remaining sewers, they became heavily focused on the production. Some even complained that it seemed like working in a factory. Others perceived that some sewers only thought about sewing and income. They are not interested in forming an organization because they cannot earn from it. Later, the sewers realized that it was not a good idea to hire a production supervisor.

To help strengthen the Gaya-Gaya sewers, students from the UP CSWCD served as facilitators of capacity building workshops which covered personal and organizational development. As a people-to-people strategy, Igting co-facilitated these workshops through sharing of their experiences and learnings and through mentoring and coaching them particularly on operations and products. Institutions such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the local government of San Jose del Monte, and the UP ISSI gave technical trainings such as (1) machine Repair and Maintenance, (2) Special Machine Operation, and (3) various aspects of Business Management.

They follow the process of community organizing: *pagkamulat at pakikilahok* (understanding poverty in the context of Towerville); *pakikipag-kapwa at pakikisama* (awareness of one's knowledge, skills, and attitude in order to appropriately locate oneself in the organization); *pagsasamahan* (appreciation of SE-CO-CD (Social Enterprise-Community Organizing-Community Development) by adhering to the principles of collectivism, accountability, and ownership); and *pagtatasa ng kakayahang mamuno* (enhancing leadership capacity through task force formation/committee system).

The sewers' statement at the end of their presentation reads, "We may be poor but we can do something through our collective efforts to alleviate our situation. We may not have thousands or millions but through our organization, we have a vision of a full life."



## Slow Food as Medicine: A Case Study on Alternative Development Practices in Southeast Asia

**ESPERANZA SANTOS**

Trimona Multi-Purpose Cooperative  
The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** Addressing the prevailing lack of access to healthy, organic, and safe food and health problems associated with unhealthy eating and lifestyle, TriMona Multi-Purpose Cooperative (TMPC) was formed in 2007 by a group of activists coming from three NGOs—Peoples’ Global Exchange (PGX), Integrated Pastoral Development Initiative (IPDI), and Kaalagad—to create a dream space of shared resources and passion for healthy food and lifestyle, fair food production and trade, and slow food. For the past eleven years, TriMona Healthy Dining, now rebranded as TriMona Co-op Café (TCC), located in an area in Quezon City where many NGOs hold their offices, has been offering a healthy menu of fresh, organic, and natural food without artificial flavoring and synthetic taste enhancers to the public. It is also a favorite venue for wellness events, parties, and meetings of friends and colleagues in the development field. For the past year, in order to address the challenge of sustainability and growth, the cooperative has opened its membership to all Filipino citizens who are interested in healthy lifestyle, attracting many new members who are inspired by the living example of the original members who exude good health even without maintenance medications in their senior years.



The Trimona Multi-Purpose Cooperative’s (TMPC) perceived the following problems: lack of access to healthy, organic, and safe food, and at the same time, the proliferation of health problems. Given this situation, Trimona’s response is a dream space of shared resources, expertise, and passion for healthy food and lifestyle, fair food production and trade, and slow food tradition. In 2007, TMPC established the TriMona Healthy Dining in Quezon City. It is set up by activists from NGOs and offers a healthy menu of fresh, organic, and natural food without artificial flavoring and synthetic taste enhancers. After 10 years, in 2017, they have rebranded the TriMona Healthy Dining to TriMona Co-op Café. It easily became a favorite venue for wellness events, parties, and meetings of friends and colleagues in the development field and as a preferred caterer of healthy food.

To address the challenge of sustainability and growth, TMPC opened its membership to all Filipino citizens interested in healthy lifestyle, attracting many new members inspired by the example of the original members. TriMona (a pun for “Try *mo na!*,” meaning “You try it!”) is a battle cry for Slow Food as Medicine, an alternative lifestyle based on food as medicine, slow food, alternative healing, and fair production and trade. The café is a melting pot—a hub for these advocacies, where healers, artists, development workers, health enthusiasts, and environmental lovers converge.

TriMona tries to address the very basic human rights—Right to Food and Right to Health in the midst of limited access to healthy, organic and safe food, proliferation of diseases and health problems associated with unhealthy eating and lifestyle, doubtful efficacy and exorbitant cost of medical treatments, and lack of awareness of food as medicine and alternative healing. TriMona argues that the current food culture is dominated by capitalists, the biggest players being agro-chemical and big pharmaceutical companies. Government enables capitalists' foothold by not providing adequate support to consumers. Therefore, Esperanza explained that, "to claim our rights, we challenge the dominant capitalist food culture and ultimately, TCC is our venue and TMPC is our means."

TriMona has so far conducted the following activities to push for its agenda: setting up a healthy dining restaurant; organized a cooperative in 2008 to register the restaurant business; created a menu of home-cooked healthy food following slow food principles (fresh, local, and made from natural ingredients); menu innovations to appeal to a wider market; advanced the advocacy by drafting a manifesto and walking the talk; catered for various events and provided food delivery services; co-sponsored advocacies of various groups who use the restaurant as venue; convened a pool of healers and organized healing sessions; sponsored health seminars by alternative health practitioners/researchers; opened the membership of the cooperative to everyone interested; strategized on moving forward; updated the vision, mission, and goals; and launched more services and renovated the space, with more share capital from new members.

From a small capital of PHP150k in 2007, TMPC's assets and net worth has doubled as they expanded their regular clientele beyond CSOs and activists. Additionally, TCC became a hub of alternative healing, a wellness circle, where most of the old members, who are now senior citizens, remain healthy and strong. TMPC's advocacy gained ground with the continuing operation of TCC, inspiring and influencing people to adopt a healthy lifestyle. It is however inevitable that the cooperative faces challenges such as convincing members and restaurant staff to walk the talk, sustaining our influence on advocates/development workers to walk the talk, offering a fully organic menu while keeping the prices affordable, lack of business background among co-op leaders, and mobilizing co-op leadership to take a more active role.

The cooperative employs an alternative development approach that is: participatory, endogenous (development from within our culture), self-sufficient, and objectives-oriented. TriMona has the potential for effecting change by building a consumer movement towards a critical mass for Slow Food as Medicine. Its policy recommendation is to have an integrated framework for development that addresses lack of access to organic, natural, and safe food. It dreams of transforming itself into a more robust learning organization with new generation of advocates.





## Sustainable Economy that Starts from the Local Level – Challenge and Opportunity

### Sustainable Economy and TSP Movement: From, By, and For the Working People

**SASTRO MARUF**

Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia–KPRI (Confederation of Indonesia Peoples Movement in Indonesia)  
Indonesia

**ABSTRACT** KPRI or Confederation of Indonesia Peoples Movement is a national organization consisting of federations of workers, peasants, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, urban poor, and women. It adheres to the concept of solidarity economy which is rooted from the local level where the supply chain of products is independent and free from the dictates of the global capitalist economy. This concept is important for KPRI as Indonesia continues to import agricultural products that are significant to their identity. For many years, KPRI implements different projects and conducts research on economic solidarity and transformative social protection across Indonesia.



Capitalism dominates and controls. It has grown and controlled not only the state, but also the market, as well as the working people, contributing to the mutation of the political elite. Although capitalism has always been hit by various crises, neo-liberalism has become the savior of capitalism for economic development. The impact is on the working people who continue to be an object of exploitation, as well as on natural resources/environment, social, and cultural. There is no balancing force that enables to control the dominance of capitalist regime.

Sastro traced back how the capitalist system was introduced in Indonesia, which began from the Colonial Period, Old Order from 1945-1965, to the New Order in 1967-1998. It has triggered the multi-dimensional crisis between 1965 and 1997 through the social, economic, political, and cultural aspects. Now, there is a Masterplan for Acceleration and Expansion of Indonesia's Economic Development (2nd New Order). With capitalism dominating Indonesia's production, it massively oppresses and exploits the working people and the natural resources/environment resulting to the widening of inequality between the rich and the poor.

The Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia or KPRI aims to organize and develop working people in terms of economy, politics, social, and culture. Its vision is to actualize a just, egalitarian, and prosperous society through the economy, politics, and transformative social protection. KPRI believes that mass organizations should realize their historical struggle and re-organize their resistance. With that conviction, KPRI needs awareness and knowledge on organizing people



and community and managing organization, database of members, communities and networks, regeneration and sustainable leadership, and technology and information. KPRI aims for the people to “consume what they produce and produce what they consume.”

KPRI is an institutional transformation of PERGERAKAN in its 3rd Congress in Bandung. PERGERAKAN is the abbreviation of Perhimpunan Penggerak Advokasi Kerakyatan (People-Centered Advocacy Organization for Social Justice). PERGERAKAN was founded as a membership-based organization in 2003 and held its first Congress in 2005 in Bali, attended by CSOs, NGOs, and other social movement actors. The organization was initiated in a process from 1999 to 2002 through a series of researches, assessments, educational efforts, and consolidation meetings both at national and regional levels. KPRI members are 70 unions or people's organizations in 22 provinces and 125 districts/cities in Indonesia. The organization manages Kedai Kopi KaPe RI—a café located in Jakarta with various products for sale and produced by members.

## Collective Enterprise as a Workplace: A Philippine Case

**BENJAMIN QUIÑONES, JR. Ph.D.**

Asian Solidarity Economy Council (ASEC)/RIPESS Asia  
The Philippines

**ABSTRACT** PK-MPC was a charitable NGO that re-organized into a multipurpose cooperative. The case study highlights the socio-economic model of the cooperative in response to the distressed conditions of poor peasants in Isabela province (Philippines) as results of natural calamities, exploitative practices of landlords and traders, and not so responsible local governance.



Benjamin provided a brief background on the Neoliberal Cycle, stating that “crises are systemic in a capitalist economy” given the growing unemployment rate, worsening labor conditions, widening income gap, increase in poverty levels and the prominence of political repression, and human rights abuse. To counter this, Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) responds to the crisis of the neoliberal economy by organizing and mobilizing labor to create an alternative economy.

The Payoga-Kapatagan Multipurpose Cooperative (PK-MPC) is one case of a peoples' collective enterprise. It is a people's joint socio-economic undertaking for the purpose of addressing their basic needs through an enterprise co-owned and co-managed by many individuals who jointly established it.

Benjamin described how this cooperative as a collective enterprise has become a workplace. It is owned and managed by the poor/marginalized peasants. In that manner, it reconciles or integrates into one person the functions of worker, manager, and owner which capitalism assigns to separate persons. The cooperative harnesses labor power for the transition from inorganic to organic agriculture. It practices socially responsible governance and reconnects with communities. Predominantly owned by the farmers, the cooperative improves and expands the livelihood base of the farmer-members and facilitates their access to social protection services of government agencies. In the process, it transforms landless peasants into rural entrepreneurs.

The Features of the Collective Enterprise are the Five (5) Dimensions of Social Solidarity Economy Enterprise: socially responsible governance, people-centered development, environmental conservation, socio-economic sustainability, and edifying ethical values.

Using the UN SDGs as indicators, socially responsible governance addresses SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). People-centered development focuses on the engagement with stakeholders of the value chain (social impact investors, private business sector, and governmental bodies for social protection services) and addresses SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). Environmental conservation addresses SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). Socio-economic sustainability addresses SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). Finally, edifying ethical values addresses SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

Here are the challenges that PK-MPC faces thus far: inculcation of long-term development perspective and development/access to long-term development finance; fostering greater ideological awareness among members and the CSO community in general on building SSE as an alternative to neoliberal market economy; mapping (identifying SSE stakeholders and actors and their locations, business model, production or services); building synergies and collaborative partnerships among stakeholders and actors who are doing similar activities in the same strategic part of the value chain (producers, financing, logistics, marketing and trading, capacity building, research/advocacy, etc.); continuing studies on socio-economic linkages among collective enterprises and the development of value chains owned and operated by the poor and marginalized.



## Open Forum

**Andrew Aeria (ARENA, NTFP EP Malaysia, and CIVICA Research, Malaysia):** My question is for the last presenter. I recognized you say that they can save the money and put it in the bank. What if the local area has no bank, no savings institution whatsoever?

**Benjamin Quiñones (Asian Solidarity Economy Council (ASEC)/RIPESS Asia, The Philippines):** That is a good question. Actually, we have a project in Malaysia among the indigenous peoples and we have this problem because the data is so bad. So, the organizer, the local council provided the link to the bank located in Kuala Lumpur. This is one way of doing that if there is no bank in the area.

**Flora Assidao-Santos (Alyansa ng Maralita sa Baesa (Alliance of the Poor in Baesa) (ASAMBA)–Sanlakas, The Philippines):** The concept is very good, but I am just concerned about the practice. In our organizing, very often, the problem is sustainability. Establishing an organization and having projects and programs are easy. The next problem is how we can sustain it and the role of the organizer in the organization, especially in a cooperative which involves money. The community is very vulnerable. That can be the reason why a project fails. Even if you give a lot of education, seminars, one big problem is sometimes the funds and capital. Another problem is the credibility of leaders to continue the project. In any cooperative or project, the organizer has to closely guide through value formation and everything.

**Benjamin Quiñones:** I just want to answer the two questions from Tita Flora. How do you generate savings of the poor? My thesis is that the poor can save and I have proven that. In many countries, India, Nepal, Indonesia, even in China, the only thing is the concept: management of savings. Even in Malaysia, I think we gathered the savings from poor people and the result: they have money. Now, how do we make sure that they have money and resources? From what I have seen, those that accept what is here have proper determination. And then, the asset is always under discovery of all the people. It is not only by a person. If it is cared by only one person, then that is very risky. Now, to answer the next question, I think the answer lies in the content, like what Andrew says, and all people from the organization. The only thing that, probably, I would like to consider is because he studies as structure. You go there, write it up. Not to find this and do that. Do not tell them that “this is the way.”

**Venarica Papa (UP College of Social Work and Community Development, The Philippines; translating a question):** She was asking because, right now, we are finishing the process of cooperative planning in the organization. She says they already have the shared capital. She wants to find out if that is different from savings when we refer to cooperative terms.

**Benjamin Quiñones:** Capital is different. Savings is the most important active part. Now, what I suggest to you is that you follow the methodology of recording on what your members can save. Do not start with PHP1,000. Start rather with PHP1 because everybody can save PHP1. If I can save PHP1, I am already included. That is why PHP1 is inclusive and PHP1,000 is not. They can save PHP1 for a week and then line up in the bank for 6 months. From the very start, already break down the partnership with the finance company. Why? Because you are not an institution that corresponds. That is why there is an institution that corresponds. That is his business; your business is something else. You need to partner with them. How do you partner with them? You must show that you have a cash loan. Once you have a cash loan, do not borrow the amount you cannot pay. If you have PHP10,000 savings, you borrow 5,000. If you will pay late, you will have a credit record. Once you have a credit record, they will deduct from you. Now, because you are going to wait for six months, in the meantime, discuss what kind of project you would like to initiate.

**Sastro Maruf (Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia (KPRI), Indonesia):** Are we talking about the alternative to the bank? Well, that is good. Our community now has around 1,500 workers as members and we get money from them—IDR60 million. Every union member has to get IDR20 million. For whom? For the members. Before, the union was wrong, but three years ago, we changed. The credit union is to make members independent. For example, if I buy my house, I will not get credit from the bank, but go to the credit union. But this one must be professionalized. Each local organization has a focus. One on economy, another on advocacy, and another on the production. Now, with a credit union, we have a structure even if just a very small group. I think this one is doable.

**Question:** My question to Ate, why is it that you mentioned that it would be better to also look at the export market? Why is it that a lot that started and tried to bring the products directly to consumers have not really worked that well?

My question to Sastro, in the framework that you used, you mentioned the political, economic, and social protection. In the other frameworks that I have come across, there is always this look at social protection. But what is the definition? Is it just providing essential social services? What about if you are looking at a whole system and you do not have those means for the people?

**Benjamin Quiñones:** My observation is generic because I worked on cooperatives in the 1970s and I noticed that the focus is on the organization. Because their focus is on the organization, you look at their banks. They are leaning on a capitalist corporation. They are positioning themselves to become a major stakeholder and anchor in a neoliberal market economy. In other words, the market economy

has a lot of attraction. Once organizations like this overcome the stage of organizing a start-up, they begin to grow. And if they do not come back to their values, those they resist to, then they are more likely to have issues. And for that reason, it is difficult to build an alternative economy. So this is to blame the organization. I asked them about the economy and they have no answer to that. They do not talk about the economy so this is a problem.

**Sastro Maruf:** I think, our struggle reflects the political and economic struggle. Like a bridge, this is important in social protection. This is not only economic but also political. For example, the people must know how much is the national and local budget for education, health care, resettlement. This is very important because it is a liberal state. For example, using our capital, we built an alternative school in our reclaimed land in the rural area, and we practice how to maintain the school.

I think the bank also has money for social protection. In Indonesia before, social protection is only in the city, for the urban poor and the worker. Social protection is human life cycle and it is very important. Access to life is under social protection. Sorry, I might not have answered your question.

**Question:** Actually, my point is more on your framework. Where does culture and arts come in? Where do all those intangible parts (important but not codified) come in the framework? Social protection is there but it seems closer to economy than we realize. How do we stand by this production, consumption, and everything? Is it actually putting together the resources of the whole country so that allocation will be based on what the people need? Social protection is closer to that. But where are all of these? There are lots of things that we want to consider—the consciousness-raising, changing values to what is needed, changing the ways of working, and thinking that are within this capitalist-neoliberal framework.

**Sastro Maruf:** I think we must look at the tip of the local and national budget. We need to offer education and training to the people on how they can access and gain control over their budget. This one is like political education, including how the budget can support social protection in order to contribute to society and the people. And I think this is not enough.

The tendency is that if the state is in crisis, the people also feel the crisis. One of the criticisms of the social protection concept is the notion of social democracy. Like in many European countries, while they do not exploit the people, their import-export relations with ASEAN countries are questionable.

**Venarica Papa:** There are three points that we would like to highlight. First, before we go to social solidarity economy, we must be clear

where we are getting at. And the message is getting clearer. We will not get it for the purpose of business. Rather, for the purpose of the people. Hence, such must be inclusive. We must have our framework. This is where we talk about the principles, the reasons, the rationale, the direction in establishing the social solidarity economy. But at the same time, we must also take its details seriously. Based on the cases of Professor Quiñones, Sastro, and Pangging, they really went into details of how to make resources work, to enhance capacities, to train, to write about financial management, etc. All these three (3) are the main components.





## Planning Session/Reporting

04:00 PM

Members were divided into three groups. Each group was assigned to discuss one particular agenda item: (1) Network Building, (2) Documentation and Publication, and (3) People-to-People Exchange. Each group has an assigned facilitator.

### Group 1: Network Building

The group was tasked to conduct activities that would further promote linkage formation and network building among partner organizations: coordinating the interactions between the alternative practices; convening and organizing conferences and workshops of the groups and communities involved in alternative practices; mobilizing the entire universe of alternative practices, regional interactions, and the communities; and organizing joint actions and initiatives.

After the discussion, the group decided to clarify the vision as the basis of the work that will be done. The group suggested that the initial endeavor will center on the 30 organizations that compose the current conference participants who will work towards the formation of “Alternative Regional Integration.” Towards 2019, the group agrees to organize a regional conference to hear other cases and sharpen the call for Alternative Regional Integration. National conferences and trainings on alternatives will be encouraged. The eight panels will serve as the pillars. The group will have to identify common points arising per panel in order to establish links within the panel and those from other panels. Interconnectivity will have to be established while substantial documentation for all panels should be done for the presentation of data.

## Group 2: Documentation and Publication

The group was assigned to discuss the scanning of more alternative practices in Southeast Asia, publication of documented practices, building a database, popularizing, mainstreaming and disseminating knowledge on alternative practices, and posing a critique and challenge to existing mainstream and dominant thoughts and models of development.

Documentation and publication are deemed vital because of the need for evidence for the peoples' initiatives on alternative development. The group believes that communities are capable of scientifically, systematically documenting their experiences. Communities are experts in their own right because they are the experts of their experiences. These case studies can add up to the literature on alternative development.

The group wants to develop a documentation framework or guidelines in order to have some kind of a standard in documentation, although not necessarily using academic standard, at the very least, a systematic documentation. UP CIDS will be a repository of the cases. The project should encourage volunteers (case study writers and communities) from among the network.

In particular, the group intends to have a published database of all the cases with open access. The themes that expound the concept 'Alternative Development' (e.g. Solidarity Economy, Reclaiming our Health) should be published. A book series should be realized with Series #1 as the complete presentation of case studies of this conference using the thematic format of the conference.

The development of diverse platforms for different audiences using various documentation methods should be done. The group expressed the need to ask help from case study writers in the community. The documentation using Participatory Approach Research should expand through UP CIDS and UP CSWCD initiative. The case studies as outputs must be translated into local language, thus, the need for volunteers.







### Group 3: People-to-People Exchange

For this group, the task was to generate an integration program that will facilitate experiential learning among participating partner organizations on their respective alternative practices: forming/strengthening linkages, networks, model building and improvement; replication, conducting alternative learning and training programs based on grassroots needs; and conceptualizing and making sense of the practices and developing new paradigms and strategies of development.

Members of the group discussed the importance of building unity towards a goal. The group suggested that information related to this movement on alternatives must be shared by everyone within the group (e.g., issues on food, housing, gender). Such information and knowledge sharing can be done through diverse means, either physical or online. This is necessary for current and future collaborations, in conducting field visits to understand the context and lives of communities, and in the interface of themes and concepts (e.g., how solidarity economy can help address concerns on agriculture).

Here are some significant events across the region that can help locate the timely organizing of the people-to-people exchange and field visits: LGBT Pride in Timor-Leste (July); Sorghum Festival in NTT, Indonesia (October 20); Forest Music Festival in Sumatra, Indonesia (July or August); Chef's Table in Sakon Nakhon, Thailand (February). The group stressed that in conducting people-to-people exchange, the principle of inclusivity must be recognized by including the interest and agenda of all participating alternative practitioners.

In a bilateral approach (within a country or between countries), the group suggested that the internship or field integration program for students (citing the cases of Malaysia and the Philippines) must continue in order to deepen understanding and build solidarity. The project on life-long learning should expand to the resettlement sites, especially with the idea that children with disabilities can be part of this

project. Knowledge building on alternatives through local networks, workshops, and discussions should be pursued. To cite an example, Vietnam has this Friday Forum where the alternatives can be discussed further at the national level. Already, some participants have organized their own trip exchanges, product exchange, online networking. Filipino CSOs, working with the urban poor, has a scheduled visit to Vietnam in January to see their cooperative housing. The presenters on food sovereignty coming from Indonesia and Thailand have discussed earlier their future collaboration.

The group suggested to establish a cloud-based repository of files and data among members for their easy access. Files and data should be shared through Google Drive.

To realize this people-to-people exchange, the main concern however is the budget. The group suggested a continuing conversation on fund generation and counterpart of every member.



## Closing

06:00 PM

Asst. Prof. Venarica B. Papa of the UP CSWCD provided a synthesis of the activities conducted throughout the three-day conference followed by the closing remarks of Joseph Purugganan of the Focus on the Global South.

# Synthesis of Activities

**Assistant Professor Venarica B. Papa**

College of Social Work and Community Development  
University of the Philippines Diliman

I don't think there would be a need for me to elaborate everything that has transpired, because as I have mentioned a while ago, it is so heartwarming for us to see everyone to be really interested and really be investing their thoughts, their time, their ideas even without asking one to provide answers. It only proves how sincere we are and how true the solidarity is of this group through the end of identifying alternative strategies, to the end of highlighting and providing spaces for the voices, the interests, and the bias of the grassroots communities.

So, I don't think I would have a monopoly of understanding and the grasp of everything that happened. I give that respect to everyone and every participant here. Rather, I would like to go to a recap, just so we will be reminded that perhaps, we will keep the good memory with us as we pass through that door, going back to our homes.

So, for the first day, we have three (3) panels comprising of Access to Justice, Ecology and Food Sovereignty, Gender Justice and Governance. In the presentations, we were told, we were informed that people responded to their own needs with the help of advocates, government organizations, and people's organizations themselves, in aspects of food, health, and legal services. These endeavors also get to increase the capacities and capabilities of the communities.

On the second day, we have four (4) panels: Solidarity Economy, Culture as Alternative, Alternative to Healthcare, Rights to Housing and Social Protection. I just want to highlight how we were reminded in the day 2 presentations that music is not only for when we're falling in love. Music is also for giving rise to rage. Music is also for when we want to fight for our rights and music education and art are spaces that we can utilize. They can serve as agents for changes we want to achieve together.

And today, we had the panels of Alternative Pedagogy and, again, Solidarity Economy. Let us not forget that we also had the Solidarity Night last night. We had fun. We saw who were good at singing and dancing,



and also who would have rather really just presented and facilitated—myself included. I think that really brought through to the intention of coming together, finding common interests, finding common goals, and finding common results to make things happen for us.

At the end of the day, there's one thing we affirm. Alternative strategies exist and these alternative strategies, in themselves, are resistance against what we call "dominant thoughts and concepts of development." All we need to do is to strengthen this push back, to strengthen this resistance, and we are in the right direction. With the outputs of the workshops that we have presented, all we need to do is keep a commitment and we will get there.

Thank you very much, everyone. We hope you had a great day!



Joseph Purugganan

First, I think, a round of applause to the Secretariat. A big thank you to the Secretariat and all the facilitators of the conference. A big applause to everyone, the 30 case studies, and that we still have the energy up to this point.

Yesterday, we got a bit of sad news. I heard that an Indian activist by the name of Amit Sengupta, one of the leaders of the people's health movement, passed away. Amit was here in Manila last February 15. He attended the 20th anniversary of Focus and the "Conference on People's Struggles and Alternatives" which we organized, where he spoke about people's health as an alternative, but situated in a bigger anti-capitalist struggle. Amit, as one inventor described him, was a steadfast activist. One of the bigger people in the people's health movement. I want to reflect on that, linking it to our discussion in the past three days.

Alternatives are not only about ideas and approaches. It's equally about building a movement that would push these ideas and sustain the efforts, that there is a political dimension to the work on alternatives as well. When I say political, I don't mean the bad definition of political, meaning, politicians. Political, not in the sense of politicians with vested interest, but politics and the question of power.

Where does power reside today? Or more importantly, how do we tilt the balance of power in our favor? How do we challenge it, as Vena said, push back? And the power anchors that are aggressively pushing for policies and systems that undermine people's aspirations for their life. The cases presented in this conference are a testament to the power of the people to rise above the challenges in order to advance their dreams and aspirations for a better life, a better and more just, humane, more tolerant society. These challenges have been magnified now in the context of rising authoritarianism, the shrinking of popular spaces in the region.

Alternatives can mean a lot of things. It can be a response to the favor of government, to the exclusion and marginalization. It can mean people pursuing their own development, it can be a form of resistance. It can be



about reclaiming and reasserting the needs, practices, and cultures that have been muted, erased, or marginalized by capitalism.

Through the conference, we saw that there are people's alternatives. We heard 30 stories and cases across eight panels, dimensions that we can view as the pillars to our vision of an alternative regional community. Within this conference, I hope for a stronger sense and appreciation of our collective power to push for genuine change.

Again, thank you to UP CIDS, Professor Ed Tadem, in particular. We thank 11.11.11 for supporting this activity and all the other funders. And we thank the main organizers for allowing Focus on the Global South to contribute and participate towards this effort to document these stories, learn from one another, articulate a cohesive people's agenda, and discuss the challenges in development and development paradigm. These efforts will move us closer to the kind of society, the kind of regional community that we all hope for.

Thank you.











The participants and organizers of  
*Rethinking Cross-Border Regionalism: Conference on Alternatives in Southeast Asia*





