



Chapter 1

PEACE-BUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

THROUGH LOCAL PLANNING: CONTEXT AND CONSIDERATIONS

Pace has become an increasingly urgent concern for Filipinos. Since 2004, “peace in the country” (as well as criminality and terrorism) consistently ranked in the top five urgent national concerns in nationwide surveys (Pulse Asia, Ulat ng Bayan, 2004-2006]. In fact, peace-related problems altogether rank as the 2nd highest national concern, second only to economic-related concerns like controlling inflation, low wages, and poverty.

This growing concern for peace reflects another reality -- fewer and fewer Filipinos remain untouched by violence. Whether it is a small domestic dispute between spouses or neighbors, crime, or a long-standing insurgency, Filipinos often have to cope with violent conflict and its effects on their daily lives. Poor and vulnerable sectors also deal with the many faces of structural violence on a daily basis.

At the same time, surveys also make clear that Filipinos primarily look to government to address violence and peace problems. At the local level, this means local government units (LGUs) are playing, or need to play, even-bigger roles in resolving conflicts and promoting peace.



WHY SHOULD LGUs PLAY A BIGGER ROLE IN PEACE-BUILDING?

As conflict and violence increasingly affect everyday life, LGUs across the Philippines come face-to-face with various kinds of violent conflict and are called upon to address them. Conflict or violence is usually seen as criminal acts or peace and order problems at the local level. Beyond this, however, conflict is also defined as “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources,” (Cosser in Neufeldt, 2002). The experience of conflict, then, extends beyond peace and order concerns to include poverty (conflict over wealth and resources), gender violence, and other forms of structural violence. Increasingly, LGUs also face urgent problems of insurgency, family violence, political violence, and land disputes, as well as more indirect forms of violence like environmental threats, poor governance, and poverty. (See Boxes 1.1 and 1.2).

BOX 1.1 MANY FACES OF CONFLICT AND PEACE ISSUES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Local government units face a myriad of conflict and peace issues:

1. Ideology-based armed conflicts (IBACs)

IBACs refer primarily to communist and Muslim insurgencies. In the Philippines, IBACs are often perceived as the main contributors to armed conflict. The Philippine Human Development Report (PHDR) 2005 reports that 91% of all provinces have been affected by IBACs from the period 1986 to 2004. The Report also lists 22 provinces with the highest number of armed encounters for the same period. Fifteen of these provinces are located in Mindanao.

PROVINCES WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF ARMED ENCOUNTERS

Encounters involving the MNLF/MILF	Encounters involving the NPA
Maguindanao	Quezon
North Cotabato	Davao del Norte
Basilan	Albay
Lanao del Norte	Cagayan
Lanao del Sur	Metro Manila
Davao del Sur	Davao Oriental
South Cotabato	Isabela
Sultan Kudarat	Davao del Sur
Sulu	Camarines Sur
Zamboanga del Sur	Agusan del Sur
	Surigao del Sur
	Kalinga-Apayao

Source: C. Bautista, 2005, cited in PHDR 2005

The presence or influence of the New People’s Army (NPA) has several unwanted consequences. LGU officials admit to having to contend with rebels’ disruption of government-initiated development projects; their collection of revolutionary taxes; the destruction of telecommunication infrastructure; and to their involvement in the deaths of perceived ‘enemies of the people’. In the Philippines, remote areas, such as upland or coastal barangays, are prone to infiltration by the rebels. In some cases, the insurgents control these areas to the extent that these become partially or wholly inaccessible to government officials and to the provision of basic services.

2. Boundary and territorial disputes

Disputes over land and territory are common conflicts at the local level. Clashes over territories and boundaries are an all-too familiar sources of tension among LGUs at various levels: inter-barangay, inter-municipal and inter-provincial. The municipality of Sadanga, in Mt. Province, for example, is into several boundary conflicts with its neighboring municipalities. It is also conflict over territories that make otherwise peacefully coexisting indigenous peoples groups in the CAR decide to take up arms.

3. Political and extra judicial killings

Almost daily, newspapers carry stories of left-wing activists and hard-hitting media personalities being murdered. Government officials, too, are not spared from political violence. Both elected and appointed officials have continuously been targets of assassination throughout Philippine history. Political rivalry and revenge are the usual causes of such occurrences.

4. Family and gender violence

Alarming as well, are reports of heightened violence against women and children. Child abuse is on the rise in numerous areas across the country. For example, it is perceived by some provincial LGU officials during needs assessment conducted for this project that incest is one of their top concerns.

5. “Rido” or clan wars

A study on armed conflict in Mindanao has found that a bigger number of armed conflicts in the region is not from MILF or Abusayyaf camps but from “rido” or clan wars.



6. Crime

Index and non-index crimes such as theft, robbery, homicide, murder, rape, and drug-related offenses are the most frequently recorded crimes at the local level. In Bicol, for example, officials of certain towns reported quite a number of cases of highway robbery. Vehicles traveling along their main highway have been stopped and robbed, sometimes carjacked, by as yet unidentified criminals. Another disturbing finding is the reported rise in cases of children in conflict with the law (CICL) mentioned by LGU representatives from a municipality in Laguna. Effects of rapid urbanization, such as prostitution were also reported by LGU officials of a particular town in Batangas.

7. Poor governance

Commonly cited complaints relate to the following: limited or minimal knowledge of local government officials on matters pertaining to local governance and development; excessive politicking; lack of political will; poor fiscal governance; inadequate delivery of basic services; and extensive graft and corruption. The majority of LGUs in the pilot areas cited weak governance as one of the main issues of conflict in their locality.

8. Environmental threats

More than ever, local government officials are starting to realize that illegal logging, illegal fishing, poor sanitation and waste disposal, unregulated mining, and over cultivation of land can have disastrous effects on the livelihood and security of their citizenry. Furthermore, the depletion of environmental resources gives rise to conflicts over the utilization of these limited resources. Natural calamities such as typhoons, flashfloods, landslides, volcanic eruptions and the like are also a chief source of insecurity at the local level.

9. Poverty

LGUs mention poverty as one of the major conditions of structural violence in their localities. Lack of employment, minimal livelihood opportunities, inadequate resources, and diminishing food and/or agricultural productivity are repeatedly cited as manifestations of poverty. Moreover, officials pinpoint acute poverty as one of the key causes of increased criminality; membership in the communist movement; domestic violence; and destruction of the environment.

Primary Source: Results of Workshops with Pilot LGUs of the IPBLGP Project, October-November 2006

Box 1.2 presents the Root Causes of Conflict, as identified by the National Unification Commission (NUC) in 1993. Note that many of the root causes, identified by NUC, mirror several forms of structural violence that LGUs confront at the local level).

Box 1.2 ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICTS

- 1 Massive and abject poverty and economic inequity, particularly in the distribution of wealth and control over the resource base for livelihood
- 2 Poor governance, including lack of basic social services, absenteeism of elected local officials, corruption and inefficiency in government bureaucracy, and poor implementation of laws, including those to protect the environment
- 3 Injustice, abuse of those in authority and power, violations of human rights, and inequity, corruption and delays in the administration of justice
- 4 Structural inequalities in the political system, including control of an elite minority, traditional politicians and political dynasties, and enforcement of such control through private armies
- 5 Exploitation and marginalization of indigenous cultural communities, including lack of respect for and recognition of ancestral domain and indigenous legal and political systems
- 6 Ideological differences between conflicting parties that include on one side the belief in armed struggle as the means to achieve political goals
- 7 Degeneration of moral values
- 8 Conduct of counterinsurgency
- 9 Adversities experienced by communities in the midst of armed conflict
- 10 Destruction of the environment



DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF VIOLENT CONFLICT

Whatever form it takes, violent conflict has devastating effects on people and communities. Aside from its immediate human costs, conflict disrupts entire societies and undermines gains in human development. Violent conflict interrupts food systems, interferes with livelihood activities, contributes to hunger and malnutrition, and undercuts progress in health and education. It also heightens mental health costs, such as, psychological stress and trauma (UNDP,1995).

The 1994 Human Development Report published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) specifies four main impacts of violent conflict on communities:

- Slow economic growth, lost assets, and lost income;
- Lost opportunities in education;
- Adverse consequences for public health; and
- Displacement, insecurity, and crime

Violence of any kind creates a downward spiral. Insecurity, losses of physical infrastructure, reduced economic activity, the opportunity costs of military expenditure, loss of assets, and related vulnerabilities are a toxic combination for development. Conflict increases poverty, reduces economic growth, discourages new investment and destroys the infrastructure of human welfare. It also supports high levels of military spending, which diverts resources from productive investment.

PEACE-BUILDING AS AN LGU MANDATE: NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

In 2001, a comprehensive national peace process agenda was institutionalized to guide the country's continuing peace efforts. The agenda was developed as a result of various multi-sectoral consultations held in 71 provinces by the NUC (then chaired by Haydee Yorac) in 1993. NUC had earlier been formed by President Fidel Ramos in 1993, to address the growing internal conflict in the country.

Peace-building as a matter of national importance was institutionalized with the signing of Executive Order No. 3 by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, on February 28, 2001. E.O. No. 3, entitled "Defining Policy and Administrative Structure for Government's Peace Efforts" laid the framework for the implementation, coordination, monitoring, and integration of all government peace initiatives in the pursuit of a just and lasting peace in the country. The said E.O. mandates the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) to coordinate and implement the six (6) components of the comprehensive peace agenda defined by the National Unification Commission (NUC).

This peace agenda endorses three principles and six components, which serve as the backbone for all peace initiatives of the government, and which should also guide LGUs' peace-building efforts. These are as follows:

TABLE 1.1. THE SIX PATHS TO PEACE

Six Paths to Peace	
1 Pursuit of social, economic and political reforms	This component involves the vigorous implementation of various policies, reforms, programs, and projects aimed at addressing the root causes of internal armed conflicts and social unrest.
2 Consensus-building and empowerment for peace	This component includes continuing consultations on both national and local levels to build consensus for a peace agenda and process, and the mobilization and facilitation of people's participation in the peace process.
3 Peaceful, negotiated settlement with the different rebel groups	This component involves the conduct of face-to-face negotiations to reach peaceful settlement with the different rebel groups. It also involves the effective implementation of peace agreements.
4 Programs for reconciliation, reintegration into mainstream society and rehabilitation	This component includes programs to address the legal statutes and security of former rebels, as well as community-based assistance programs to address the economic, social, and psychological rehabilitation needs of former rebels, demobilized combatants, and civilian victims of the internal armed conflicts.
5 Addressing concerns arising from continuing armed hostilities	This component involves the strict implementation of laws and policy guidelines, and the institution of programs to ensure the protection of non-combatants and reduce the impact of the armed conflict on communities found in conflict areas.
6 Building and nurturing a climate conducive to peace	This component includes peace advocacy and peace education programs and the implementation of various confidence-building measures.

Source: Executive Order No. 3, signed by President Gloria Arroyo, 2001

PEACE-BUILDING AS AN LGU MANDATE: PEACE AND ORDER

While the six (6) paths to peace should shape LGUs' peace-building efforts, at the local level, LGUs also have their specific mandates in peace-building and conflict prevention.

In the last 15 years, the main peace-related mandate of LGUs has been maintaining peace and order. Two major statutes support LGUs' peace and order efforts, namely:

- Local Peace and Order Councils (EO No. 309 and Rule XXIII, Article 186 of RA 7160 in Republic Acts No. 7160 (or the 1991 Local Government Code); and
- Republic Act No. 6975: An Act Establishing the Philippine National Police or the PNP Act.



Key provisions of these include:

- Development of a comprehensive local peace and order plan;
- Supervision/Implementation of projects in connection to the local peace and order plan;
- Monitoring and evaluation of the programs and projects defined in these plans; and
- Supervision and control of law enforcement agencies and personnel

PROMOTING PEACE THROUGH LOCAL PLANNING

Indeed, LGUs have a high stake in reducing conflict and violence, and in building peace in their communities and areas. More than reducing crime and danger, managing conflict and promoting peace contribute to economic growth, security, productivity, and people's health and wellbeing.

LGUs have varying degrees of awareness of their special role in peace-building. Whatever their level of awareness may be, dealing with violence and its effects, as well as promoting peace, has always been a local government domain and area of responsibility. From cases of domestic violence, tribal or clan conflict, boundary disputes, and armed insurgency, LGUs have been in the thick of the issue -- as negotiators and arbitrators, justice advocates, as centers of refuge, as neutral third parties, and in some cases, as protagonists.

The role of LGUs as peace-builders, however, has not been given much importance in the past. For this reason, many LGUs see these responsibilities as secondary to their other "official" functions. However, with the growing advocacy for peace work worldwide, LGUs are being compelled to take a more active role in conflict prevention and peace-building, particularly at the program and policy levels.

With the increased recognition for the need of LGUs to go beyond addressing peace and order concerns, LGUs are also starting to find other strategic measures towards peace-building and conflict prevention. These include:

1. Delivery of basic services, especially in far-flung and conflict affected areas;
2. Formulation of peace promoting policies at the local level (e.g., legislation in relation to land disputes);
3. Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) on promulgation of rights of the people;
4. Addressing gaps in relation to conflict-sensitive indicators (e.g., disparity in access to water, access to electricity, adult literacy);
5. Curbing graft and corruption; and
6. Safeguarding against differential treatment towards constituents

To be peace-builders, LGUs are realizing that their policies and programs need to reflect and consider these key measures.

This guidebook was developed in an effort to provide LGUs with concrete knowledge and tools to carry out their role as peace-builders. Specifically, it introduces LGUs and their local governance partners to peace-promoting and conflict-sensitive local development planning.

A GUIDEBOOK FOR LGUs

Entitled "Peace-Promoting and Conflict-Sensitive Local Development Planning," this guidebook was conceptualized and developed by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and with technical assistance from Surveys, Training, Research and Development Services (STRIDES, Inc.). In closely working with conflict-affected LGUs, OPAPP gradually came to realize that, to bring about comprehensive and sustainable peace, LGUs have to be mobilized and capacitated for peace-building and conflict prevention.

Local development planning -- one of the most essential and strategic responsibilities of LGUs-- thus becomes an important step to peace-building at the local level, and with LGUs at the helm.

OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook was developed with two (2) focal objectives:

1. To introduce and develop in local government officials and functionaries a basic understanding and appreciation of a peace and development perspective and the human security framework as they apply to local development planning.
2. To serve as a practical, methodical, and user-friendly tool to guide local government officials in developing conflict-sensitive and peace-promoting development plans.

The framework espoused by the guidebook and the tools contained herein will hopefully assist LGU readers craft plans that maximize resources and lead to sustainable peace and development in their localities.

HOW THE GUIDEBOOK WAS FORMULATED

Several activities were conducted to aid the formulation of the guidebook:

1. Extensive review of related literature on conflict-sensitive approaches, human security and peace indicators;
2. Conduct of needs assessment and LGU situationer workshops in Manila, Naga City and Baguio City as venue for gathering data on the peace conditions and needs of 15 conflict-affected LGUs (see Box 1.4);
3. Series of roundtable discussions with peace and local government planning experts, OPAPP-PIDO, OPAPP Senior staff, and UNDP-CPPB;



Box 1.3 OPAPP: WORKING TOWARDS THE 6 PATHS TO PEACE

Working towards the realization of the six paths to peace, the Peace Institutions Development Office (PIDO) of OPAPP leads in institutionalizing and strengthening community-based conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peace advocacy, and rehabilitation and development efforts by government in conflict-affected areas. PIDO partners with civil society organizations, regional line agencies, local government units, and communities themselves in the implementation of its five (5) major thrusts:

1. Community-based peace processes and mechanisms;
2. Rehabilitation and development of conflict-affected areas;
3. Peace education and advocacy;
4. Community-based interfaith/tri-people's dialogue, healing and reconciliation; and
5. Documentation, monitoring and database development.

For the implementation of these thrusts, OPAPP-PIDO partners closely with the GOP-UNDP Conflict Prevention and Peace-Building Programme (CPPB) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The development of this guidebook is one of the outputs of the project entitled "Integrating Peace-Building in Local Government Planning Process (IPBLGP)". The IPBLGP project is intended to contribute mainly to:

- CPPB's Outcome 1: Peacebuilding, conflict prevention and human security mainstreamed in development processes, and the delivery of Expected Output 1.4: Conflict-sensitive and peace-promoting planning and legislation mainstreamed in local government.
- CPPB's Outcome 2: Key actors are better able to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict and build peace and human security.

4. Conduct of the peace orientation and peace-promoting local planning training for key representatives of 15 pilot LGUs; and
5. Participation in the Rationalizing Planning System (RPS) Workshop of DILG. More information was gathered on the status of the RPS through attendance in DILG-sponsored RPS consultation workshops in December 2006.

These activities, including important inputs from project participants (see Annex B for List of Key Informants and Project Participants), helped clarify the scope of the Integrating Peace-building in Local Government Planning (IPBLGP) project and this guidebook. It became clear that the development of the planning guidebook and the implementation of the project entailed much more than what was originally envisioned by OPAPP-PIDO and STRIDES. In its original conception, the development of the guidebook was to be anchored on Local Poverty Reduction Action Plan (LPRAP) and the development of a few indicators. However, several important developments significantly widened the scope of the project, specifically:

1. DILG's ongoing efforts to rationalize all local government planning processes (RPS), which includes doing away with LPRAP as a separate planning process to be undertaken by LGUs;
2. LPRAP not being implemented by many LGUs; and
3. Deeper understanding of the needs of LGUs in relation to peace-promoting planning and requirements of conflict-sensitive planning

Considering these developments, the decision to anchor this peace-promoting planning initiative on DILG's rationalized planning system was reached (see Chapter 3 for detailed discussion on this). At the same time, the information gathered from across these multiple sources became the basis for the development of the framework (Chapter 2), elements, step-by-step-guide and initial tools for peace planning (Chapter 3) discussed in the next chapters.

ORGANIZATION OF THE GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook consists of three (3) chapters:

- Chapter 1 presents the context for guidebook development.
- Chapter 2 proposes a framework for peace-promoting and conflict-sensitive local planning using human security framework and a conflict-sensitive approach.
- Chapter 3 describes important elements, steps and tools for peace-promoting and conflict-sensitive local development planning.

They are written as stand alone chapters, and can be read independent of each other.



BOX 1.4 PROFILE OF PILOT LGUs OF OPAPP IN THE IPBLGP PROJECT

Fifteen conflict-affected LGUs participated in the project, namely:

- Guinobatan, Albay (2nd class)
- Ligao City, Albay (5th class)
- Castilla, Sorsogon (3rd class)
- Sorsogon City, Sorsogon (5th class)
- Rosario, Batangas (1st class)
- San Juan, Batangas (1st class)
- Agdangan, Quezon (5th class)
- Gumaca, Quezon (2nd class)
- Liliw, Laguna (4th class)
- San Jose, Tarlac (4th class)
- Banaue, Ifugao (4th class)
- Aguineldo, Ifugao (4th class)
- Sadanga, Mountain Province (5th class)
- Tubo, Abra (4th class)
- Lacub, Abra (4th class)

The participating LGUs were selected using the following criteria defined by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process:

- o Priority conflict-affected area with identified Kalayaan barangays
- o With existing Local Poverty Reduction Action Plan (LPRAP) or in the process of preparing the LPRAP; trained in the conduct of LPRAP
- o Presence of convergence of peace and development programs and/or projects
- o Priority convergence area of the Regional Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (KALAHI) Convergence Group or RKCG
- o Participated in the Conflict Analysis Workshop

