

PART VI

FOUNDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

17 Attaining Just and Lasting Peace



Attaining Just and Lasting Peace

A society where there is just and lasting peace is critical to the realization of *AmBisyon Natin 2040* or the Filipino people's collective aspiration of a *matatag, maginhawa, at panatag na buhay* (strong family and community ties, a comfortable and secure life). Peaceful communities can harness the fruits of economic growth through improved access to social services and financial opportunities, and increased overall human development, without fear or threat to their lives and livelihood. Conversely, economic development can diminish the likelihood of armed conflict, especially if socioeconomic interventions are inclusive, participatory, and sustainable.

In the first three years of the current administration, significant strides have been made resulting in the successful negotiation and implementation of peace agreements with internal armed conflict groups. Complementary interventions for the continuous protection and development of conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable communities were also pursued along with the implementation of other peacebuilding initiatives.

For the remainder of the Plan period, interventions in conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas will be sustained while being mindful of the new health protocols. This is to ensure that the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will not aggravate the fragile situation in such areas, and that peace building efforts would contribute towards a healthy and resilient Philippines.

Assessment and Challenges

Assessment: The first half of the Plan period marked significant milestones in the peace process. The enactment and ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (Republic Act [RA] 11054) paved the way for the establishment of a new political entity in the Bangsamoro, ending the decades-long armed conflict with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The Bangsamoro normalization process was fast-tracked through the issuance of Executive Order (EO) 79, s. 2019.¹ The government has likewise continuously engaged the two groups

of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) to ensure the implementation of the remaining commitments under the 1996 Final Peace Agreement (FPA). Efforts to complete the implementation of the peace agreements with the *Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa-Pilipinas* – Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPMP-RPA-ABB) and the Cordillera *Bodong* Administration-Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CBA-CPLA) were also actively pursued. These were complemented

¹ Implementing the Annex on Normalization under the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB).

by the institutionalization of a whole-of-nation approach to end local communist armed conflict through the issuance of EO 70 in 2018. Socioeconomic interventions, reintegration programs for former rebels and former violent extremists, and other various peacebuilding initiatives to create an enabling environment for peace and development were also implemented.

Challenges: While the government remains committed to build on and sustain the gains of the peace process, the current pandemic introduced new challenges in the implementation of peace agreements. Refocusing of budget priorities to address the impact of the pandemic can affect or delay the implementation of some components of peace agreements and of various socioeconomic interventions for conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable communities. Both the physical and virtual inaccessibility (e.g., lack of internet access, low level of capacity to use technology) particularly in geographically-

isolated, conflict-affected communities can limit government in implementing alternative mechanisms to deliver socioeconomic and peacebuilding initiatives. New policies such as health protocols and quarantine restrictions, also pose hurdles in the implementation of peace building programs particularly those requiring face-to-face interactions in affected communities.

The pandemic has increased the vulnerabilities and further limited the capacities of poor and conflict-affected communities to respond to other economic, social, and environmental shocks. Moreover, violent extremists and terror groups may take advantage of the crisis to ramp up terrorist activities. The gains from the peace process that have been achieved thus far could take a setback due to this situation. Hence, it is imperative to find alternative and innovative approaches to sustain the gains of the peace processes amidst the pandemic.

Strategic Framework

The government remains committed in pursuing efforts to attain just and lasting peace for the remainder of the Plan period. These include the effective implementation of signed peace agreements and continuous delivery of various

peace and development interventions in conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas. These will be undertaken despite the challenges posed by the current pandemic.

Figure 17.1 Strategic Framework to Attain Just and Lasting Peace



Strategies

To achieve these outcomes, the following strategies will be implemented in line with the President's Six-Point Peace and Development Agenda:

Successfully negotiating and implementing peace agreements with all internal armed conflict groups

Support the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) as the interim government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). As the interim government

during the transition period from 2019 to 2022, it is critical for the BTA to lay down the foundations for the establishment of a fully-functioning BARMM government in 2022 or beyond, as may be provided by the Congress. Foremost are the enactment of priority legislations, the determination of parliamentary districts for the first regular elections of the Parliament members, the organization of its own civilian bureaucracy, and the full transfer of powers and properties of the dissolved ARMM regional government to the BARMM. These activities are guided by the BTA's priority pillars: education, health, economic development, strategic infrastructure, and moral leadership. A critical component in the implementation of the peace

agreement is the immediate organization of all mechanisms under the National Government-Bangsamoro Government Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB), which resolves all potential issues and concerns, ensuring smooth relationship and coordination through continuous engagements and consultations. The National Government and the Bangsamoro Government will fast-track the organization of the two remaining intergovernmental relations mechanisms, namely, the Philippine Congress-Bangsamoro Parliament Forum and the Bangsamoro Sustainable Development Board. The five other mechanisms have already been organized: (a) Intergovernmental Fiscal Policy Board; (b) Intergovernmental Energy Board; (c) Intergovernmental Infrastructure Development Board; (d) Joint Body for the Zones of Joint Cooperation; and (e) the Council of Leaders.

Intensify the implementation of the normalization program for the Bangsamoro.

The Inter-Cabinet Cluster Mechanism on Normalization (ICCMN), along with other joint bodies (Joint Normalization Committee, Joint Peace and Security Committee, and Joint Peace and Security Teams), is tasked to guarantee the completion of the components of the normalization program. These include (a) timely decommissioning of MILF forces and their weapons particularly for the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (MILF's forces); (b) implementation of socioeconomic development efforts for MILF decommissioned combatants; (c) transformation of identified MILF camps into villages with increased access to economic opportunities; and (d) implementation of interventions towards social healing, reconciliation, and cultural harmony to address the legitimate grievances of the Bangsamoro people. The ICCMN also includes the creation of a technical working group that will assess the propriety of grant of amnesty, pardon, or other available processes towards the resolution of cases of persons charged with or convicted of crimes and offenses connected to the armed conflicts in Mindanao. The implementation of these components during the pandemic

will comply with the required health-related guidelines, protocols, and restrictions.

Complete the implementation of the remaining commitments under the 1996 Final Peace Agreement between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the MNLF.

The government will further pursue the completion of its remaining commitments under the 1996 FPA with the MNLF through the coordinating committees created in 2019 with the *Misuari* and *Jikiri* groups. These include the establishment of the Bangsamoro Development Assistance Fund (BDAF) intended to uplift the conditions of the MNLF and the operationalization of a monitoring mechanism anchored on the results of the Tripartite Review Process (TRP) between the GPH, MNLF, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The full implementation of the 1996 Final Peace Agreement (FPA) will contribute to sustainable and durable peace, development, and security in Mindanao and ensure inclusivity of peace dividends.

Implement a transformation program for the MNLF combatants.

A transformation program for the MNLF combatants, their families, and communities will be implemented through the coordinating committees, beginning in the Province of Sulu. It shall mirror the Normalization Program of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and intends to deter disgruntled MNLF combatants from joining the *Abu Sayyaf* Group and other violent extremist groups in the Southern Philippines, thereby contributing to the enduring peace and stability in the Bangsamoro.

Effectively implement the National Plan to End Local Communist Armed Conflict 2019-2022 that will operationalize the whole-of-nation approach to address local communist and other armed conflicts.

The National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC),² together with the Cabinet Officers for Regional Development and Security, will oversee the implementation of the whole-of-nation approach

² The NTF-ELCAC is headed by the President as Chair and the National Security Adviser as the Vice-Chair.

through the regional³ and local task forces and the 12 lines of efforts (LOEs)/clusters.⁴ The NTF-ELCAC will ensure inter-cluster convergence of efforts in addressing community armed-conflict issues. In addition, these task forces and LOEs will support and complement action plans to address the impact of the pandemic at the national, regional, and local levels, including the localization of interventions through the Barangay Development Program (BDP).⁵ Referral protocols for monitoring and response will also be streamlined to improve vertical and horizontal connectivity of various cluster mechanisms.

Effectively undertake localized peace engagements through community consultations and problem-solving sessions, and local peace dialogues with local insurgent groups. The *Lakbay Kapayapaan* Roadmap for Peace and Development⁶ will be mainstreamed as the primary mechanism to support localized peace dialogues in communities based on mutual confidence and trust. In connection to this, the government will prioritize the enhancement of capacities of local chief executives and the strengthening of the role of local government units (LGUs) in carrying out peace dialogues, and the complementation and convergence of socioeconomic packages to communities and individual former rebels and their families.

While the current pandemic calls for alternative mechanisms in carrying out engagement activities with communities, face-to-face interactions will still be undertaken especially in local community dialogues, consultations, and problem-solving sessions, albeit in strict compliance with public health standards and protocols. Face-to-face interactions are important in building and

rebuilding confidence with the communities, especially in providing a safe democratic space for communities to raise issues and concerns that are at the root of, resulting from, or further aggravating the armed conflict. It also provides a platform for constructive engagement among the community, the government, and other stakeholders, and provides opportunities for strengthening capacities for peace. Alternative mechanisms such as the use of digital platforms will be utilized only when necessary and feasible.

Fast-track the completion of remaining commitments under the signed agreements with the RPMP-RPA-ABB and the CBA-CPLA. The government remains committed to complete the implementation of the remaining commitments under these agreements by 2022. The completion strategy for the RPMP-RPA-ABB involves engagements with the *Tabara-Paduan* Group (TPG) and the *Nilo de la Cruz* Group (NDCG). The 2019 Clarificatory Implementing Document (CID) lays down the commitments towards the absolute and final settlement of the 2000 Peace Agreement with the RPMP-RPA-ABB between the government and the TPG. These include the full transformation of the TPG from an armed group into a civilian organization through a three-year normalization plan that will facilitate development assistance to its members, their families, and identified communities. Engagement with the NDCG is also being pursued within the bounds of the 2000 Peace Agreement, with full observance of the ceasefire agreement. Meanwhile, the completion strategy for the CBA-CPLA focuses on the implementation and sustainability of socioeconomic reintegration programs for former CPLA members, their families, and communities. Multi-stakeholder

³ The regional task forces are created through the convergence of the Regional Peace and Order Councils and the Regional Development Councils, and are headed by the Cabinet Officers for Regional Development and Security.

⁴ These are: (1) local government empowerment; (2) international engagement; (3) legal cooperation; (4) strategic communication; (5) basic services; (6) infrastructure and resource management; (7) poverty reduction, livelihood, and employment; (8) peace, law enforcement, and development support; (9) situational awareness and knowledge management; (10) localized peace engagement; (11) Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP) and amnesty; and (12) sectoral unification, capacity building, empowerment, and mobilization.

⁵ The BDP is a peace and development convergence initiative of the NTF-ELCAC which provides socioeconomic interventions, (e.g., farm to market roads, school buildings, health stations, livelihood support, etc.) to communist terrorist groups-cleared barangays.

⁶ The *Lakbay Kapayapaan* Roadmap aims to institutionalize and champion sustainable peace and development agenda at the grassroots by continuously building strong and capable institutions, strategic partnership of government and non-government organizations, and heightened citizen participation through whole-of-nation approach to establish and sustain peaceful, progressive, and resilient communities.

convergence to support regional peace and development advocacies and interventions towards the Cordillera autonomy will also be pursued.

To this end, collaboration and partnerships through existing peace process mechanisms need to be sustained especially in recalibrating specific strategies in light of the new normal. Digital communications infrastructure is also needed in the conduct of critical activities such as monitoring of project implementation, consultation meetings with various stakeholders, and capacity-building and skills development programs for beneficiaries.

Protecting and developing communities in conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas

Strengthen convergence and complementation in the implementation of peace and development interventions. Convergence of all government efforts and mechanisms at the national, regional, and local levels will be critical in advancing the protection and development of conflict-affected areas. These include the *Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA)* Program, the Retooled Community Support Program (RCSP), the E-CLIP,⁷ programs and projects under the NTF-ELCAC, and crisis and contingency planning activities as provided under EO 82, s. 2012.⁸ The Regional Task Forces of the ELCAC will be further strengthened as a mechanism for national and regional coordination to address key issues and concerns affecting peace, security, and socioeconomic development.

Inter-agency programming and agency-level budget prioritization need to be strengthened in light of foreseen priorities towards addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is to ensure that the aforementioned peace and development interventions will still be effectively implemented amidst this crisis.

Empower communities by increasing their capacity to address conflicts and reducing their vulnerabilities. Strengthening local capacities for addressing peace, conflict, and security issues remains central in sustaining the government's community-based support and peacebuilding programs. The government will continue its engagements with severely affected and vulnerable groups in armed conflicts (i.e., women, indigenous peoples [IPs], children, elderly, internally displaced peoples [IDPs]) and pursue the application of inclusive and participatory approaches to empower these groups. Moreover, partnerships with women and youth sectors and the local civil society organizations (CSOs) will be strengthened in recognition of their significant role in advancing the peace education and peace advocacy agenda. In this regard, the government will sustain its efforts for various capacity development and advocacy initiatives on conflict-sensitive and peace-promoting (CSPP) approaches, providing avenues for dialogues with vulnerable groups and their communities. Face-to-face peace conversations will still be conducted, albeit in strict compliance with public health standards and protocols. Use of alternative digital platforms and other forms of mass media such as local radio and television, will also be considered.

Strengthen government peace and development institutions and mechanisms to increase their accountability and responsiveness to peace and human security issues. Strengthening institutions to effectively ensure security, restore public

⁷ E-CLIP's coverage was expanded through Administrative Order (AO) 25, s. 2020, amending AO 10, s. 2018, Centralizing All Government Efforts for the Reintegration of Former Rebels and Creating for the purpose an Inter-agency Task Force. This provides for a comprehensive, integrated, and community-based national program that is locally implemented to address the economic, social, psychological rehabilitation needs, legal status and security of Former Rebels (FRs) who are members of the CPP-NPA-NDF, former violent extremists, their immediate family members and communities through the E-CLIP. The Task Force Balik Loob (TFBL) oversees the implementation of the E-CLIP.

⁸ EO 82, s. 2012: Operationalizing the Practical Guide for National Crisis Managers and the National Crisis Management Core Manual, and Establishing National and Local Crisis Management Organizations.

confidence, and provide economic opportunities is critical, particularly in light of emerging multi-dimensional risks arising from armed conflicts, disasters, and health-related hazards. Establishing accountability mechanisms will enable the government to appropriately respond to various threats to communities in conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas.

Planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of peace and development programs will likewise be undertaken to ensure streamlined and harmonized government response to various peace and security issues. Mainstreaming of CSPP approaches in the plans and programs of government and various stakeholders will be institutionalized. This includes mainstreaming CSPP in the Comprehensive Development Plans (CDPs) to highlight the important role of LGUs and local special bodies in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) will develop various online knowledge products, including the facilitators' manuals and guidebooks on mainstreaming CSPP in the CDPs of conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable LGUs. As part of the new normal, the LGUs will explore online schemes of reporting their CSPP mainstreaming and coaching efforts to the national government.

The government will develop and continuously implement action plans to ensure the protection and promotion of rights of women, youth, and children in conflict situations and against radicalization and violent extremism. These include the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAP-WPS), the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security (NAP-YPS), program framework and work plan for the implementation of the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act (RA

11188), and the National Action Plan to Prevent/Counter Violent Extremism (NAP-PCVE).

Priority interventions under these plans will complement the national, regional, and local efforts to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and will be aligned with the rule of law, international human rights law, and international humanitarian law.

NAP-WPS. A major goal of the NAP-WPS is to ensure the meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls as active change agents in conflict transformation and post-conflict development. It seeks to protect women and girls' human rights at all times—before, during, and after various conflict situations—and prevent all forms of violence against them. It also embodies the government's commitment to implement United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 and 1820,⁹ and other related resolutions. For the remainder of the Plan period, the National Steering Committee on Women, Peace, and Security, through its member agencies and local stakeholders, will target the implementation of the action points identified in the Agency Strategic Action Plans. These include mainstreaming of the WPS agenda in policies, plans, and programs at the national, regional, and local levels; the localization of the NAP-WPS through the crafting of respective regional action plans, the development and implementation of programs to address gender-based violence in emergencies (e.g., those affected by the *Marawi* crisis), and ensuring that former women rebels and violent extremists can benefit from normalization and reintegration programs.

NAP-YPS. The crafting of the NAP-YPS is in compliance with the UNSCR 2250¹⁰ on the YPS agenda. The NAP-YPS will outline the country's YPS agenda based on the recommendations from the Youth Peace Tables, which serve as a

⁹ UNSCR 1325 was adopted in October 2000, affirming that “peace and security efforts are more sustainable when women are equal partners in the prevention of violent conflict, the delivery of relief and recovery efforts, and in the forging of lasting peace.” UNSCR 1820 was adopted in June 2008, recognizing sexual violence as a tactic of war that “can significantly exacerbate situations of armed conflict and may impede the restoration of international peace and security.”

¹⁰ UNSCR 2250 was adopted in December 2015, recognizing that “young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.”

platform for young peace advocates to further strengthen their capacities in building a culture of peace and conflict sensitivity and mobilize a youth constituency to support the peace processes. The NAP-YPS also aims to guide both policymakers and service-providers in integrating and adopting the action points in the formulation and implementation of policies and programs that will address or contribute to addressing the needs articulated by the youth. Other related efforts on the NAP-YPS include capacity-building for national government agencies (NGAs) on UNSCR 2250, and mapping of different youth-related programs and projects of the government and non-government organizations.

Implementation of RA 11188. The Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act seeks to strengthen protection mechanisms for children, involved in affected, and displaced by armed conflict situations, including guaranteeing their rights in situations of armed conflict and providing preventive measures against recruitment, use, and grave child rights violations, prosecution, and rehabilitation and reintegration.

The law declares children as “zones of peace” – hence, treatment will extend beyond territorial and geographical boundaries and will focus on the promotion and protection of their rights at all times. An Inter-Agency Committee on Children in Situations of Armed Conflict (IAC-CSAC) was created to oversee the implementation of this law. For the remainder of the Plan period, all activities for the development of a work plan for this law will proceed, utilizing alternative strategies, in consideration of the current public health situation.

These activities include policy advocacy and dissemination, risk communications, and community engagements through online platforms; conduct of regular online coordination meetings to enhance and finalize the work plan, and increasing partnerships with NGAs and

international development partners, particularly in updating and enhancing CSAC protocols on the handling and management of children involved in armed conflict.

NAP-PCVE. The NAP-PCVE will continuously be implemented to address the various factors of radicalization which lead to violent extremism. This is to ensure that recurrence of armed conflict will be avoided, and public order and safety is ensured particularly at the grassroots level (see *Chapter 18*).

Continue to build on the gains of the peace processes through education, social healing, and reconciliation. Instilling a culture of peace (COP) and non-violence will sustain the gains of the peace process and ensure that legitimate grievances can be raised without resorting to armed conflict and violent extremism. The government will continue and expand the mainstreaming of peace education and promote a culture of peace and non-violence in both formal and non-formal settings. These include the integration of peace education in basic, higher, and technical and vocational education and integration of Mindanaoan narratives from IPs, Bangsamoro Filipinos, and Filipino Christian migrants into the Philippine Educational System. This will be coupled with advocacy programs, capacity-building for faculty, and development of syllabi and training materials for peace studies in higher education. Development of online learning materials and capacity-building modules for COP and peace education mainstreaming will also be pursued as part of the new normal situations. Other COP sessions will be conducted, firmly adhering to prescribed health standards and protocols. The government will actively undertake social healing, reconciliation, and peacebuilding programs. For example, the implementation of reintegration and rehabilitation programs for former violent extremists (FVE) through the Task Force *Balik Loob* (TFBL) will be conflict-, gender-, and culture- sensitive. These will also include various programs and projects

such as provision of safe spaces for healing and reconciliation of FVEs and their families, families of survivors and victims of conflict-related violence, and the communities. Furthermore, the building and rebuilding of relationships of the IDPs with their community leaders, sectoral

representatives, NGAs, LGUs, CSOs, and all stakeholders is expected to build social cohesion, resilience, and sustainable peace towards the recovery and rehabilitation of *Marawi* and its nearby municipalities.

Legislative Agenda

To achieve the desired outcomes discussed above, the following legislative agenda will be pursued in the remainder of the Plan period.

Table 17.1 Legislative Agenda to Attain Just and Lasting Peace

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA	RATIONALE
Separate amnesty proclamations for the Bangsamoro, RPMP/RPA/ ABB, and former rebels of the communist terrorist groups	The proposed presidential proclamations on amnesty for various groups aim to accept former combatants back into the fold of the law and eventually, provide them access to the government's socioeconomic services as a means to attain peace, reconciliation, and unity in the country.
Enabling law creating an autonomous region in the <i>Cordilleras</i>	This aims to establish a political entity and provide the structure of its government, in recognition of the justness and cause of the <i>Cordillerans</i> and to secure their identity and posterity and allow for meaningful governance.
Enabling law creating the National Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission for the Bangsamoro (NTJRB)	The proposed law will create the NTJRCB which shall design and supervise the implementation of a TJR program. The program shall be guided by dealing with the past framework that respects, protects, and fulfills the victims' rights to truth, justice, and reparation, and ensures the State's obligation to provide guarantees of non-recurrence.

