

Peace and Development Work Among the Lumads in their Ancestral Domain

Isabelita M. Somoza

Introduction

This paper documents my involvement with Tripeoples Concern for Peace, Progress, and Development of Mindanao, Inc. (TRICOM). TRICOM started in 1996 as a consortium of various nongovernment and people's organizations (POs). It started when an assembly of peasant organizations questioned the inclusion of the Moro and Lumad peoples in the classification of peasants. The question was valid considering that the two peoples have different cultures and practices and could hardly be classified as peasants.

The Lumads are the most marginalized and disadvantaged in Philippine society. They are indigenous inhabitants of Mindanao but are being displaced from their ancestral lands because there is no sufficient legal instrument to secure their land tenure (TRICOM 1998, 17). The only available instrument then was the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Administrative Order No. 2 (DAO 2), Series of 1993, providing for the identification, delineation, and recognition of ancestral domains.

A pilot project was conducted in 1996 to assist the Lumad communities in claiming their ancestral domains in South Upi, Maguindanao and Titay, Zamboanga del Sur (TRICOM ADC Research 1996). The project bore positive results and was replicated in fourteen Moro and Lumad communities in 1997. The project was called Mindanao Ancestral Domain Claim 1 (MADC 1). I was asked to coordinate the Moro and Lumad research teams and ensure that the claims were filed.

In 1998, TRICOM was transformed into a nongovernment organization (NGO) as the members of the consortium no longer agreed on the terms and strategies of the organization. The remaining council members agreed to change the name of TRICOM to Tripeoples Concern

(instead of Consortium) for Peace, Progress and Development of Mindanao Incorporated. The council became the Board of Incorporators and registered the organization with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

The transformation was just timely as the continuity project called Mindanao Ancestral Domain Claim 2 (MADC 2) was on the way. The project aimed at piloting area development in ancestral domains. It was a step further from MADDC 1 which merely sought to file ancestral domain claims.

MADC 2 is a study of the appropriate approach in assisting Lumad communities in filing their claims, as well as in formulating and implementing their ancestral domain sustainable development plan. Because the indigenous communities implemented MADDC 2 according to what they deemed was appropriate, it did not have a "ready made" model nor a definite impact or result. It was allowed to evolve according to how the community responded.

TRICOM's vision and mission as an NGO focus on the possession and control by indigenous peoples and communities of Mindanao of their own respective territories (ancestral domain), self-governing in the light of present realities, and determining and managing their own political, cultural, and economic development. It therefore tries to assist these indigenous peoples and communities through its various programs (Moncano-Somozo 2001, 13).

To achieve this, TRICOM drafted a ten-year plan aimed at facilitating and conducting the required activities, providing the necessary trainings, and creating the avenues that would enable indigenous peoples and communities to:

1. Increase productivity and income, specifically in the identified Lumad communities of Kulaman, Lake Sebu, Surallah, Bagumbayan, and Glan through their agriculture support program;
2. Initiate forest rehabilitation in the identified areas of Binlibol and Tudog – both of Kulaman, and other sites that might be identified by partner organizations;
3. Empower Lumad women through organizing and increased economic productivity;
4. Enhance Lumad children's development through Early Child Care and Development Program in areas which may be identified by partner organizations;

5. Strengthen Lumad governance by reactivating existing indigenous structures or any other form of organization deemed appropriate;
6. Strengthen support structures through linkage with other Lumad communities and organizations, people's organizations (POs), local government units (LGUs), government agencies (GAs), funding agencies (FAs), financing institutions, church, individuals, and NGOs; and
7. Promote cultural regeneration through advocacy for the setting up of a "Lumad school" or any other concept that advocates Lumad peoples development.

Programs and Services of TRICOM

TRICOM's programs and services came out after the Lumad communities formulated their ancestral domain development plans. TRICOM prioritized the solution of these problems, and created the appropriate programs to support the efforts of the Lumads.

Ancestral Domain (AD) Governance and Linkage - is the base program of TRICOM. All the activities are geared towards achieving land tenure security for the Lumads. These activities include organizing the ancestral domain claimants, filing the claim, preparing an ancestral domain development plan, and building community capability linkage.

Agriculture and Environment Program - includes the formation and strengthening of agriculture and environment teams, trainings, and seminars for the committee leaders and communities, e.g., Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT), farm planning, basic ecology, nursery and seed production, reforestation, and other services which the communities can avail of once they have identified agriculture and environment as priority programs.

Women and Children's Program - strives to provide recognition of women's significant role in the value formation of children and the community as a whole. This program aims to give women the opportunities to learn and expand their views and frameworks by enabling them to teach and manage children centers; run workshops and summer camps; develop curriculum and human resources; and establish community support systems.

The TRICOM Staff

TRICOM is, in many ways, a microcosm of Mindanao. The board and the staff are composed of Moro and settlers from Luzon and Visayas, comprising government organizations (GOs), NGOs, POs, academic people, and individuals. Most of us are of Visayan and Luzonian origins, our families having moved to Mindanao to look for a better life in the "Land of Promise." The vast tracts of lands were there all right, but the promises were not. American and Japanese companies had already occupied the fertile plains, easing out the original inhabitants, the Lumad and Moro peoples. The Moro people have been driven to fight the government as the Lumads retreated to the hills.

We share common experiences pertaining to the war that raged and still is raging between the Moro people and the settlers in Mindanao. Most of us saw the massive evacuations due to the war between and among the Higa, the Baracuda, and the Black Shirts. Our parents then had to find other means of livelihood in the city and town centers where it was safer.

We grew up in different parts of Mindanao where the mountains used to be green and the forests were near the town or city centers. But these were not to remain so. Logging companies did not stop operations while a tree remained standing. Consequently, we lost our playgrounds to floods, and our rivers to siltation.

Most of my teammates (except the newly hired staffers) were born in the 1950s and were all teeners when Martial Law was declared. I was born in 1963, so I was six during the First Quarter Storm (FQS) and nine when Marcos declared Martial Law. Growing up in those turbulent years stirred in us similar responses. The severity of the violations of human rights was made manifest in the hundreds of alleged rebels who were arrested, detained without warrants, tortured, salvaged, or who simply disappeared. The crimes were so heinous that they drove many young people, including some of us, to the hills to fight with the revolutionary movement while others became sectoral organizers.

The purge in the movement called "Kampanyang Ahas" in Mindanao in 1984 made many of the active members waver in their stand. The eventual split in 1995 affected not only the members of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), but also of the NGOs and POs, and even the funding agencies here and abroad. Alignment of service NGOs, federations, and alliances also changed, as personnel split between the

RAs, or those who re-affirmed the principles upheld by the CPP under the leadership of Jose Maria Sison, and the RJs; or those who rejected them, with some opting for peaceful means of resolving conflicts.

Today, we at TRICOM continue with our work. We continue to work because the situation in our country has not changed. The gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. We go on because we understand that war can be waged not only with guns but with awareness and community capability, self and women empowerment, internally-driven development, love, and compassion. We aspire not to make the poor rich because that is almost impossible in the present Philippine set-up, but to make life worth living — to help weave dreams of equitable and self-determined communities, and to hold on to these dreams until they come true.

Once There was a Forest

Let me describe the situation of the ancestral lands that the Lumad communities claim.

Thirty years ago, the areas of Kulaman, Sultan Kudarat, and other assisted Lumad communities in Southern Mindanao were covered by forests teeming with wild life. Thousands of hectares of dipterocarp trees once crowned the land. The tree trunks were huge. They reached as high as a hundred feet, their leaves forming a canopy that obliterated the view of the skies. Indigenous species of woods such as lawaan, bakbakon, benwang, tipedos, lamod, tanguili, plenegi, guilo, tipulo, klani, unay, ulayan, and many others played hosts to hundreds of species of mountain and forest creepers, flyers, hangers, borers, hoppers, and other forms of life that can only exist in the natural environment of a forest.

The forest, known as the abode of the spirits, is where the *b'liyans* (more commonly known as *baylans*) get medicines of roots and twigs, barks and leaves, words and whispers, and many more that cured the sick (Schlegel 1999, 184). Caves and crevices in the forest served as the *b'liyan's* altar where tribal rites and rituals are celebrated. Nooks sheltered the ancient burial jars where old ancestors lay at rest.

Game abounded, and the Dulangan Manobos, Blaans, and Tbolis hunted wild boars and deer. Where there were trees, there were the monkeys playing in the branches. In the forests flowed the sources of water — springs that turned into streams and rivers. There were fishes, reptiles, and crustaceans. Colonies of insects helped speed up the decay

of organic materials, and transforming wood and leaves into humus that fertilized the soil. But most of all, under the earth were gold, copper, coal, and other minerals.

Then Logging Companies Came

Logging companies came with their huge and rumbling machines, scarring the mountains and carving the roads. One by one the trees fell, tumbling with the echo of destruction. With each felled tree, hundreds of life forms died or went away.

Soon bunkhouses started forming along the logging roads, their occupants eager to lay their hands on the newly opened and very fertile lands. They picked and hoed, and the once forest lands produced rice and corn, coffee and cassava, fruits and vegetables.

As the settlers claimed more and more of the Lumad ancestral lands, the natives themselves learned the ways of the settlers. They learned to trade their lands for a bottle of Sio Hoc Tong, a pack of cigarette, or a can of sardines. They learned to cut the remaining trees, not to make a swidden farm, but to sell the timber. The Blaans of Glan sold illegal timber by floating the logs in the river and catching them at the delta before they drifted to the sea. Or they cut the timber into smaller pieces and hawked them to interested persons, especially those building a house. They learned to sell a lot of things, including leadership, culture, beliefs, wives, children, lands, corn, and others so they can have money to gamble. Unfortunately, they did not learn to plant more durable crops or use the technology of multi-cropping. They relied on planting rice or corn, the harvest of which could only sustain them for two months. They sold their land and looked for more fertile soil elsewhere, usually in the uplands.

Today, the forest is gone. Gone are the life forms that co-existed with it. Gone are the indigenous culture, knowledge, systems, and practices that developed from the ecosystem of the forest. The economic sources of the tribes are also gone. What remain are vast tracts of land that produce corn only with heavy input of chemical fertilizers. Where there is still relatively fertile soil, the land produces coffee and rice. Secondary products include bananas, peanuts, and root crops such as camote, cassava, and taro, which serve as the staple food of the tribe. Some of the Lumads grow vegetables such as tomatoes, eggplants, squashes, raddishes, and carrots as the bushes no longer yield wild yams and roots. They cultivate these vegetables in several areas in limited quantities. A few others plant

fruits for local consumption, and as source of cash to buy other needs like sugar, edible oil, matches, and more.



The Lumads associate biodiversity with the forest, although they do not know the term. They can identify various life forms and can trace their interdependence, but they cannot associate this with our responsibilities as humans. For example, they associate abundance of food with the presence of forest and they know that the destruction of the forest is caused by logging, *kaingin* (swidden farming), etc., but they do not plant trees and crops as a logical alternative. Somehow their framework ends with the destruction of the forest. The planting of trees for its rehabilitation is not part of the chain. They say that the forest has been there ever since; they never planted a seed to create it. When they cut trees for their *kaingin*, the trees always grew back. What they do not realize is that the new trees need hundreds of years to grow big.

We do not need to teach the Lumads about respect for the environment. They have existed for centuries in harmony with the earth. The Lumads may have limited understanding of the interrelatedness, but they are not ignorant of the importance of these resources for everybody's survival. They have the capacity to learn that they need not wait for the forest to regenerate by itself, but that they themselves can help restore the forest to its original state by prohibiting *kaingin* in forested areas, and by planting more trees in denuded areas.

The Lumads' Ancestral Domain

Once upon a time, according to a Teduray legend (T'duray ADC 1996), the brothers Mamalu and Tabunaway lived on the shores of Cotabato. One day, the older brother Mamalu went to the mountains to hunt, leaving Tabunaway in the village. While Mamalu was away, Shariff Kabungsuwan arrived to preach the teachings of Islam. Tabunaway heard the teachings of Shariff Kabungsuwan and was converted to Islam. When Mamalu came home, he was angry to learn that his younger brother had converted to Islam without consulting him. So they decided to divide the land. The uplands went to the older brother Mamalu, while the lowlands went to the younger brother Tabunaway. Mamalu became the ancestor of the Lumads, while Tabunaway became the ancestor of the Muslims.

If we follow the legend of the Tedurays, then the ancestral domain of the Lumads would cover half of Mindanao. But the Lumads are not claiming one half of Mindanao. They only want a portion of the remaining lands where they used to roam.

I will mention some of these ancestral lands.

The ancestral lands of the Manobos include the lands of Lebak, Kalamansig, Kulaman, Palimbang, Esperanza, Bagumbayan, Tulunan, and Colombio in Sultan Kudarat; the uplands of North Cotabato, near the Davao and Bukidnon boundaries; the Davao del Norte and Agusan del Sur boundaries; Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Sur boundaries; and some towns of Surigao del Norte (Rodil 1992, 5). Almost all of these ancestral lands are in the uplands and ridges because, according to the Manobos, it is easier to locate a place or see things around you when you are at the top of the mountain. These lands served as the highways long before roads traversed these provinces. These Manobos are usually identified according to the specific area where they live. Some are named after their oldest known ancestors who represent several clans. Thus, we have the Dulangans of Kulaman, the Arumanens of Carmen, the Matigsalogs of Davao and Bukidnon, the Ata Manobos of Davao, the Higaonons of Bukidnon, and the Agusan Manobos.

TRICOM is at present helping four Lumad organizations that have been granted their Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claims. These organizations are the Kulaman Manbo Dulangan Organization (KMDO), the Tboli Ubo Claimants Organization (TUCO), the Dawing Kandang

Claimants Organization (DAKCO), and the B'laan Manobo Kaganfon De Tana (BLAMAKADETA).

The KMDO ancestral domain claim covers more than 9,000 hectares located in Kulaman, Sultan Kudarat. The TUCO claim covers 16,000 hectares in Surallah, South Cotabato. The DAKCO claim covers 2,500 hectares, also in Surallah, South Cotabato, while the BLAMAKADETA claim covers 15,000-20,000 hectares in Glan, Sarangani. Incidentally, the members of DAKCO are also Tboli Ubos, but they belong to a different clan and have therefore made their own claims.

As the settlements are highly dispersed within the claimed territory, it had become necessary to form them into clusters around which ancestral domain plans are created. KMDO has seven clusters, TUCO has four clusters, DAKCO has one cluster, and BLAMAKADETA has one cluster.

Let me describe three clusters in the KMDO ancestral domain.

The Binlibol cluster. Binlibol is a sitio of Barangay Langubang. It is characterized by barren and rocky mountains where most people plant corn. A little forest exists not very far from where the source of water gushes forth. The size of the claim of Sitio Binlibol is 1,020 hectares which including Bagang-bagang, is populated by about 700 families. A portion of the domain is within the Integrated Forest Management Agreement (IFMA) 20 concessions of Consunji. Another 1,500 hectares in nearby Lagubang are a native reservation, but a large part of the reservation is already mortgaged to settlers despite the fact that it is communally titled under CARP.

The Midpanga cluster. Midpanga is a sitio of Barangay Kuden. It has a little remaining forest where native cane varieties are found. For the most part, it is barren mountains. The size of the claim is about 1,000 hectares, but some twenty hectares of this are within IFMA Plantation 20. About 400 hectares have been surveyed by DAR in 1995 for stewardship program. The collective title is in the possession of three people, among them the barangay captain. Another 800 hectares have been distributed by DAR to some 500 beneficiaries under CARP.

The Laguton cluster. The Laguton cluster has the biggest number of settlements as it covers Barangay Tinalon, Sitio Laguton, Sitio Minting, Sitio Bakbaken, and Sitio Badiangon of Barangay Sabanal, Kalamansig, and Sitio Isukong of Barangay Kuden. The AD claim approximately reaches 1,000 hectares. The community is located near the river of Tran where portion of the lands are planted to rice, a little corn, and coffee. Surrounding the center of Bakbaken are farms planted to several kinds

of crops as in the farms of Sitio Badiangon. Part of the Laguton AD claim covers IFMA Plantation 20, and another portion is within DAR's agrarian reform area. Ninety-four households occupied the four sitios of Laguton, Minting, Badiangon, and Isukong.

In Sitio Bakbaken, there are only twelve households and a chapel in the center. Surrounding the center are farms planted to corn, upland rice, camote, cassava, taro and others.

Sitio Badyangon is a part of Barangay Sabanal of the municipality of Kalamansig. It is settled along the road traversing IFMA 21. There are twenty households scattered near the center, a Catholic chapel, a *salsalan* (blacksmith shop) and a cemetery nearby. There are mountains and forested hills in Kedasud, Tebogkes, Segeleten, Takub Mamas, and Meketkitan. Bald mountains are in Satil, Banog, Meguwawa, and other parts of the area. Apart from these, there are caves such as Ilib Tabako and Neogdas.

In Sitio Laguton, there is a small forest and a 3-hectare reforestation project planted with Narra. The rest of the lands are cogonal. There are caves, springs, streams, a waterfall, and a river. These water sources supply the irrigation for the ricefields located near the sitio center.

Sitio K'defang (in Palimbang) has no remaining forest, only denuded hills, rivers; and small streams. There is tertiary growth where some wild yams and herbs can be found. The AD claim covers 3,000 hectares, but the documents are not complete yet. Part of the area is claimed by KMDO. There is no organization, but there are about 600 claimants. DENR has already surveyed around 200 hectares for the Visayan and Muslim settlers, but the Sultan protested the survey and sent away the Muslims.

Sitio Sagabsab is surrounded with denuded mountains though there are small residual forest areas. There are ricefields, but these have not been planted for several cropping seasons because of the long drought. There are springs and sources of water, but these have been too small to support the irrigation of the ricefields. The ancestral domain claim is 500 hectares with thirty claimant families. There are Visayan settlers who possess about 200 hectares of land within the domain because earlier Manobos have sold these lands to them. There is also a portion of the claim that falls within the DAR's Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) areas.

The entire area of Midtungok is already subdivided among the beneficiaries of the Agrarian Reform Land Distribution Program. The

Manobos did not know who initiated the distribution and many of the lots were awarded to non-Manobo CARP beneficiaries, while majority of the Manobos moved uphill to find other lands to till. The ARC area reaches the communities of Sitio Bob and Kiasok.

Sitio B'langas, Barangay Midtungok has some irrigated lands planted to rice. There is a small residual forest in the mountain where cane can still be gathered for trading. There is also a school where some Subanens and Muslims have settled nearby. There is a 40-hectare land within the IFMA concession. The ancestral domain claim is estimated at 400 hectares for a population of about 2,000.

The ancestral lands of the Tbolis are next to the Manobos, on the sides of Bagumbayan and Palimbang going to Lake Sebu, T'boli, Polomolok and north to Surallah. But the Tboli-Ubo or Obo are a mixed lot. Their ancestral lands are found between the Tboli and Manobo ancestral lands. This is perhaps because they are said to be a tribe that came out from the intermarriages of both tribes.

The ancestral domain of the Tboli-Ubo is scattered in several sitios within the triboundaries of Lake Sebu and Surallah of South Cotabato and Bagumbayan of Sultan Kudarat. It is bounded on the North by the hills of Tudok Salabanog, Spartan, Abaka, Bok, Kiyantay, Datal El, Datal Lawa, and Lawa River. On the East are the communities of Kolonyeku, Lusok, Taboto, Lamsuging, Malunes, and Sambayang, parts of Surallah. The boundaries in the South are the communities of Sambayang, Lambadak, Talasak, Tabila, Tatuli, Tudok K'Beton, and Tasufu, part of Lake Sebu; and on the West are the Lawa River, the communities of Afag and Kulosubong, and the mountain of Tudok Salabanog, also part of Lake Sebu. It has an estimated area of 20,000 hectares of rolling hills and is traversed by creeks of Afag, Tubak, Mahi, Kukob and Malunes or Malunis.

In TUCO, the claim consists of four main clusters of communities namely Tubak, Datal Lawa, (Kiantay and Lamsuging included), Malunes, and Lambadak. Tubak is the political center of the ancestral domain claim. Originally known as Tabyolong, it is named after a tree (byolong) which grows in the area. It was also known as Kasab, or pit trap. Tubak is named after a creek of the same name that runs from Abaka Hills to Afag River.

Kandang is part of sitio Dawing of Barangay Bai Saripinang, Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat and is the ancestral lands of the Kandang and Gayaw clans of the Tboli-Ubo tribe. It is a 2,500-hectare span of

rolling hills and mountains located about four kilometers away in the western side of barangay Bai Saripinang and sixteen kilometers from the municipality of Bagumbayan. It has twenty-five households with thirty registered voters and eighty-five percent of the inhabitants are Tboli-Ubos. The rest are Ilonggos, Manobos, and Moros.

Lanaw Banwang is a sitio of Barangay Datal Bukay, Glan, in Sarangani Province, located near the northwestern boundary of Malapatan and farther east of Davao del Sur, specifically the municipality of Jose Abad Santos or Kaburan. It is part of the Blaan and Manobo tribes' claim comprising of thirteen sitios or communities and covering an estimated area of about 20,000 hectares. The terrain is no better than Tubak as it is characterized by high mountains and steep cliffs.

Sustainable Development in the IP Context

For the Lumads, the concept of development simply means the presence of a forest that provides food to eat, and a little farm to raise crops to sell and earn money to buy their other needs. But Western development strategists think differently. They extract resources which are mostly found in the ancestral lands of indigenous peoples in developing countries. They keep on expanding until one day the earth becomes too hot and melts the ice. Floods then wash away the crops, and people die of famine and diseases, wars, and calamities.

From simply being "development" the term evolved into "sustainable development," as people saw the environmental degradation that has resulted from the type of development practiced in most Western countries. Development paradigms also shifted from merely production-oriented development to people-centered development, influencing not only political actions but also economic policies of funding institutions and social and cultural organizations (Declaration on the Right to Development 1986, 1).

Under DAO 2, several Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADCs) were awarded, and Ancestral Domain Management Plans (ADMPs) were formulated, supposedly following the sustainable development framework. The government supported this effort by establishing support structures, programs, and projects. But a closer look at the ADMPs formulated and approved by the DENR reveals many anomalies. Many CADCs were awarded to questionable claimants, not to the rightful claimants. The budget for the ADMPs was spent on

other things. Most claimant communities did not find the plans relevant. They complained that they did not participate in their formulation, and that the DENR was not sincere in implementing them.

The Lumad communities were becoming poorer despite President Ramos' Medium Term Philippine Development Plan, President Estrada's development corridors and poverty eradication, and President Arroyo's modernization of agriculture.

The enactment into law of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 is thought to usher in peace for the Lumads and prevent their total assimilation. However, some critics say that most indigenous communities are already integrated into the Philippine body politic through the tribal barangays, courtesy of the Local Government Code of 1991. But this intervention serves only the political interests of the local officials. These tribal barangays do not receive economic, political, or social services due to a government political unit. Lumad governance is not capable of countering the damage done by government integrative and marginalization efforts through the years.

Poverty Among the Lumads

The Lumads comprise about thirty percent of the total population that dwells in the hinterlands of sixteen out of twenty-two provinces of Mindanao. They suffer from poverty, coupled with powerlessness and cultural degeneration. Their ancestral lands continue to dwindle in size and in utility. The loss of the land has resulted in the loss of their capability to become autonomous communities that could respond to their own problems and needs (Headland, www.sil.org, 1).

Various administrations have formulated policies and development plans, but without taking the Lumads into serious consideration. The Commission on National Integration wanted them integrated into the mainstream of Philippine society. Realizing that this was not an easy task, the government created the Philippine Assistance for National Minorities (PANAMIN). The government also created the Office of Muslim Affairs and Cultural Communities, which disregarded the fact that Lumads and Muslims are two different peoples who have different systems and hold different beliefs. The government divided the agency into the Office of Muslim Affairs (OMA) and the Office of Northern and Southern Cultural Communities. But even though the offices were separated, the framework used was the same. The direction of the

government program was vague and it was not clear whether the indigenous peoples knew of its existence.

The most evident problem of the Lumads is poverty brought about by environmental degradation. Decades ago, the forest sustained them. As the forest is gone, they have to rely on their farms. But now, their harvest is not enough to feed a family. They are not lazy, but are traditional hunters and gatherers who grew up in the forest, which provided them with various crops. They are not traditional farmers, thus, they resisted the settled way of farming (Abinales 2000, 79).

Another Lumad problem is the absence of strong, dignified, and autonomous indigenous peoples' communities able to govern themselves. This is aggravated by the peace situation where there is persistent fighting among armed groups—New People's Army (NPA), Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and terrorists—that any effort to progress has very little chance of succeeding. The peace problem may be seen as both a cause and an effect. The cause of the absence of peace is the absence of development. If there is development, peace will reign.

Digging deeper into the problem, one learns that the problem is not merely abject poverty. In some cases the IP communities are found in areas with rich resources. Neither is development support a problem because government- or foreign-funded projects have been implemented in the uplands for decades now.

One major factor causing the poverty situation is the communities' lack of awareness of the power they hold in their hands—that they are capable of developing despite little or no support from the government. Another factor is the absence of active participation of women in other aspects of community development.

Outside support came both as a curse and a blessing. It was a curse because it opened the gateway to various unprecedented interventions, hastening their integration into the dominant social system. It was a blessing because it paved the way for a deeper understanding and appreciation of their specific contribution as a people, and the need to preserve whatever is left of their culture.

Goal Oriented Project Planning (GOPP)

After filing the Ancestral Domain claim, we assisted the Lumad communities in formulating their Ancestral Domain Sustainable

Development and Protection Plan (ADSDP) using Goal Oriented Project Planning (GOPP).

Prior to MADC 2 there were already efforts by different groups and agencies to assist the different tribes of Mindanao. DAO 2, issued in 1993, already included the formulation of an ancestral domain management plan as a requirement for claim applications. The Church has an Indigenous People's Apostolate (IPA) working in sixteen out of twenty-two provinces of Mindanao to respond to IP needs. What we did with MADC 2 complemented what the NGOs have been doing, except that we used the GOPP method in formulating ancestral domain development plans, and adapting them to the Lumad context.

The GOPP tool or methodology was piloted in Kulaman. It was eventually used in all our areas. The process includes: environmental scanning or resource inventory, entity and timeframe definition, stakeholders identification and support matrix setup, problem identification and analysis, problem and objective trees building, objectives clustering and programs prioritizing, and logical framework formulation.

The environmental scanning allowed the Lumads to see their present situation compared to their situation ten or more years ago. This enabled them to identify their available human, cultural, social, economic, and political resources.

What surfaced in the scanning was the interplay of roles among different groupings in the community such as the *b'liyan*, *panday* (blacksmith), dancers, warriors, hunters, farmers, leaders, women, children, and how they relate to the contemporary social groupings and institutions in various aspects of community living. It made possible the identification of those who would play important roles in the regeneration of their economy, governance, and culture in the light of the present context; and the definition of a culturally appropriate ancestral domain development plan. Some practices were identified as still beneficial for the regeneration of their governance, in establishing an economic base, and in linking with the other tribes.

We learned the manner in which they maintain the traditional form of organization and how they govern themselves including, but not limited to, selecting a leader; sharing responsibility; and knowing how laws are made, disputes resolved, and justice and related concepts implemented.

We started the scanning with the condition of the forest because it was where they began as hunters and food gatherers. The before and after comparisons were mostly in terms of the basic needs they get from

the forest and their mode of farming. The Lumads saw the change in the state of the forest as significant in bringing about their present situation. In tracing the causes of the destruction of the forest, we listed logging (legal) and "*laging-laging*" (small-scale illegal logging), kaingin, and increase in population. We fleshed out how these environmental changes affected their systems, and how they coped with the changes.

They had just started farming a few years back and had not yet learned other ways of farming. The practice of kaingin in steep slopes was no longer productive, but because they knew no other way, they continued doing it. The change in the state of the forest resulted in hunger, discouragement of the leaders, scattering of the tribes, and turning away from tradition, among others.

They coped by slowly adapting to the settlers' systems. They started sending their children to school. They learned to make *pakisama*¹ and even encouraged inter-marriage in an attempt to be closer to the settlers. They participated in elections and practiced the local or barangay governance system. Despite these attempts discrimination was prevalent. Believing that they, too, would earn from companies or individuals, they sold their ancestral lands to loggers and settlers.

The GOPP expressed their dream to have a better future for the coming generations. We observed that they had very limited means of projecting what is "better" for them. They described their dreams simply as "maayo or pareha kaniadto (good or the same as before)" but what is "maayo" or "pareha" could not be defined easily. The facilitators could only break down their dream into more achievable goals based on what they said. The program "Development of Ancestral Domain of Dulangan Manobos of Kulaman" was very general. At any rate, as long as they agreed on what "development" consisted of, we let it be. In their case, development was simply having enough food for the family all year long, and having a bit of additional income for other needs such as clothing, medicine, and schooling for the children.

The next step was identifying the keyplayers and stakeholders, and formulating the support matrix. This part was easier but also ironic. They easily identified the support groups such as the Church, LGUs, GAs, NGOs, and individuals. It took them sometime, however, to identify the lead players—themselves. Somehow they had the notion that they would just benefit from the plan but not work as primemovers in its realization. This was clarified later when the support matrix was done. It showed that they must act first and do things by themselves before outsiders can provide the support.

Now We Have the Plan, What's Next?

A few weeks after the GOPPs, the AD Management Teams were formed. Each program was supposed to have a team or committee to take charge of its implementation and to monitor its progress. Our problem was that no such team or committee existed in Lumad traditional governance structure. These committees had to be created in the claimant organization to serve as channels for our assistance and supervision. The Lumads chose their own teams. The team members were chosen by their respective communities. The Lumads themselves defined their own tasks and functions.

As facilitators, our problem was that we were not familiar with the capability of the members. We ended up with teams whose members were not known for leadership qualities or for being active. Very few people could be relied upon to do the tasks. The outcome was a blend of people who could barely understand concepts and could hardly express themselves. Consequently, the teams did not function because the team leaders did not know how to call a meeting or facilitate one. It became evident to us how far they have been left behind as a result of their isolation.

Trainings were conducted in the hope that the teams would learn to implement the plan on their own. Unfortunately, this did not happen because most, if not all, claimant communities could not identify their plans. While there were structures and officers in place, these were not functioning.

As they could not offer any alternative, we had to go on and try as much as possible to make the process "user friendly" and minimize any adverse impact on their systems. We reasoned that since outside interventions and influences were already creeping in and the Lumads were changing anyway, we might as well have a hand in propelling these changes towards a people-oriented development framework—a framework that respects human dignity, promotes economic and political equality, and encourages participation in all aspects, especially in caring for the children and the environment.

Towards the end of July and the start of August 1999, we prepared the modules for the trainings, assessed our performance of the past six months, appraised the staff, and took a break. The modules that came out included biodiversity and ecology, watershed and sustainable development, diversified and integrated farming systems, organizing,

facilitating and leadership, planning, monitoring and evaluation, simple bookkeeping, and finance management. Later we had a study-exposure at Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Center in Bansalan to learn how to teach and implement Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT) 1-4.

The first training we conducted included organizational, leadership, and facilitation training. We compressed all the subjects because of their very limited attention span. The result was not good as Manobo leaders retained very little of the various topics.

The Lumads associated planning with what time to wake up or what important things to do which were not part of the daily routine. They had no idea of community planning for improvement except when someone called for a *dagyaro*.² They did not ask any question regarding what to do to improve the community because they expected the leaders to know better. And they expected their leaders to just tell them what to do. Through the years, the leaders thought they were doing fine in leading their people, which perhaps was true, based on the customary concepts of leadership. They attributed their lack of development to the LGUs and other agencies but not to themselves. When they found their condition becoming more unbearable, they looked for outside help as they no longer found the datu and other traditional leaders able to help.

Assessments or evaluations were also not part of their daily life. If anything was done, they did not look back to whether it was done well or badly, or whether it helped them or not. There was no evidence of organizing, facilitating and leading. They also have no idea what monitoring and evaluating were. We failed to consider that they had no direct experience of such a political process, except in tribal governance which is very elementary.

After all the training, we somehow expected community implementation to improve. There were slight improvements on the level of organization. These were evident in the appearance of more crops in the fields and farms, the relative cleanliness of the children and the surroundings, and the participation of women in community discussions. Decision making, however, remained a weak aspect in most of the communities as coordination remained elusive.

In our evaluation, it came out that we conducted the trainings too soon. We should have observed that most of the communities had no clear idea what an organization was and how it operated. The Lumads did not even consider their traditional structure as an organization when in fact it was.

Only after a year did we realized that the training did not help much to improve their organization. We decided to put some of the training on hold until they comprehended the concepts of organization and management.

Work with the Lumads is exceedingly slow—as it is very difficult to mobilize them.

Their traditional system does not prepare them for participation because in the past only the datu made the decision and the members simply obeyed. They are not used to giving their opinion, except in *antang-antang*. But antang-antang only covers marriage negotiations and resolving family or clan disputes. The Lumads are not able to cope with the demand for individual or community participation in discussions or meetings.

The Indigenous Peoples Apostolate

The Dulangan Manobos of Kulaman are blessed with a supportive church and government institutions and some friendly individuals. Since the 1980s, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) has been working in Kulaman, promoting IP rights and providing services to the Manobos. The OMI runs the Notre Dame of Kulaman High School where over a hundred Dulangan Manobo children are enrolled as scholars. They also provide a dormitory for the boys, while the Religious of Notre Dame Missionaries runs the girls' dormitory and administers a health program in some Manobo communities. The Missionaries of Christ Jesus based in Lañgal operates the primary school in Binlibol and Bagsing where the majority of students are Manobos.

The Indigenous Peoples Apostolate supports the effort in claiming the ancestral lands of the Dulangan Manobos. Their programs familiarize the Manobos with the concepts of health, education, and livelihood. They conduct exposures, trainings, and conferences to expand the views of the Manobo leaders, although the communities' responses to these efforts is another matter.

Kulaman was one of the piloted areas of the World Bank-funded Mindanao Rural Development Project implemented through the local government. The Manobos got a portion of the project, with the help of the formulated AD development. How the project was implemented is another matter.

Let's Hear the Women...

In working with the Lumads we have to consider their worldview or how they lead life the way they deem proper (Schlegel 1999, 169). We are not anthropologists, so we are limited in the extent of our observations. We just assume that appropriate intervention and positive responses would help much in changing the situation of the Lumads. There are still claimants and ancestral domains to claim which are laden with both human and natural resources. There is a legal instrument for making the claim—the IPRA, which provides for support system in realizing development (Aguilar 1998, 13; RA 8371, 1).

IPRA provides for and ensures participation of Lumad women in community and nation building (RA 8371, 1997 Chap. 5, Sec. 26). Five years have passed and yet Lumad women are still grappling with culturally and socially induced discrimination and male dominance. While IPRA provides for the establishment of support structures and appropriate programs to respond to community-initiated women activities, Lumad women's rights in general remain virtually unknown in most indigenous communities.

Knowing that Lumad communities are generally male dominated, we made it a condition that thirty percent of the participants of the planning should be women. During the actual planning, however, the Service Team noticed that there were seldom Lumad women in the sessions, so there was not a plan that was made for or by Lumad women. In the actual activities, less than ten percent of the participants were women even though there were more women than men in Tudog and Mantil in Kulaman. The same was true with the Tboli-Ubo and Blaans in other areas. In Mantil, it was the Bisaya women who made the percentage of women attendance higher, but even then less than ten percent of those in attendance actively participated. The results were presented to various agencies later (KMDO, TUCO, DAKCO and BLAMAKDETA ADSDPP, 1999 and 2002).

TRICOM insisted that since women have a bigger role in production, they should be involved not only in the planning, but also in the entire process of implementing and assessing the project. To exclude them from the decision-making process is to marginalize them further. The Service Team believes that women should share in the leadership for the development of the tribe, as their role has long been unrecognized. Unless

justice is served to the Lumad women, there would be no qualitative development.

To remedy the situation, TRICOM conducted a series of focus group discussions with the Dulangan Manobo women of Kulaman from November 1999 to May 2000 so that we would know them better — their situation, problems, dreams, and aspirations. Without Lumad women in leadership, no Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection program would be for real. No peace would be possible.

From what we have observed and heard from casual conversations, women are viewed often as the cause of disputes. Most stories talk of women who run away with other men. The cases are resolved through "antang," which results in the doubling of the bride price returned to the parents of the husband, or to the husband himself. In some cases, the incident results in violence and *pangayaw* (raiding party). This is one of the reasons why women are not allowed to go out and attend functions or other activities (especially with men). Keeping them in the house would keep them away from temptation. Though there have been changes in these perceptions, the attitude towards women generally remains the same today.

Lumad women are the unwilling victims of their own culture. Until recently they didn't even have such concepts as love or respect. In a problem tree built up by the women who attended the FGDs, they described how their husbands and the community treat them and how they want very much to free themselves from bondage. They cited this as the main reason why they were grouchy. At first, they had difficulty opening up. They had to discuss among themselves if it was proper to divulge the abuses of their husbands, their parents, and the community. Realizing that by telling the truth they might be free, they decided to tell all and soon they were crying and laughing over the misfortunes and blessings of being Lumad and women.

The output of the women's GOPP was integrated into the general plan. Later, they identified the representatives from the communities to constitute the various Ancestral Domain Management Teams. In their latest assessment, the women said there was already a seed among the women that was difficult to suppress, and this was their realization of their rights. They saw that the change helped ease the burdens of life. They are now able to express their heavy loads as women which they had kept to themselves for so many years.

ADSDPP Presentation

After drafting the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) was presented to the different LGUs, NGOs, and GAs for their reactions and comments. The aim was to get their commitment to support and to plan. We had a problem in the presentation, as we knew the capability of the Lumads to present the plan in their own way. While they might have understood the contents of the document and could present the data in their own way, the panel may not understand any Manobo, Tboli or Blaen. Neither could the Lumads understand each other. The Manobos, for example, presented the plan in Bisaya, a language that many could not understand. While we at TRICOM were a stakeholder, we were not the lead players. And though we could have presented it ourselves as facilitators, that would certainly defeat our efforts to have Lumad full participation in the project from start to finish.

When the actual presentation in Kulaman came, we were not really sure if what they presented were the contents of the document because we ourselves did not understand a thing. At any rate, the presentation of the Kulaman Manobo Development Organization was conducted in September 1999 at the Manobo Tribal Center and was attended by about a hundred people. There were Manobos and some friends from the nearby Tboli and Teduray tribes, representatives from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) National and Provincial Offices, Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Regional and Municipal Offices, Department of Agriculture (DA) Municipal Office, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) Provincial Office, RNDM Sisters, Fr. Jun Matas and the Indigenous Peoples' Apostolate (IPA) Staff, MCJ Sisters, Sangguniang Bayan, AFRIM, TRICOM, Philnet and other friends.

The presentation gave us much realization. Foremost of this was the fact that the Lumads need much on-the-job training to be able to run the organization and implement the projects sustainably. At the rate they were running their communities, it would not take long for them to reach an impasse. If or when they reach this stage, no amount of training or exposure could regenerate their sense of dignity, economic sufficiency, and other aspects of their existence. By then, they would have lost more than what could be regained and further efforts would be futile. And no matter how we tried to protect them from the influences that we

brought, they were changing with or without us. This change was inevitable and fast.

In the first quarter of the year 2000, we gathered all the Ancestral Domain teams to assess the previous year's implementation. There was little progress cited since the formulation of the plan. We gathered that they did not make any action plan or know how to do it. Neither did they think that they (themselves) would implement it. They thought that we (TRICOM) would implement the plan and that they would benefit from it. It became evident at this point that the "dole out" system had taken root in their mental framework. We had to reorient them about our approach, which is summed up in this statement: *"We cannot bring in development, you have to work for it."*

The composition of the management teams was already completed by then and some had undergone the necessary trainings for leaders. However, as said earlier, the composition was not well chosen, thus, KMDO needed to reorganize and retain only those who had proven themselves capable of delivering their tasks. The rest just had to go, otherwise the management team would not function at all. After a 6-month delay the action planning was made. By then, the World Bank-funded Mindanao Rural Development Project through the local government unit was already implemented despite the weak organization.

The quarterly action planning was done by committees. The Kahagtayan Team (agriculture) included individual farm planning to enable each member to lay out the various crops to be planted according to varying slopes and soil conditions of each respective farm. The Fleku Katalunan (reforestation) team agreed to collect forest tree seeds for natural or assisted reforestation. They also agreed to ask the DENR for seedling support. The women planned to expand their home gardens, clean up the surroundings, and conduct a series of children's workshops. The Kitab (governance) team agreed to conduct focus group discussions to evolve necessary laws regarding the use of ancestral lands and other pertinent rules that would help govern the operation of the entire ancestral domain and the tribal organization.

By June 2000, the teams had their mid-year assessment. It was attended by representatives of various teams from different areas. The number of participants was more than we could possibly handle. After two quarters, we decided to have the assessments only with the volunteers, while the respective community teams did their own assessments at the community level.

Summary and Conclusion

MADC 2 is a very rich work and life experience. People who got involved with the project did not do it just for the work, but for the drama of life unfolding within the IP community. We implemented the project with two objectives: 1) to find the more appropriate approach in helping the Lumads; and 2) to test our methodology as adopted in their context.

As we went along with our partnership with the Lumads, we were confronted by the reality that if we had to assist them, we had to make decisions affecting our structures and the delivery of assistance. We formed the programs based on the Lumad priorities and made our plans in response to their capability building needs. One time, we had to put the trainings on hold as we observed that the Lumads learned very little from the trainings we conducted. We shifted to actual and on-field trainings as they found it easier to understand when they themselves did what they were taught.

We grew up with them, not only in number but also in the way we viewed our work and our lives. We no longer saw the different aspects of the project separately. It was no longer the environment or the people, we or them, their effort or ours, our project or theirs. We viewed all these interrelatedly such that environment and governance were given a gender sensitivity form, and the gender program became the aspect of governance. In the end, it was no longer a TRICOM, but the Lumads' project. And as they started to take the lead and give the project a distinct Lumad form, we started to recede in the background.

We thought peace and development work would only involve teaching peace and stirring ancestral domain development, but it was more than these. It was journeying with them towards understanding the realms not only of the economic or political, but also of the culture, different views, and frameworks.

We need not teach the Lumads peace, because in the real sense they lived it. They may have another manifestation of growing or maintaining peace and attaining development, but it just shows that there is a lot to be learned from them in this field.

Notes

¹ The value for good public relations through avoidance of open disagreement or conflict with others.

² A practice where the whole community pitches in to accomplish tasks like harvesting fruits and crops, building a house, or preparing the land for planting.

References Cited

- Abinales, P. N. 2000. *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the formation of the Philippine nation-state*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Aguilar, Delia D. 1998. *Towards a Nationalist Feminism*. Quezon City: Giraffe Books.
- Schlegel, S. A. 1999. *Wisdom from a Rainforest: The spiritual journey of an anthropologist*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Journals

- Rodil, B.R. 1992. *Struggle of the Lumad Tribes in Mindanao*. Tambara, Ateneo de Davao University Journal, Vol. IX, pp. 1-33.

Reports, Studies and other Publications

- AFRIM, PRRM and Philnet-Mindanao. 2001. *Food Basket Daw ang Mindanao?* Mindanao Focus Special Edition. AFRIM, PRRM and Philnet-Mindanao.
- TRICOM. 1998. *Defending the Land: Lumad and Moro peoples' struggle for ancestral domain in Mindanao*. TRICOM.
- DENR-PAWB, CI- Philippines, BCP-UPCIDS, FPE. 2002. *Philippine Biodiversity Conservation Priorities*. Final Report. DENR-PAWB, CI- Philippines, BCP-UPCIDS, FPE.

Unpublished Materials

- Moncano-Somozo, I.G. 2001. *The Journey: A proposal for Mindanao ancestral domain claim and development program 1*.
- TRICOM. 1996. *T'duray Ancestral Domain Claim*. A Research for CADC Application.
- TRICOM. 2003. *Mindanao Ancestral Domain Claim Project 2 Evaluation Proceeding*.

TRICOM. 1999. *Kulaman Manobo Dulangan Organization Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan.*

TRICOM. 2000. *B'laan- Manobo Kaganfon de Tana Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan.*

TRICOM. 2000. *T'boli - Ubo Claimant Organization Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan.*

TRICOM. 2000. *Dawing- Kandang Claimant Organization Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan.*