

Another reason for the persistent weakness of state machinery in post-Taliban Afghanistan is the fact that a higher priority has been given to immediate service delivery than to strengthening government institutional capacities. This is evident in the disproportionate donor funding for prominent national programs such as the NSP, and in the fact that two-thirds of international aid to Afghanistan is channeled outside the national budget (World Bank, 2009). Public institutions at both national and sub-national levels have received little attention (Nixon 2008; Lister 2009; Bijlert 2009). Although the government encourages bottom-up institution building through District Development Assemblies (DDAs) and Provincial Development Committees (PDCs), local governments have thus far exerted minimal influence on budget formation; what little budget is available is allocated by the central government to its line ministries (Nixon 2008, 5).

2. State building from the bottom up: the NSP

Shortly after the Taliban was ousted in 2001, a large number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) began to repatriate back to their rural communities, creating an urgent need for their reintegration and for rehabilitation of basic infrastructure. In response to this pressing need, in June 2002 the MRRD and the World Bank jointly introduced the NSP as a component of the Emergency Community Empowerment and Public Works Program⁵.

The NSP delivered quick results by mobilizing communities to build and rehabilitate roads, irrigation canals, schools, and clinics. The NSP helped establish Community Development Councils (CDCs) in 22,476 villages (NSP webpage 2009), reaching approximately 70% of Afghanistan's rural communities⁶. The NSP also was effective in transforming rural communities' perceptions of the government. Previously, rural society had generally perceived public authorities to be either oppressive and exploitative or associated with

⁵In 2003, the NSP was integrated into the National Development Framework (NDF), together with five other National Priority Programs (NPPs).

⁶ The NSP considers the number of communities to be 32,769 for CDC establishment purposes (Nixon 2008, 9).

empty promises in times of desperate need. The NSP sent a message to people in rural areas that the new public authorities truly cared about them. Following “free and fair” election of CDCs, some communities were able to retake control of their villages from the unaccountable local militias; others even saw enhanced participation by women and disadvantaged groups in community decision-making (Boesen 2004, 36-57; Kakar 2005, 14-16). However, the impact of the NSP has been limited and continues to face many challenges.

(1) Capacity of communities

While successful projects to some extent strengthened community solidarity and improved basic infrastructure, many communities remain vulnerable to chronic poverty, natural disasters, and violent pressures from local militias. Moreover, recent surveys suggest that the success of a few projects is not enough to transform deeply rooted rural distrust towards the central government (Brick 2008). To enhance community capacity and government legitimacy, continuous assistance is necessary in such areas as delivery of basic health and education services, women's empowerment, economic and livelihood activities, basic infrastructure and agriculture.

Moreover, not all community-led projects have had positive outcomes. Project outcomes have depended on multiple factors, including security, community social structures, traditional decision making mechanisms, the capacity of facilitating partners, project selection and design, and efficient block funds disbursement. Unsuccessful projects have produced frustration and have amplified villagers' distrust of the government and external actors. Furthermore, in some communities the prospect of lucrative funds has motivated local militias regain control by force, creating even more instability (Brick 2008). One survey found that participation by women continues to be extremely limited, and is often little more than a token gesture for the purpose of securing NSP funds (Boesen 2004, 37-41). In some cases, CDCs were captured by local elites, preventing it from meeting the collective needs of the community (Brick 2008); in others, delayed funding due to internal disputes or bureaucratic red tape

hindered project outcomes and lowered the villagers' expectations of the government (Barakat et al. 2006, 103-105).

The NSP has attempted to tackle various problems concerning NSP operation/facilitation and the capacity of communities to manage disputes and development. While the Afghan government and donors are considering a NSP exit strategy, there still remains a significant lack of skills, budget, and human resources for MRRD to fully assume the role of the NSP.

(2) Capacity of the government

The operating structure of the NSP was designed to meet a pressing need for service delivery without inefficiencies from leakage and corruption. It was organized to provide funds directly to CDCs, bypassing the government. In the initial stages of the NSP, an Oversight Consultant (NSP-OC) was established that was operationally autonomous from the MRRD and headed by international consultants⁷. Actual community development work was outsourced to Facilitating Partners (FPs), which were mostly international NGOs and Kabul-based national NGOs⁸.

As shown in Figure 1, operationally meaningful flows of information and resources occurred among the NSP, the FPs and the CDCs, most of it bypassing central and local governments. As a result, the field capacities of the MRRD and the Provincial MRRD (PRRD) were slow to improve, making more difficult the transfer of functional responsibility from the NSP to the MRRD. Moreover, the NSP management unit headed by international experts stood as an obstacle to the fostering of Afghan NSP ownership and the developing of the capacity of national staff.

In response to this situation, the MRRD decided to place NSP management directly

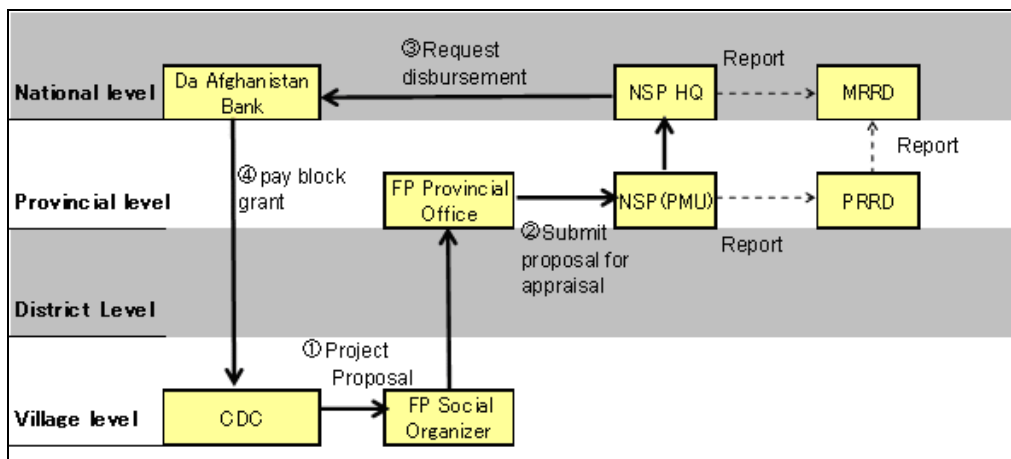
⁷ Responsibility for implementation of the NSP was initially outsourced to the NSP-OC. After 2007, the NSP-OC handed its responsibility over to the NSP Management Unit, which is under the jurisdiction of MRRD (MRRD 2006, 28-30) but operationally autonomous from the government.

⁸ Major international NGOs include BRAC, AKDN, DACAAR, Oxfam, Action Aid, IRC, CARE, and GAA. One international organization, UN-Habitat, also served as a FP. Major national NGOs are CHA, SDF, and GRSP.

under its jurisdiction while still allowing it operational autonomy. Moreover, Afghan consultants rather than expatriate consultants now head the management unit (NSP-MU). As part of the NSP exit strategy, a newly established MRRD department, the Community-Led Development Department (CLDD), is mandated to oversee CDCs that have completed NSP projects (see Figure 2).

Such “Afghanization” efforts notwithstanding, MRRD continues to suffer from chronic personnel shortages and low staff capacity, possibly due to the lack of a standardized training program and to the considerably lower salaries of Afghan government officials compared to those of the international organizations⁹. Moreover, the limited number of ministry staff is stretched thin trying to manage multiple meetings and “training courses” provided by different donors while at the same time engaging in policy formulation and monitoring programs and projects. This capacity gap of the government poses one of the biggest challenges to long-term development of rural Afghanistan, but JICA’s experience working closely with MRRD may provide a way forward.

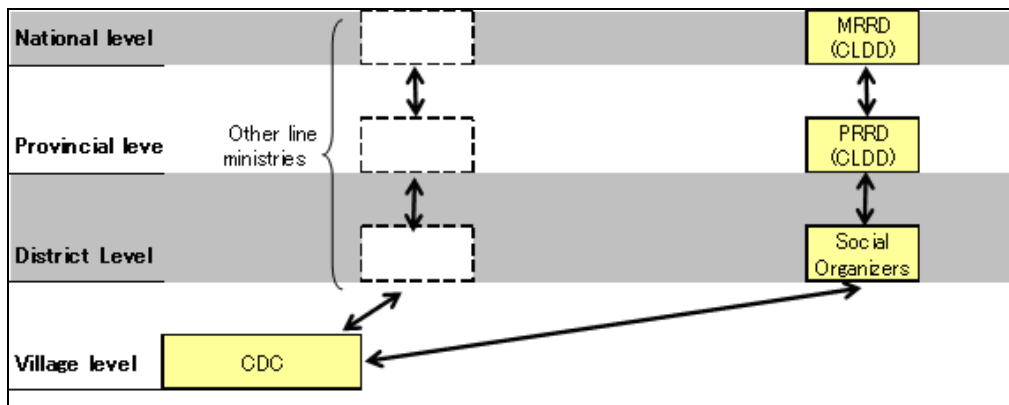
Figure 1. Flow of NSP documents and funding¹⁰



⁹ The salary of Afghan government officials is said to be less than one tenth of that earned by a senior NSP manager or by local staff of USAID or UN (information obtained by author while serving in Kabul office, 2005-2008)

¹⁰ Figures 1 and 2 are the author's interpretation of the MRRD(2006) document "The expansion of NSP: Empowering communities to deliver the I-ANDS benchmarks"

Figure 2. Suggested structure for sustainable CDCs (after NSP)



3. JICA Community development projects

(1) Overview of Japanese assistance to Afghanistan

Since the initial stages of reconstruction, Japan has been active in Afghanistan state-building initiatives. Japan hosted the Tokyo Conference for reconstruction in January 2002, led the DDR¹¹ and DIAG¹² processes, funded the NSP and NABDP¹³, and rehabilitated Kabul International Airport and major trunk roads (Kandahar-Kabul highway, Kandahar-Herat highway, and the ring road in Balkh).

Since 2001, JICA has been assisting in three main sectors: (1) agriculture and rural development, (2) urban development, and (3) education and health. This assistance has been based on the two core principles of human security and capacity development. JICA has worked closely with MRRD and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL)¹⁴ to achieve synergy in rural areas between economic and social development.

(2) JICA Support Programme for Reintegration and Community Development in Kandahar (JSPR)

In 2003, in the early stages of reconstruction, JICA initiated the JICA Support

¹¹ DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration)

¹² DIAG (Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups)

¹³ National Area-Based Development Program, one of the National Priority Programmes of the MRRD

¹⁴ JICA has so far rehabilitated three main agricultural experimental stations in Kabul and a rice research center in Nangarhar, with plans to disseminate tested technology in Ballch, Bamiyan, Kunduz, and Takhar.

Programme for Reintegration and Community Development in Kandahar (JSPR). The project purpose was to promote community-led development by identifying and developing capacity in local development actors such as CDC members, locally based NGOs, and officials of PRRDs. The JSPR targeted two related NSP issues: decrease the high dependency of communities on external resources and strengthen the capacity of local development actors for more sustainable, locally driven development.

To decrease the high dependency of communities on external resources, the JSPR sought to maximize local knowledge and resources by down-sizing community block grants while increasing facilitation and participation. Under the program a second round of block-grants, one third the amount of the NSP, was distributed to selected communities that had completed NSP projects. To increase the sense of ownership while yielding low cost projects, JSPR trained CDC members to identify and mobilize local resources and traditional knowledge. Based on *ashar*, a tradition of cooperative labour, communities implemented such projects as rehabilitation of *karez* (traditional wells) and irrigation canals, construction of *hamam* (public baths), and cooperative dairy farms at a much lower cost than under the NSP. The JSPR provided basic skills training courses to selected villagers in carpentry, electrical work, water pump repair, and embroidery. The JSPR also trained CDC members to formulate a more comprehensive, longer-term community development plan so that they could actively seek funding from other donors and national programs. Several CDCs have since approached donors and government institutions with their community development plans.

To decrease dependency on large international and Kabul-based national NGOs, JSPR contracted with locally based NGOs to develop their capacity through theoretical training¹⁵ and hands-on practice. Initially the locally based NGOs could not compete with the large international NGOs because contracting with the NSP required high-level skills in

¹⁵ The modules were Project Cycle Management (PCM), Project Rural Appraisal (PRA), Monitoring and Evaluation, and peace-building works.

administration, English, and implementation. However, with proper training and guidance, the local NGOs demonstrated that they could eventually deliver more effectively since they carried lower personnel costs, knew more about local politics and practices, and were more likely to remain in the area even after the funds decreased. Based on this experience, JSPR later developed a training model under the MRRD for local development actors in collaboration with the newly established Afghanistan Institute for Rural Development (AIRD)¹⁶.

(3) Inter-Communal Rural Development Project (IRDP)

Another JICA project, the Inter-Communal Rural Development Project (IRDP), took a different approach in mobilizing local resources and strengthening the capacity of communities and local governments. In December 2005, JICA and MRRD started this as a project that clustered groups of communities to promote inter-village solidarity and to address needs that frequently crossed village borders (see Figure 3)¹⁷.

During the three-year project period, the IRDP organized 19 clusters in three provinces¹⁸, and implemented cluster-wide projects that were out of reach of the NSP block grant budget ceiling, such as inter-village roads, drinking water supply networks, irrigation dams, and micro-hydro powered electricity plants (see Table 2). The IRDP produced two notable outcomes: fostering inter-village solidarity, and developing core capacity for MRRD officials.

¹⁶ The AIRD was established in 2006 to undertake policy research and educational training of the rural development sector. JICA and MRRD are currently negotiating a project proposal to develop the training capacity of AIRD.

¹⁷ One cluster is composed of three to six CDCs chosen according to such criteria as geographic proximity, shared resource endowment, and common development needs

¹⁸ Bamiyan, Kandahar, and Balkh Provinces

Table 2. Comparison of NSP and IRDP

	NSP	IRDP (JICA)
Coverage	One CDC	One Cluster CDC (three to six CDCs)
Size of funding	Average grant of US\$ 33,000; maximum limit of US\$ 60,000 per village (US\$ 200 per family)	US\$ 167,000 per cluster
Types of projects	<u>Intra</u> -community (tertiary) roads, irrigation canals, wells, generators, livelihood projects	<u>Inter</u> -community (secondary) roads, clinics, schools, water supply networks, irrigation dams, micro-hydro water electricity plants and grids

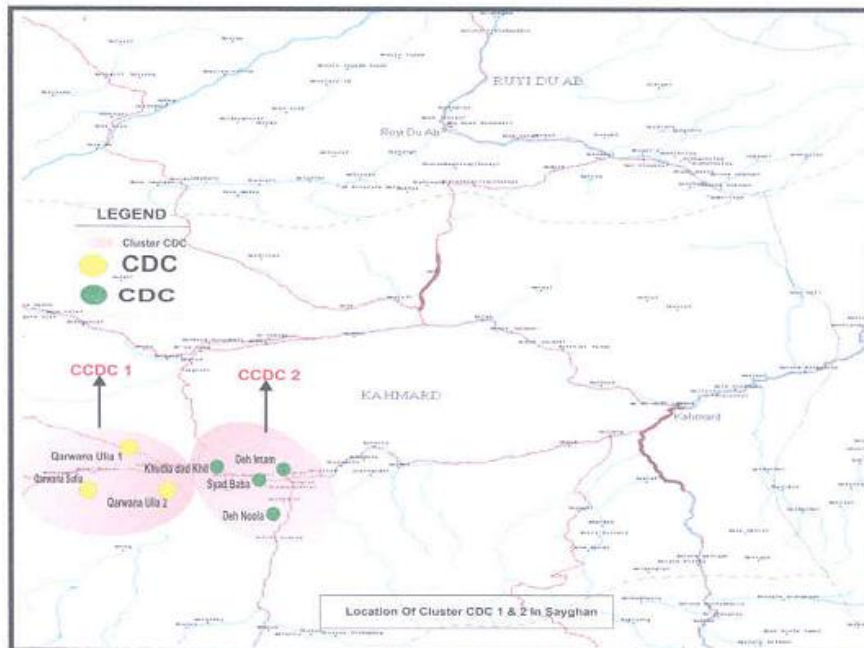
With regard to the first notable outcome, in a number of cases the cluster model fostered solidarity and promoted reconciliation among conflicting communities. Common development needs combined with incentives for inter-community projects helped open up opportunities for dialogue and collaboration among communities that had once been in violent conflict with each other. In one community, however, an armed attack against a construction vehicle occurred, probably due to unclear procurement procedures and a corrupt CCDC (Cluster Community Development Council) member. This negative incident indicates the vulnerability of these types of projects to conflicts and the need for preventative measures to avoid raising new conflicts. Based on its experience in conflict mitigation, the IRDP developed a framework for conflict management that emphasizes the importance of early preventive efforts.¹⁹ An IRDP revision of the NSP manual to apply to cluster-level projects is now being adopted by the NSP²⁰ to start a scaled-up pilot cluster-model project²¹, supported by the World Bank Japan Social Development Fund (JSDF).

¹⁹ The IRDP framework divides the conflict management process into three phases: (1) preventing the occurrence of any conflict; (2) preventing conflict escalation; and (3) resolving conflict. The IRDP learned that prevention efforts in the earlier phase are crucial; once a conflict scales up to the cluster level, the complexities of issues and actors render its resolution increasingly difficult.

²⁰ According to Annex H of the NSP Operation Manual V (2009), a Cluster Community Development Council (CCDC) in the NSP-JSDF pilot project will consist of a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 CDCs. Block Grant entitlement for a given CCDC is estimated at US\$16,815 per CDC multiplied by the number of CDCs in the CCDC, a maximum of US\$168,150 per CCDC.

²¹ Scheduled to be implemented in some 40 locations.

Figure 3. Two clusters in Sayghan District, Bamiyan Province



With regard to the second notable outcome, the IRDP was able to identify and develop core skills for central and provincial officials of MRRD. Previously, PRRD staff had performed conflict resolution and supervision tasks on an ad-hoc basis. After receiving training on project management, coordination and peace-building, however, they were able to plan their tasks according to a pre-determined timetable and to take more proactive roles in conflict resolution in the field. They also learned to interpret MRRD policies to match each locale's specific context.

This experience highlights the importance of provincial line ministries in coordinating policies, managing conflicts and storing institutional knowledge. The PRRD staffs have demonstrated that with adequate training and guidance, they have the potential to become key actors in sustained local development. JICA and MRRD are now formulating a joint project to further develop PRRD capacity.

(4) Identifying the gap between bottom-up and top-down approaches

In order for the NSP bottom-up approaches to be effective and sustainable, they must be

complemented with top-down approaches in line ministries and provincial and district governments. The National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP), another MRRD national program, is designed to assist community representatives in formulating District Development Plans (DDPs). The NABDP adopted its own clustering approach (see Table 3) as a method for selecting representatives to District Development Assemblies (DDAs). In theory, the core development needs of their districts are prioritized by DDA members based on consultations and then fed into Provincial Development Plans (PDPs) and provincial budgetary consultations. Community leaders seem to have skills gaps however, in identifying district level needs and formulating district-wide development plans that extend far beyond their villages' boundaries.

The IRDP approach may bridge the skill gaps exposed by the NABDP. While the NABDP clusters focus on representation at the district level, the IRDP focuses on project implementation at the cluster level, mid-way between villages and districts. There have been several reports of community leaders involved in IRDP project implementation demonstrating strong leadership and planning skills as representatives at the DDA.

Table 3. Comparison of IRDP (JICA) and NABDP clusters

	IRDP (JICA)	NABDP
Purpose of clustering	Project implementation	To select representatives to the DDA, which is responsible for formulating District Development Plans (DDPs)
Size of clusters	3 to 6 communities/cluster	No statistics available. The number of NABDP clusters per district is limited to 15. The size of each cluster varies depending on the number of villages per district.
Clustering process	Clusters are formed according to established criteria. The IRDP coordinates with NABDP clusters to avoid overlap.	There are no clear-cut criteria. Clusters are formed through consultation among communities.

Source: Minutes of Meeting for IRDP Terminal Evaluation, Annex 9 (2009)

4. Conclusions and Lessons learned in community development projects in Afghanistan

(1) Strengthening the bottom-up approach

Addressing an urgent need for reconstruction, the NSP has had positive effects: contributing to a rapid improvement in the social and economic infrastructure of rural villages, fostering community solidarity, and strengthened to some degree the legitimacy of the new Afghan government. NSP has enabled many CDCs to negotiate with irregular local forces and, if not to eliminate their influence entirely, at least to keep them at bay. Despite remarkable progress, however, rural areas are still vulnerable to violence, inter-village conflict, natural disasters, low production, and chronic poverty. The NSP was effective in mobilizing local resources and constructing basic infrastructure, but now those efforts must be sustained and broadened into a more comprehensive approach that covers other development areas such as education, health, agriculture, and economic development.

JICA's JSPR was an attempt to "localize" the NSP by mobilizing community knowledge and resources, and by developing the capacity of locally based NGOs. IRDP attempted to scale up NSP projects by clustering several CDCs for inter-village undertakings. As was explained, with the help of the World Bank JSDF, the NSP and IRDP have recently joined forces to scale up the cluster approach in selected provinces. IRDP's cluster-based project approach has been effective in bridging the skills gaps between village level development and district level planning. It is yet too early to assess the impact of the cluster model on long-term economic development. It has already, however, proven instrumental in fostering leadership and management skills, alleviating inter-village animosities, and improving local infrastructure that crossed traditional village boundaries. This is a small but promising forward step toward laying down the building blocks of substantive bottom-up state-building.

(2) Addressing skills gaps in the top-down approach: central and local governments

Criticism has frequently been voiced about a lack of adequate support for government capacity development. But this lack was unavoidable for programs, such as the NSP, which

were focused on the urgent need to reintegrate large numbers of returnees and to win the trust of rural populations subject to a newly installed interim government. Nonetheless, the urgent need for quick results did divert attention away from the development of government institutions. One major issue facing the Afghan government at both the national and sub-national levels is the lack of competent personnel, due in part to low salaries that discourage motivated and qualified people from joining government ministries or from remaining in their positions.

At the same time, MRRD staffs who have worked with JICA projects have shown strong commitment to their work and a willingness to absorb new ideas and management methods. They have demonstrated that with proper training, they have the potential to take more proactive roles in project management, coordination, and conflict resolution in the field.

To establish its legitimacy for the long run, the government will have to be entrusted with responsibility for implementing major policies responsive to social demands. External donors should continue to engage the Afghan government in the implementation as well as in the formation of these policies. Only through hands-on experience can donors and the Afghan government alike uncover potential and learn what is possible in this complex and dynamic environment.

List of acronyms and abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIRD	Afghanistan Institute for Rural Development
AKDN	Aga Khan Development Network
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CCDC	Cluster Community Development Council
CDC	Community Development Council
CHA	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
CLDD	Community-Led Development Department
DACAAR	Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
DDA	District Development Assembly
DDP	District Development Plan
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DIAG	Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups
FP	Facilitating Partner
GAA	German Agro-Action
GRSP	Ghazni Rural Support Programme
IDA	International Development Association
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Government
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRDP	Inter-Communal Rural Development Project
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JSDF	Japan Social Development Fund
JSPR	JICA Support Programme for Reintegration and Community Development in Kandahar
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NABDP	National Area-Based Development Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSP	National Solidarity Program
NSP-OC	National Solidarity Program Oversight Consultant
NSP-MU	National Solidarity Program Management Unit
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PDC	Provincial Development Committee
PDP	Provincial Development Plan
PRRD	Provincial MRRD
SDF	Sanayee Development Foundation
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States of America

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Weak State vs. Weak Society: Challenge of State-Building in Mindanao

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Abstract

After examining the historical and social context of the Mindanao conflict, this work explores the establishment of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao as an attempt at local state-building from above and the political and social causes of its failure. The paper then turns its focus to a new approach of societal empowerment at the community level that has been promoted by Japan. The initiative is an unprecedented endeavor for Japan since it is implemented in conflict-stricken zones under the strong influence of anti-governmental forces before peace has been firmly established. The paper concludes by explaining how, as the progress of the state-building efforts from above is extremely slow, the sole means of protecting and empowering people and fostering reconciliation is to work patiently at the community level.

Keywords: Mindanao, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Rido

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the nature of the state-building process in Mindanao, an island in the Republic of the Philippines. While Mindanao has historically been included as part of the Filipino state, the central government has been unable to govern the region effectively due to the presence of various armed forces resisting the encroachment of central authority. The central government has repeatedly attempted to extend its authority over the region, while some Muslim groups have aspired to establish an independent Muslim state. Beginning in the early 1990s, an attempt was made to organize an autonomous state-like entity (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao) within the Filipino national framework. Thus far, all of these attempts have failed.

This work examines the historical and social context of Mindanao in order to explore the origins and nature of the armed conflict in Mindanao. The experience of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao is analyzed as an attempt at state-building from above, and the political and social causes of its failure are highlighted. The third section of the paper focuses on a new approach of social empowerment at the community level that has been promoted by Japan. The initiative is an unprecedented endeavor for Japan since it is implemented in conflict-stricken zones under the strong influence of anti-governmental forces before peace has been firmly established. The paper concludes by observing that when progress of state-building through efforts from above is extremely slow, the sole means of protecting and empowering people and fostering reconciliation is to work patiently at the community level.

1. Origins and Nature of the Mindanao Conflict

The arrival of Islam on the island of Mindanao at the end of the 13th century ushered in a period of Islamic kingdoms, which lasted until the beginning of the 16th century. During that period, sultan-ruled kingdoms, large and small, were established. Those in the Sulu Archipelago and Maguindanao were especially powerful and vied for hegemony in the region.

The clans who wield power in many areas of Mindanao are said to be descendents of the sultans.

In the 16th century, Spain succeeded in conquering Luzon Island and the Visayan Islands and converted local people to Christianity. It attempted but failed, however, to subjugate the Muslims in the south. This act of Spanish aggression against the Muslims, known as the Moro War, lasted from the 16th century to the 19th century and entrenched mutual distrust and animosity for generations.

After achieving independence in 1946, the Philippine government pressed forward with a national integration policy to assimilate Muslims and mountain tribes, often infringing on their traditional rights. The government also expanded organized migration to Mindanao from Luzon and the Visayas in an effort to alleviate poverty resulting from crop failures and overpopulation in the latter areas. Many fertile farmlands were seized and used by newly arrived Christian immigrants. The settlers claim that they secured the farmlands legitimately; however, the Moros contend that their land was seized without adequate prior explanation and agreement. This gap in the historical understanding of land rights on Mindanao has yet to be closed. In the southern Philippine provinces, the non-Muslim population came to outnumber the Muslim population, which now constitutes a majority only in the Lanao del Sur and Sulu provinces.

The group identity of Muslims was thus strengthened after the colonial and Philippine governments took advantage of religious and cultural differences to incite a sense of religious supremacy and suppress the identity of Muslims. Before the 1960s, however, little sense of political unity was observed among Muslims in the southern Philippines despite their common history of sufferings. They were geographically and linguistically divided into Mindanao groups and Sulu groups. It was only in the late 1960s that Muslim insurgents, infuriated at the 1968 murder of a Muslim soldier in the Filipino army¹, stepped up their struggle against the

¹ In March 1968, a young Muslim soldier of the Armed Forces of the Philippines from the Sulu Islands

central government. Historically accumulated discontent and frustration finally resulted in the formation of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in the early 1970s. The MNLF intentionally adopted the word “Moro,” a derogatory term that had been used with contempt, hatred and fear to refer to Muslims when the Philippines was under Spanish rule. The MNLF defined Moros as people who live in the areas under the sovereignty of the nation it seeks to build (Bangsa Moro) and are sympathetic to its nationalist ideals. Under this banner, MNLF tried to unify the Moro people to achieve independence as a Muslim nation.

Further complicating the situation in Mindanao is the fact that religious strife was not the sole source of local conflicts. *Rido*, or a violent feud among clans, tribes and families, has been as detrimental as Muslim separatism to citizens’ lives. The parties in *rido* conflicts are diverse—tribes, kinship groups, families within the same kinship group, and religious groups—but the sources of the conflicts have mostly comprised disagreements over land ownership and/or the right to exploit natural resources. A total of 1,266 cases of *rido* were recorded in Mindanao between the 1930s and 2005, in which 5,500 people were killed and thousands were forced to migrate elsewhere. Of these conflicts, 64% remain unresolved.²

The number of cases of *rido* has been on the rise in recent years. For the five-year period from 2000 to 2004, 637 cases were reported, accounting for 50% of all disputes. Apart from the sheer number of victims, *rido*-based armed rivalries cause the destruction of property, the stagnation of local economies, and forced migration of and psychological threats against residents. *Rido* is characterized by its persistence; although feuds may temporarily subside, they will almost certainly reemerge, lasting for generations.

In short, the Mindanao conflicts represent long-term internal strife between Muslim insurgents and the Philippine government over religion and ideology as well as feuds between

was murdered by a Christian officer on a suspicion of mutiny. The Military Court gave the Christian officer a verdict of not guilty.

² A breakdown of *rido* cases by province shows that Lanao del Sur topped the list, with 377 cases, followed by Maguindanao with 218, Lanao del Norte with 164 and Sulu with 145.

locally- or community-based groups.

To these conflicts can be added rebellions by the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group and the communist New People's Army, although the threat posed by these groups has been limited thus far.

2. An Attempt at Building the State from Above: Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)

(1) The Ascent of MNLF to ARMM

The Aquino Administration born from the "people's revolution" of 1986 addressed the Muslim issue in Mindanao seriously to distinguish itself from the undemocratic and centralized government of former President Ferdinand Marcos. The new 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines stipulates in Article 10, Section 15 that autonomous entities shall be created in southern Philippine regions:

"There shall be created autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and in the Cordilleras consisting of provinces, cities, municipalities, and geographical areas sharing common and distinctive historical and cultural heritage, economic and social structures, and other relevant characteristics within the framework of this Constitution and the national sovereignty as well as territorial integrity of the Republic of the Philippines."

By definition, an autonomous region integrates existing provinces under its domain. The Organic Act for Autonomy (Republic Act No. 6734), enacted in 1989 to substantiate the 1987 Constitution and formally known as An Act Providing for an Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, called for autonomy in Muslim Mindanao within the framework of the Philippine constitution and national sovereignty.

In accordance with the Act, a plebiscite was held in 13 southern provinces to decide if each province would opt to become part of an autonomous region. Expressing discontent with the limited nature of autonomy, MNLF boycotted the referendum. Based on the results of the

referendum, however, it was decided to establish the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) covering no more than four provinces in which the majority agreed to join: Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao. The first ARMM election held in 1990 elected Zacaria Candao, a non-MNLF Muslim, as the first Regional Governor, stationed at Cotabato City.

In 1992, newly elected President Fidel Ramos resumed peace negotiations with MNLF. At that time, the Philippines was facing deteriorating political, economic and social conditions exemplified by frequent coup attempts by the military, a stagnant economy and growing poverty. President Ramos regarded political stability and order as essential to turning the economy around and improving social conditions. For this purpose, he recognized the importance and urgency of the Muslim issue in Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.

MNLF was now ready to engage in dialogues with the new administration for three reasons. First, the legal framework stipulated in the 1987 Philippine Constitution and the Organic Act for ARMM was increasingly recognized as favorable to the Muslims. Second, MNLF soldiers were tired of the armed struggle that had lasted for nearly 30 years. Third, the organizational strength of MNLF was weakening as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which had split from the MNLF in 1984, strengthened its influence in the region.

On September 2, 1996, following a series of negotiations, the Philippine government and MNLF signed the Final Peace Agreement. MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari was elected ARMM governor, putting an end to MNLF's three-decade-long armed struggle and integrating the MNLF into the national system of governance. The Philippine government changed the traditional assimilation policy and accepted "multiculturalism," aiming to incorporate the cultures and histories of minority groups into the nation.

(2) Profile of ARMM Government

The Province of Basilan (excluding Isabela City) and Marawi City joined ARMM by the 2001 plebiscite. As a result, ARMM came to cover 94 municipalities and 2,148 *barangays*

(towns). In the same year, the 1989 Act was replaced by the Republic Act No. 9054, enacted to realize the Final Peace Agreement between the government and MNLF. Article 3, Section 11 of the 2001 Act stipulates that the ARMM government shall be granted a wide range of authorities and functions, including the delivery of public services in health, education, livelihood, housing and water supply. The ARMM government shall also be guaranteed autonomy in taxation and tax collection (Article 9), matters related to ancestral domain, ancestral lands and agrarian reform (Article 10), urban and rural planning and development (Article 11), the economy (Article 12), public order and security (Article 13), and education, science/technology, arts and sports (Article 14). Section 3 of the same article provides that the powers of ARMM shall be devolved to lower government units, particularly in areas of education, health, human resources, science and technology and empowerment of the people. Moreover, ARMM Organic Act No. 25 specifies that “the governor shall supervise and manage the municipalities pursuant to Article 8, Section 18 of the Republic Act No. 6734.” In reality, however, the ARMM regional government’s power to supervise and manage the municipalities in the ARMM area is limited due to the insufficiency of budget allocation from ARMM regional government to these municipalities.

The ARMM government is composed of the “administrative organ,” which consists of the governor’s secretariat and central government offices, the “self-government assembly,” composed of 21 elected members, and the “judicial organ,” locally called the “Sharia Court.” The number of autonomous government employees was 26,223 as of August 16, 2005.

The ARMM government is allowed to collect certain taxes and charges, but only with the budget allocated by the central government can the ARMM government provide legally delegated public services and pay administrative expenses. As of March 2006, the amount of regional revenues was 420 million pesos, equivalent to only 5.6% of the total budget. The two major expenditures were salaries for ARMM officials and expenses for development projects

and programs³.

The central government's budget allocation to ARMM, in contrast, is planned by the Budget Management Department and proposed by the President to the Lower House for approval. The budget in real terms has been declining since 1999. For the past five years, the project budget for infrastructure and other development purposes has been kept low while personnel expenditures have accounted for more than 70% of the total budget, a figure far higher than the national average of 35%.

The annual budget as Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) allocated from the central government to Local Government Units (LGUs) such as provinces, cities, municipalities and *barangays* is calculated automatically on the basis of land, population and equal apportionment. Therefore, it is said that the central government's budget allocation to LGUs is not arbitrary.

However, the annual budget allocation to the ARMM government does not follow the general rule. The table below shows the annual budget allocated to the ARMM government by the central government. The budget doubled in 1998, two years after MNLF Chair Misuari had assumed the ARMM governorship. Soon afterward, however, the budget was reduced. Although the budget rose again in 2001 when Governor Misuari was replaced by Hussin, Vice-Chair of MNLF, it was reduced again the next year. The budget was raised once again in 2006 when Zaldy Ampatuan from the Ampatuan Family, one of the biggest clans in the Maguindanao region, was elected as a non-MNLF governor.

Although such fluctuations of budget allocation can be partially explained by the Asian economic crisis of 1998 and the Arroyo government's austere fiscal policy after 2003, they were caused mainly by the uneasy relationship between the ARMM government and the central government during the eras in which Misuari and Hussin were in office. The central government tries to control the ARMM government through the allocation of the annual

³ Development projects and programs are planned by the ARMM's Economic Development Planning Committee and approved by the self-government assembly.

budget.

Budget Allocation to ARMM by the Central Government (1,000 pesos)

	At Current Prices	At 1996 Prices
1991	792,812,000	1,124,618,504
1992	972,107,000	1,277,975,907
1993	1,933,613,000	2,407,065,371
1994	2,089,772,000	2,401,148,028
1995	2,484,772,000	2,675,590,269
1996	2,180,275,000	2,180,275,000
1997	2,507,870,000	2,378,746,383
1998	4,940,539,000	4,288,768,731
1999	4,370,334,000	3,580,829,983
2000	4,326,421,000	3,410,145,602
2001	7,200,480,000	5,314,156,501
2002	5,073,285,000	3,635,303,875
2003	5,402,450,000	3,741,903,976
2004	5,625,000,000	3,676,371,269
2005	5,488,000,000	3,332,602,798
2006	7,092,960,000	4,054,220,720

Source: Philippines General Appropriations Act.

Consumer Price Indexes used for the calculation of the budget allocation at 1996 prices are adopted from ADB, *Key indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2009*.

To compensate for inadequate fiscal resources, many international donors offered assistance to the ARMM. The Japanese government proposed a long-term support project at

the Japan-Filipino summit meeting in December 2002. The proposed aid package covered three fields: support to improve the ARMM capacity for planning and policy implementation, improvement of people's basic living conditions, and peace-building and antiterrorist measures. To implement the package aid, JICA dispatched policy support experts as advisors to the ARMM government and carried out many projects using multiple types of cooperation schemes: technical cooperation, grant aid and loan assistance schemes.

(3) Failure of the MNLF Government at ARMM

The first MNLF governor, Governor Misuari, appointed many MNLF leaders as the heads of government offices. Six years later, Governor Hussin (2001-2005) followed suit, appointing his own protégés. Because of this practice, the consistency and effectiveness of administration were considerably hindered in many government offices. In addition, since personnel expenditure accounted for more than 70% of the limited budget of the ARMM government, the budget appropriated for the provision of social services to local people was extremely scarce, with the result that local people were increasingly dissatisfied with the ARMM government.

The inadequacy of MNLF government's performance is reflected in the poverty rate. In 2003, or seven years after the MNLF took control of the ARMM government, the ratio of poor households was as high as 45.7% in the ARMM provinces, much higher than the national average of 24.7%. Per capita gross regional product (GRP) in ARMM was less than one quarter of the national average for the same year (Romulo 2005).

There are several reasons for the poor performance of the ARMM government. First, MNLF was not a monolithic or strong organization. As early as 1977, Hashim Salamat, a descendent of a Maguindanao Kingdom ruler refused to accept MNLF's negotiation stance vis-à-vis the central government. He left MNLF and founded the MILF in 1984. MILF aimed at an independent Islamic state, called "Bansa Moro," that maintained close relationships with terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah. On the other hand, Misuari, who had

been ousted from his post as Governor of the ARMM government, attacked a national army base in Jolo Island just to jeopardize peace. Moros thus divided and weakened the ARMM government to a considerable degree.

Second, the MNLF government was faced with armed disputes, including clashes between the central government and the MILF, subversive activities by Abu Sayyaf, and *ridos*. The increase in *ridos* was especially noticeable. As described previously, *ridos* accounted for 50% of all disputes during the five years between 2000 and 2004.

Ridos originate primarily from disagreements over land ownership and/or the right to exploit natural resources. In pursuit of these resources, *rido* conflicts are fought out not only between Muslims and Christians but also within religious tribes, kinship groups, and even among families within the same kinship group. The massacre that occurred on November 23, 2009 in Maguindanao Province was caused by a feud between two influential Muslim clans for local political hegemony.

These disputes not only hinder economic activities in ARMM—especially agricultural production—but also destroy roads, bridges, and other social and economic infrastructures and prevent private investments.

Third, the MNLF government was criticized for its personnel management, which placed importance on territorial and blood bonds and violated national rules on public employment. The result was an inadequate administrative capacity and frequent corruption. A survey carried out by the autonomous government in 1997 concluded that while the number of government employees had increased to more than 19,000, the government had made almost no improvements of people's living conditions. Corruption became so frequent under the first MNLF government that the Central Committee of MNLF judged in August 2001 that Mr. Misuari failed to solve mounting problems in the region and lost the confidence of the people. The local people's distrust of the ARMM government has resulted in their increasing dependence on the traditional clan or tribal systems, which in turn has incited armed clashes

among clans and tribes.

Fourth, the Manila government also shares responsibility. As shown in the table above, Manila's commitment to the peace agreement of 1996 did not last long. The fiscal autonomy of the ARMM has been very limited, and the budget allocation by the central government has been insufficient to satisfy people's basic living needs.

As a result of all these factors, MNLF failed to consolidate the ARMM within the framework of the Filipino nation. As a result, Zaldy Ampatuan, a non-MNLF Muslim from one of the biggest clans in the Maguindanao region, was elected as Governor of the ARMM in 2005.

3. Empowerment and Conciliation at the Bottom: Japanese Aid Experiences

(1) Fragility in Mindanao

Even after the conclusion of the 1996 Peace Agreement between the Philippine government and the MNLF, the MILF continued to engage in peace negotiations, hostilities and ceasefires with the government.

Under the Arroyo administration, which came to power in January 2001, the government and the MILF reached a draft agreement called Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domains (MOAAD). This agreement was scheduled to be signed in August 2008, but was suspended by the Supreme Court on the grounds that there was "suspicion of violation of the constitution"⁴. Consequently, hostilities were resumed between some elements of the MILF and Christian militia groups, resulting in up to 600,000 IDPs (internally displaced persons). Although this conflict soon ceased following the declaration of "cessation of hostilities" by both the government forces and the MILF in July 2009, 300,000 IDPs are now unable to return to their homes either because of worries over personal security or because their farms and homes have been destroyed.

⁴ This judgment was confirmed on October 14.

Emergency aid from UN organizations and NGOs notwithstanding, 4,000 children are estimated to be out of school, and refugees face serious sanitation and hygiene problems and malnutrition. Amnesty International accused both the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the MILF of a considerable number of human rights violations. Additional problems include a high unemployment rate and the lack of vocational training. Furthermore, the entire region is beset by a formidable lack of social and economic infrastructures, such as roads, waterworks, schools and healthcare centers. In terms of the Human Development Index, the region is on a par with least developed countries in Africa.

Although the “ceasefire” between the government and MILF has led to tranquility on the streets, the central region of Mindanao continues to see frequent clashes among clans and families. The strife has been aggravated by a large number of illegal weapons, a threat so immediate that prominent politicians in the region use it to justify the maintenance of their own militias. In fact, the entire region is infused with gun culture.

In order to overcome the highly fragile political and social conditions in Mindanao, ceasefire, reconciliation and development must be pursued simultaneously at the community level. First, people in need, especially current and former IDPs, require emergency humanitarian aids. Second, since the ARMM is dysfunctional, development projects aiming to facilitate reconciliation and peace building must be implemented from the bottom. Peaceful and economically vibrant communities will serve as building blocks of a stable and legitimate public order in Mindanao. Finally, small-scale projects are preferable for the time being, as large-scale public works necessitate large entrepreneurs with personal ties with influential local figures and consequently aggravate local conflicts over public resources.

(2) Developmental Aid from Japan

Japan joined Malaysia, Libya, and Brunei to form the International Monitoring Team (IMT) organized in accordance with the Tripoli Agreement of 2003 between the Philippine government and the MILF. Malaysia, Libya, and Brunei are members of the Organization of

Islamic Conference. The mission of the IMT was to monitor ceasefires and human-rights violations and to promote social development and rehabilitation during the period preceding an expected peace agreement between the two parties. The Japanese government dispatched a civilian to the IMT,⁵ the first ever experience for a Japanese expert to work together with people from Islamic countries to foster peace and development.

Unfortunately, the activities of IMT were suspended in December 2008 due to a setback in the peace agreement. Japanese developmental aid, however, continues to be provided. What is significant about this assistance is that it is the first ever ODA project that Japan has implemented in a region dominated by anti-government forces. Unlike other donors, Japan implemented its projects through Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA), a provisional organization based on the ceasefire pact but strongly influenced by the MILF. This unprecedented endeavor is based on the conviction that efforts for restoration and development should go in parallel with peace negotiation and reconciliation so that the two processes can reinforce one another.

(3) J-BIRD Launched in 2006

The Japanese assistance initiated by JICA and the Japanese Embassy in 2006 is called Japan Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development (J-BIRD). The Embassy implemented 32 projects within the J-BIRD framework, mainly in provinces such as Maguindanao and Cotabato in central Mindanao. These projects included the construction of schools, vocational training facilities (including those for war widows) and water supply facilities.

The first J-BIRD initiative launched in February 2007 by JICA was the Socio-Economic Reconstruction and Development for the Conflict-Affected Area in Mindanao

⁵ The first dispatched civilian was Mr. Masafumi Nagaishi, who served for approximately two years starting in October 2006. He was succeeded by Mr. Tomonori Kikuchi in August 2008. Kikuchi was followed by Mr. Yusuke Mori in November 2008. Currently, a two-man team (Kikuchi and Mori) carries out the formulation and monitoring of development projects and coordinates between the government and MILF.

(SERD-CAAM). This program helped to establish a blueprint for the long-term restoration and development of the conflict-affected region. The SERD-CAAM conducted in-depth *barangay* needs assessment (IBNA) by selecting 150 of 3,800 *barangays* in the region on the basis of the GIS conversion of data profiling in order to assess actual community needs and to implement community-level projects known as quick impact projects (QIP) or on the spot assistance (OSA). As the SERD-CAAM was expected to be completed by November 2009, JICA plans to apply the same method of GIS and IBNA to a new project that aims to strengthen the capability of communities to enlarge the scale of projects to cover inter-village necessities.

Japan-initiated community development projects encouraged villagers to participate in the planning and implementation of community development projects, such as the construction of road and schools, and consequently to foster cooperation and mutual confidence among competing groups. In fact, it is reported that half a year of planning activities served to ease hostility in a *barangay* belonging to the southern Lanao province where an ARMM Social Fund project based on a yen loan was implemented.

(4) Project for Provision of Post Harvest Facilities and Equipment for Barangay Manili

Another promising sign of reconciliation was observed at Barangay Manili, where Christian and Muslim residents had had antagonistic relations before a community project was implemented.

Barangay Manili is one of the *barangays* of the Municipality of Carmen in the Province of North Cotabato. When former President Joseph Estrada fought an all-out-war against the MILF in 2000-2003, the Municipality of Carmen was one of the areas most severely affected by the armed conflict. Camp Usman, a major MILF camp, was located in this *barangay*.

During these armed clashes, almost all the residents were displaced from their homes. Their personal belongings, including farm animals, were lost, and farm products were left rotten or were destroyed by the fighting.

Abstract (in Japanese)

要約

脆弱な環境における国家建設と紛争予防が、近年の国際社会で注目を集めている。本ワーキング・ペーパーは、カンボジア、アフガニスタン及びミンダナオの3事例を日本による援助の経験を通して分析することで、武力紛争後の国家建設に関する議論に貢献しようとするものである。3つの事例研究は、国家建設の過程を、(1) 統治機構のキャパシティ強化、(2) コミュニティや社会グループのエンパワーメント、(3) 国家と社会の相互作用を通しての国家の正統性強化、という相互に関連する3つの側面から分析している。国家建設が成功裏に進むには、これら3つの側面での前進が必要である。カンボジアでは統治機構のキャパシティ強化が先行して進んだ結果、政治は安定し、社会的なサービス提供は改善しているが、社会のエンパワーメントが遅れているため、政治腐敗の問題や不利な立場にある人々の人権侵害が問題になっている。それに対して、アフガニスタンとミンダナオでは、長期的な戦乱と混乱によって、国家と社会の脆弱性がともに深刻化しており、底辺での社会的エンパワーメントを、地方公共組織や中央政府機構の強化にも結びつけるアプローチが必要とされている。ただしミンダナオの場合は、統治機構が中央政府とミンダナオ自治政府に分裂しているために、事態はいっそう複雑である。