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State Building in Fragile Situations: Japanese Aid Experiences in Cambodia, Afghanistan and Mindanao

Ryutaro Murotani, Eiji Wakamatsu,
Tomonori Kikuchi, Masafumi Nagaishi and Naoyuki Ochiai

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JICA Research Institute

JICA Research Institute
10-5 Ichigaya Honmura-cho
Shinjuku-ku
Tokyo 162-8433 JAPAN
TEL: +81-3-3269-3374
FAX: +81-3-3269-2054

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Introductory Notes

State-building and conflict prevention in fragile situations has drawn notably increasing attention from the international community in recent years. One of the reasons for this interest is that the long-term order-building has become a central focus of international assistance to the African, Asian, and Balkan countries where armed conflicts have subsided, giving way to the new task of constructing endurable peace. A second reason is that it has been proven in Afghanistan, Mindanao, and several other places that peace and stability can be superficial and fragile. Therefore; it is increasingly recognized that, to achieve a long-term political stability, peace-settlement, state-building, and economic reconstruction need to be pursued as inseparable tasks.

Many studies have already been published on post-conflict state-building*. The assortment of three papers contained in this volume aims at contributing to the discussion on the subject by examining the nature of state-building in three conflict-affected countries/areas --Cambodia, Afghanistan, and Mindanao--through the lens of Japanese aid experience. Mindanao is not a country but one region of the Philippines. However, it shares with Cambodia

* Some of the examples are Bryden, Alan and Heiner Hänggi, eds., *Security government in post-conflict peacebuilding*, Geneva: DCAF, 2005; Chesterman, Simon., *You, the people: the United Nations, transitional administration, and statebuilding*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004; Fukuyama, Francis, *State-building: governance and world order in the 21st Century*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004; Jarstad, Anna and Timothy Sisk, eds., *From war to democracy: dilemmas of peacebuilding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008; Kaplan, Seth., *Fixing fragile states: a new paradigm for development*, West Port & London: Praeger Security International, 2008; Paris, Roland, *At war's end: building peace after civil conflict*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; Paris, Roland and Timothy Sisk, eds, *The dilemmas of statebuilding: confronting the contradictions of postwar peace operations*, New York: Routledge, 2009.

and Afghanistan the challenge of establishing endurable public order. The Mindanao case, however, is more complicated as the building of the "local state" needs to be somehow connected with the transformation of the national state.

The three papers are not intended as a comprehensive analysis of state-building and international cooperation in these countries/areas. Their focus on Japanese aid experience is due to our observation that the Japanese government and JICA have tried to adjust their aid efforts to individual local contexts and, consequently, by looking at major Japanese aid experiences, we can discern future challenges in state-building based on the different natures of the individual cases.

All the papers are sensitive to their local context but share a common analytical framework emphasizing three distinct but inter-related dimensions of state-building: (1) building the institutional and human capacity of the machinery of state, (2) empowering communities and other societal groups, and (3) establishing state legitimacy through state-society connections. To be successful, state-building must proceed in all three dimensions.

First, successful state-building requires state institutions that can provide security, rule of law, and the delivery of basic goods and services. The establishment of solid institutional structures staffed with competent personnel is indispensable for tackling the difficulties that stem from fragility and for solidifying a viable political order.

Second, societal empowerment can support state-building in two ways: On one hand, the existence of self-help social sectors, such as small farmers, contributes to socio-political stability during the early phases of development, when the government's capacity to deliver basic services is still limited. Direct empowerment of people fills the gap and gives political leaders space to consolidate the state. On the other hand, societal empowerment works to rein-in governmental overgrowth which might jeopardize long-term stability by reducing accountability and transparency.

Third, for government institutions to survive and function effectively, they must be

recognized as legitimate by the preponderance of the population. Successful state-building is something more than simply a technical process of organizational arrangements and personnel training.

Cambodia and Afghanistan present contrasting examples of state building. Simply put, Cambodia represents a top down case of state building, with perhaps excessively strong state machinery combined with a relatively undeveloped society. By contrast, Afghanistan provides a showcase example of state fragility, where the only possibility seems to be bottom-up state building based on social empowerment and the concomitant capacity-development of relevant public agencies. The Mindanao case looks similar to the Afghanistan case although the problem in the former case is, in a sense, more complex since the state-building is concerned with three-way interactions among the central government, the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

In spite of the contrasting characteristics between state-building in Cambodia on one hand and that in Afghanistan and Mindanao on the other, JICA's field experience has demonstrated that the capacity development of state machinery, the empowerment of social bases, and the strengthening of state legitimacy vis-à-vis society are closely inter-related and must be tackled simultaneously. An overgrown state must be balanced by societal empowerment in the interests of long-term consolidation of a stable and legitimate state. Societal empowerment will not necessarily bring a stable political order if it is unaccompanied by the construction of effective and efficient state machinery.

State-Building in Cambodia

Ryutaro Murotani*

Abstract

After the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement, Cambodia set about the difficult process of state-building. Despite violent clashes in 1997-98, the Cambodian government has been largely successful in establishing full control of military forces, into which former Khmer Rouge soldiers have been reintegrated. The Cambodian government, with support of donors, successfully improved infrastructure throughout the country, built up capacity in key state institutions, and provided basic public services to the people. Behind these achievements was assistance from a grassroots network built by the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) in the 1980s. This network is characterized by patronage connections between the government and village chiefs, and between the latter and villagers. Consequently, the legitimacy of the state has been strengthened. In contrast, social empowerment has been delayed, and people's political rights and freedoms have been restricted by the state. As shown by the recent increase of corruption charges and land tenure disputes, the imbalance between the powerful state and a stunted civil society is a potential factor of instability.

Keywords: Cambodia, state-building, fragile states, conflict

* Research Associate, JICA Research Institute. (Murotani.Ryutaro@jica.go.jp)

Introduction

State-building in fragile regions draws a high degree of attention from the international community for various reasons. First, as shown in the recent discussion focused on strong institutional and policy environment for aid effectiveness (World Bank 1998; Burnside and Dollar 2000 and 2004; Collier and Dollar 2002), donors are struggling to improve the effectiveness of their assistance to fragile countries with poor governance (Levin and Dollar 2005). Second, as experience in post-conflict peace-building has accumulated, discussion on aid directed toward fragile post-crisis regions has expanded. Third, heightened concern over terrorism has spurred discussion on how to help fragile states, such as Afghanistan, for the sake of global security.

Although there is not yet any established definition of "fragile states," the most frequently cited definition by OECD is that "states are fragile when state structures lack political will and/or capacity to provide the basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development and to safeguard the security and human rights of their populations" (OECD 2007). In addition to the political will and capacity of the state, recent works (e.g. Stewart and Brown 2009) also discuss the importance of state legitimacy. Overall, fragility can be defined as a situation in which basic human security (freedom from fear and want) is persistently lacking.

When considering state-building in fragile regions, one should pay attention to three distinct dimensions: (1) institutional and human capacity-building of the state machinery, (2) empowerment of communities and other social groups, and (3) state-society connections (or legitimacy-building by the state). To be successful, any state-building effort needs to proceed in all three dimensions. Otherwise, the state machinery may overgrow to become autocratic, or excessive demand-making by social groups may jeopardize the governability of the state.

This paper analyzes the state-building process in Cambodia following the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement from the point of view of the balance or the lack thereof among these three dimensions. The analysis below illustrates how the CPP-dominated government strengthened the capacity of state machinery and how it made effective use of foreign aid to forge its

legitimacy in citizens' eyes, while the weak civil society was sufficiently empowered, allowing the state machinery to become overwhelmingly powerful.

Cambodia entered a period of war with the commencement of armed struggle by the Khmer Rouge in 1968. The Khmer Rouge government took power in 1975, but was overthrown by the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP, renamed in 1991 as CPP, the Cambodian People's Party), which was initially supported by the Vietnamese army. Though the KPRP government established its rule over most of the Cambodian territory in 1979, it was not recognized as a legitimate government in the United Nations, and conflicts continued between the KPRP and several armed groups, including the former Khmer Rouge and royalist forces.

The 1991 Paris Peace Agreement, followed by the deployment of the UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia), marked the beginning of the peace process in Cambodia. The final surrender of the last pockets of the former Khmer Rouge occurred in 1999, and no large violent incident has been recorded since then (Bartu and Wilford 2009, 4-6; Yamada 2009, 9-20).

Although the large-scale armed conflict ended almost two decades ago, Cambodia is categorized as "marginally fragile" by the IDA (IDA 2007, 25), and listed in the proxy list of fragile states by the DFID (DFID 2005, 27). Cambodia is regarded as such mostly because governance indicators, except for the one showing political stability, are stagnant at a low level. Apparently, the improvement of state capacity has not been accompanied by societal empowerment. As a result, the state machinery has expanded without concomitant improvement of the societal oversight capacity. The government has tried to connect itself with the people but has done so by building vast patronage networks reaching down to the community level. The excessive reliance on patronage networks is inherently unstable because it is costly to satisfy everybody by patronage benefits and consequently discontent is accumulated among those who are left out.

1. Capacity building of the state

At the onset of the peace process, the capacity of state institutions was so weak in Cambodia that donors offered emergency assistance directly to the civil society and NGOs. Once political stability was achieved, however, the state strengthened its capacity, using donors' assistance, and reinforced its political stability through the delivery of better public services to the population.

(1) Stability in the security sector

In spite of the lack of an official DDR at the beginning of the peace process, the coalition government successfully re-established the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) in 1993 and gradually disarmed the former Khmer Rouge soldiers. The ruling CPP consolidated its control over military and political institutions in the process.

The DDR program of the UNTAC originally aimed at reducing the number of armed people among the various factions by 70% by bringing 200,000 troops into the regular army and disarming the remaining 420,000 combatants. In practice, the UNTAC succeeded in cantoning no more than 52,000 troops. This failure partially stems from the fact that various factions did not abide by their commitment to fund disarmament activities. Still more important was the difficulty of absorbing a large number of ex-combatants into the war-torn economy when 360,000 refugees were returning from the Thai-Cambodia border areas. Many of the disarmed soldiers never completed a comprehensive DDR program and were simply released on their own after surrendering their weapons in exchange for new ID cards (Bartu and Wilford 2009, 9-12).

In July 1994, while passing the Law on the Outlawing of the Democratic Kampuchea Group (former Khmer Rouge), the government implemented a policy of promising Khmer Rouge soldiers security, property rights, and assistance for socio-economic reintegration to encourage them and their families to defect to the government. This strategy was so effective that the amnesty period was extended indefinitely. It resulted in the final surrender of the former Khmer Rough combatants in 1999 (ibid., 14-17).

However, since the government integrated many of the former combatants from all the factions into the RCAF, the total number of national troops has increased to as many as 155,000. In an effort to reduce that number, the government launched a Cambodian Veteran's Assistance Program (CVAP) in May 1999 with the assistance of the World Bank and other donors.[1] The program covered RCAF members who were disabled or too old or ill for military service. The number of the soldiers, however, still remains as high as 110,000 (ibid., 18-22).

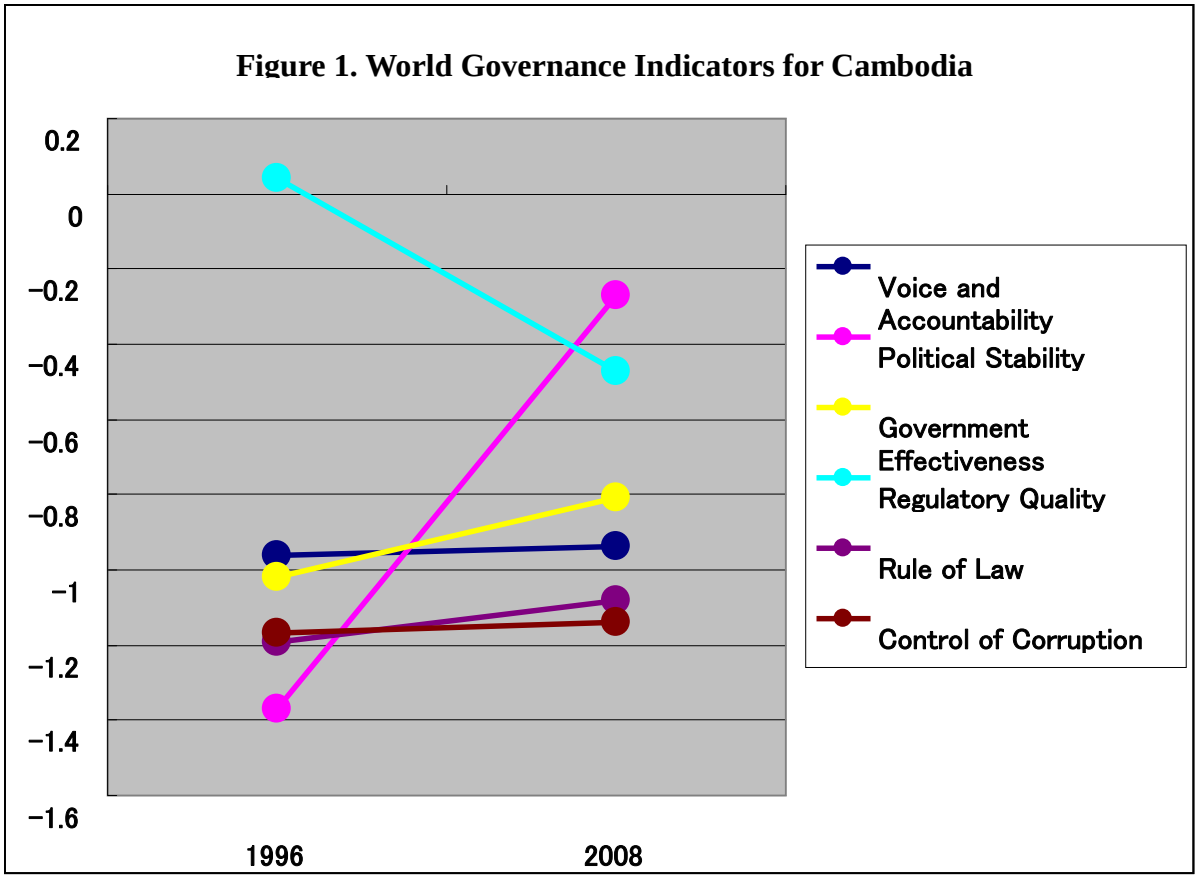
(2) Building the capacity of public service institutions

The institution building of the state has faced many difficulties because of the lack of human resources. After decades of armed conflict, the age pyramid of the Cambodian population is highly skewed: the population cohort aged 30-34 in 2008 is smaller than other age groups (National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning of Cambodia 2009, 35) and the groups aged 35-44 and 45-54 in 2008 have lower literacy rates than any other age group among the male population (ibid., 50). The lack of middle-aged high-skill personnel was a serious problem for the management of state institutions.

As a result, almost two decades since the Paris Peace Agreement, huge problems remain in state institutions: administrative ineffectiveness, corruption, inadequate rule of law, and other deficiencies. As seen in the following figure, the World Governance Indicators for Cambodia clearly show stagnation in all indicators but political stability.

[1] CVAP was originally prepared by the government and the World Bank in 1995 and 1996 to demobilize 40,000 RCAF soldiers and 3,000 defectors from the former Khmer Rouge forces. However, it was never implemented due to political instability during the period (Bartu and Wilford 2009, 14). The government revamped the program in 1999, and implemented it through 2002 (ibid., 18-20).

Figure 1. World Governance Indicators for Cambodia



Source: Kaufman et al. 2009, World Governance Indicators

In spite of the overall lack of improvement in governance capability, some institutions saw successful capacity development during the same period. These experiences show that positive Cambodian leadership combined with effective external assistance can help public institutions become highly functional in delivering good public services to the population. Some of examples will be examined below.

Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority (PPWSA)

The Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority (PPWSA) has been one of the most successful cases of institutional capacity development in Cambodia. Under the strong leadership of the General Director Ek Sonn Chan, a Magsaysay awardee in 2006, the PPWSA not only used donors' financial and technical assistance effectively, but also reformed their institutional procedures to improve their capacity to deliver clean water to the citizens of Phnom

Penh. They expanded the water supply coverage in Phnom Penh from 25% in 1993 to 90% in 2006 while reducing non-revenue water to 6% in 2006, the lowest figure in Southeast Asia (Asian Development Bank 2007).

Table 1. Major international assistance to PPWSA

Date	Project outline	Total project cost (US $)	Donor(s)	Type of aid
1993	Master plan for the improvement of water supply facilities in Phnom Penh		Japan	Technical cooperation
1993-1994	Improvements to distribution pipes (northern Daun Penh district)	1,630,000	France	Grant aid
1994-1995	Improvements to filter beds at Phum Prek Water Treatment Plant	3,260,000	France	Grant aid
1994-1996	Establishment of systems, customer surveys and records		UNDP/ WB	
1994-1998	Computerization of the billing system and network management, removal of all tanks under public land, standardization of hydrants, installation of improved water meters and establishment of 24-hour leak repair teams		France	
1994-1996	Installation of electrical equipment and distribution tanks and improvements to elevated tanks at Phum Prek Water Treatment Plant and elsewhere	25,000,000	Japan	Grant aid
1995-1996	Improvements to distribution pipes (Daun Penh district)	5,300,000	France	Grant aid/loan
1995-1997	Expansion of Chamcar Morn Water Treatment Plant	7,005,000	France	Grant aid
1997-1999	Improvements to distribution pipes (Seventh January and Toul Kork districts)	21,326,600	Japan	Grant aid
1997-1999	Improvements to distribution pipes (Chamcar Morn district)	2,269,800	ADB	Loan
1998-2001	Improvements to and expansion of Chruoy Changvar Water Treatment Plant	12,279,730	WB	Loan
1998-2001	Toul Kork district	2,819,925	WB	Loan
1999-2001	Improvements to water pipes	13,265,951	ADB	Loan
2000-2001	Improvements to distribution pipes (citywide)	1,300,000	WB	Loan
2001-2003	Improvements to distribution pipes (inner city areas)	4,700,000	WB	Loan
2001-2003	Expansion of Phum Prek Water Treatment Plant	24,800,000	Japan	Grant aid

Source: JICA Institute for International Cooperation 2008, 141

From the beginning, the PPWSA addressed short-term emergency needs and long-term capacity-development needs simultaneously. In the aftermath of the armed conflict, the PPWSA implemented an emergency rehabilitation program with the assistance of UNDP and France, while at the same time it worked with JICA to write a medium/long-term master plan. Subsequently, the PPWSA launched a program for the rehabilitation of the water supply system in line with the master plan by using assistance from France, Japan, the ADB and the World Bank, as shown in Table 1 below (JICA Institute for International Cooperation 2008, 140-141).

In addition, technical assistance was offered to the PPWSA for capacity development by France and JICA. JICA dispatched in 1999 short-term (six months) experts in the maintenance and management of water distribution pipes. JICA further sent experts in the maintenance and management of water treatment plants as well as electrical engineers. JICA also funded the dispatch of Thai experts in water process management and microbiological control. In 2001, Japan helped develop a telemeter system in Phnom Penh through a small-scale partner project proposed and implemented by the Kitakyushu City Waterworks Bureau (ibid., 141-142). During the capacity-building project phase I (October 2003 – October 2006), JICA dispatched 3 long-term (18 months) and 32 short-term (1 week to 6 months) experts with various expertise including in the maintenance of electrical facilities, water quality control, data analysis, and human resource management, and invited PPWSA's 41 engineers to various training courses in Japan (29 engineers) or Thailand (12 engineers) (JICA Cambodia Office 2006, 9-10).

In parallel with the rehabilitation and expansion of water supply facilities, the PPWSA introduced an innovative incentive structure for their officials. It defined the responsibility of each of its staff clearly enough that PPWSA's engineers and fee collectors were appropriately motivated to improve their performance.[2] By introducing the new method consistently, the PPWSA could improve its capacity dramatically, as shown in the Table 2 below. The PPWSA became so capable that it started to serve, again with JICA's cooperation, as a national training

[2] Based on an interview the author made with General Director Ek Sonn Chan on October 13, 2009.

center for the water supply authorities of eight provincial cities.

Table 2. Performance of the PPWSA

Indicators	**1993**	**2006**
Staff per 1,000 connections	22	4
Production capacity	65,000 m^3/day	235,000 m^3/day
Non-revenue water	72%	6%
Coverage area	25%	90%
Total connections	26,881	147,000
Metered coverage	13%	100%
Supply duration	10 hours/day	24 hours/day
Collection ratio	48%	99.9%
Total revenue	0.7 billion riels	34 billion riels
Financial situation	Heavy subsidy	Full cost recovery

Source: Asian Development Bank 2007

Maternal and child health care

Another example of state capacity building is the National Maternal and Child Health Center (NMCHC), which now serves as the largest obstetric hospital as well as the national center for training and for the implementation of public health programs. Unlike the assistance programs which supported grassroots emergency needs, the capacity development in the NMCHC started at the center. By connecting the refurbished central hospital with a referral network of health professionals across the country, the NMCHC tried to expand its successfully established state capacity from the capital to rural areas so that the referral system supported by its training programs can sustainably provide services to the whole population.

The NMCHC in Phnom Penh was constructed with Japanese assistance in 1997 based on consultation between the Cambodian Ministry of Health and JICA's technical advisor to the Ministry. Dr. Eng Huot, Cambodia's Secretary of State for Health and former Director of the NMCHC, played a role similar to that of General Director Ek Sonn Chan in the PPWSA. Japan started to provide technical assistance even before the completion of the NMCHC. The first phase of the JICA project aimed at building the technical capacity of the NMCHC staff to manage the institution effectively. During the first phase (April 1995 – March 2000), JICA sent 12 long-term experts and 26 short-term experts, provided equipment worth JPY 130 million

(1.15 million dollars according to the 1995-99 exchange rate average), and invited 40 medical staff to training programs in Japan (JICA Institute for International Cooperation 2008, 142-143).

After building sufficient capacity, the NMCHC shifted its function from a hospital mostly serving Phnom Penh City to a national center for maternal and child health care. In the second phase of the project, JICA started to provide the NMCHC with technical assistance to initiate a national training program for midwives and physicians as well as to further improve its clinical functions. During the course of the second phase, no less than 321 midwives were trained and the NMCHC increased its treatment capacity from 6,788 to 7,863 outpatients per month by the end of 2005 (ibid., 145).

Public service delivery is expected to expand around the country as the NMCHC develops as the national center for clinical services, training, and supervision in maternal and child health. For this purpose, the NMCHC is currently working with support from JICA to foster human resource development in rural areas.

Capacity development for the rule of law

Although Cambodia started establishing its legal system around 1979, the country had neither a modern legal system nor adequate legal experts to operate the system properly at the time of the peace agreement. To remedy this, the Cambodian government received assistance from France, Japan, the ADB, and the World Bank for legal reforms (JICA Institute for International Cooperation 2008, 147-148).

The Legal and Judicial Development Project of JICA helped the government enact the Civil Code, which was submitted to and passed in the Parliament in 2006. Instead of just sending in law experts who would draft the law by themselves, JICA opted for working together with Cambodian partners from the beginning. The resulting Civil Code is appreciated in Cambodia as one fitting Cambodian reality very well. Furthermore, by involving lawyers, judges, and other Ministry of Justice officials in the enactment process, JICA experts simultaneously succeeded in helping human resource development. The fact that Ministry experts who have worked with JICA are more frequently requested by the Parliament and other

ministries to provide legal advice is proof of the effectiveness of JICA's mode of legal cooperation. The Cambodian government now requests other donors to adopt the same approach[3] (JICA Social Development Department 2007, 17-18).

The three examples above illustrate the importance of long-term institutional and human capacity building at the national level to improve security, service delivery, and the rule of law. This is in contrast to the donor tendency to concentrate their aid activities on direct support to civil groups and NGOs in order to respond to urgent demands in post-conflict regions.

2. Nature of state legitimacy relative to society

The CPP-dominated government in Cambodia not only built up their capacity through donors' assistance, but also consolidated its legitimacy by distributing benefits from development through its grassroots patronage networks. Thanks to the strengthened capacity and legitimacy of the state, the Cambodian peace process successfully led to political stability despite the allegedly high odds that a post-conflict country returns to conflict within five years.[4] A survey suggests that the improvement of infrastructure and living conditions through the patron-client structure of administration has contributed to strengthening state legitimacy in people's eyes, although there are some alarming signs of instability.

(1) Legitimacy building through the CPP's patronage networks

According to a survey conducted by the International Republican Institute (IRI) in October/November 2008, the improvement of infrastructure is the primary reason for the support received from citizens by the current government. While 82% of people responded that the country is moving in the right direction, 73% of these 82% indicated "more roads built"

[3] In spite of the advance in legal reforms, the rule of law is still much to hope for in Cambodia. In local communities, local or traditional dispute resolution mechanisms supplement the weak legal system because people's trust in the legal system is very low (e.g. CAS and World Bank 2006) and it frequently fails to function to solve problems such as land tenure disputes, as will be explained in detail below.

[4] Collier et al 2003 illustrates that a country reaching the end of a civil war faces around a 43.6% risk of returning to conflict within five years.

as a reason they believe so. On the other hand, people who believe that the country is moving in a wrong direction raise issues such as corruption, price hikes, poverty, and nepotism (IRI 2008).

On balance, people's appreciation of the visible benefits flowing from the center outweighs the negative aspects, such as corruption and high prices. Although many voters feel that the CPP-dominated government has problems, including corruption and human rights abuse, they do not believe that other parties can do better. At least for the time being, the peace dividend is large enough to turn a blind eye to the governance problems (ibid.).

Another finding of the IRI survey is the impact of the CPP's grassroots network, highlighted by people's perception of the importance of village chiefs. In the survey, 41% replied that village chiefs have the strongest influence in their daily life, while only 28% thought of the Prime Minister as the most influential (ibid.). This does not mean the central government lacks influence, but rather shows the importance of CPP's strong networks. Many of the village chiefs were appointed by the CPP (then the KPRP) during the 1980s (Yamada 2009, 27-28). In an interview the author made of two village chiefs in Svay Rieng province[5], both of them said they had been appointed by the KPRP authority in 1979 and were re-elected in 1984 by villagers. Since then, dense patronage networks have been developed between the CPP and village chiefs, and between village chiefs and villagers.

In 2002, direct elections were introduced to select Commune Councils, which in turn elected village chiefs. However, as the CPP won the majority seats in 98.58% of the Commune Councils, long-serving village chiefs were re-appointed in almost all the villages across the country (ibid., 28).

In Cambodian villages today, patron-client relations exist in parallel with formally democratic procedures and structures. In this sense, the governance is of a hybrid nature (as described in Roberts 2009), although patron-client relations seem to be dominant and contribute to maintaining political stability so far.

[5] This interview was conducted on October 15, 2009.

(2) Reconciliation and transitional justice

Successful reconciliation among the population has been fundamental for strengthening state legitimacy in Cambodia. According to interviews made by this author in October 2009, people see few problems in the reintegration of former adversaries. Unlike many other post-conflict societies, Cambodia does not have severe social cleavages of religious or ethnic nature. Therefore, ordinary citizens did not have deeply felt resentments towards their neighbors once all the factions accepted the Paris Peace Agreement.

As discussed above, however, the repatriation and reintegration program by the UNHCR also helped promote reconciliation among returnees, internally displaced persons, demobilized soldiers, and local residents (Crisp and Mayne 1993, 22).

The newly established Khmer Rouge trial (ECCC: Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia) is another means of reconciliation, especially for the families of the victims of the conflict. This trial is also expected to contribute to changing the culture of impunity that has reigned in Cambodia (Bartu and Wilford 2009, 32).

(3) Concerns about the future

Signs of social and political instability are apparent in contemporary Cambodia. The spread of top-down patronage networks together with weak oversight capacity by civil society has aggravated irregular practices, including bribe-taking and nepotism in public administration, and these now permeate almost every aspect of Cambodian life.

Corruption

As mentioned above, the CPP–dominated government's success in maintaining power and stability is largely dependent on the patronage networks it has developed across the country since the 1980s. This short-term achievement, however, has been accompanied by an alarmingly high level of corruption. Transparency International ranked Cambodia at 158th among 180 countries in the 2009 Corruption Perception Index (with a score of 2.0, 10 being no perception of corruption). Both the index figure and the ranking worsened every year since 2005, when the TI started to score Cambodia's performance, until it improved slightly in 2009 (Table

3 below).

Table 3. Corruption perception index for Cambodia

	2005	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
CPI	2.3	2.1	2.0	1.8	2.0
Ranking	130/159	151/163	162/180	166/180	158/180

Source: Transparency International 2005-2009

The practice of corruption appears to have permeated almost every aspect of Cambodian life, and it takes various forms, from extortion to nepotism, to bribery, to tips and gifts. The patronage structure of the government feeds the process of government employees' collecting informal fees from the public to subsidize their salaries and pay off senior officials. Nepotism, informal networks, and political affiliations are used to secure jobs and promotions. In certain cases, citizens are "forced to join ruling political parties in order to access services in the local bureaucracy and institutions." The CPP is said to control 20 companies that are the "financial pillars of the system" (MacLean 2006, 15-16).

Widening inequality

As one of the results of the recent economic development, the income gap between the rich and the poor has allegedly widened. Whereas the consumption of goods and services per capita per day rose by 32% in real terms between 1994 and 2004, the poorest quintile group had only an 8% increase compared to 45% for the richest quintile. Similarly, rural living standards rose more slowly than those in Phnom Penh and other urban centers (World Bank 2007, iii). This tendency is exacerbated by legal manipulations by which ordinary citizens are increasingly put in a disadvantageous position relative to people who have connections with the CPP-dominated government. A noticeable example of this phenomenon is the problem of land disputes in which powerful elites manipulate the legal system for their own advantage. As the result of land concessions granted to prominent politicians and foreign-owned companies, it is estimated that 20-30% of the country's land has been transferred to less than 1% of the

population since the 1980s (Calavan et al. 2004, 2).

3. Empowerment of people and communities

The early distribution of the peace dividend contributed to generally improving people's personal security. However, the strengthening of state capacity has not been accompanied by concomitant empowerment of civil society. In the future, the political regime might become more liberal in accordance with economic development and social diversification. However, if state dominance continues to be strengthened, social discontent may increase and threaten long-term political stability and security.

(1) Resettlement of returnees and improvement of basic socio-economic services

In the early stage of reconstruction, much of donors' support went directly to the Cambodian people, who benefited from improved economic and social conditions.

The resettlement of returned refugees was one of the major policies to empower people in Cambodia. The repatriation of refugees was a part of the peace process. UNHCR helped the repatriation of 362,209 returnees between March 1992 and April 1993 (UNHCR 1993, 4). It also repaired 238.5km of roads, 22 bridges, 1362 wells, and many other basic infrastructures to facilitate returnees' life (ibid., 18). UNHCR's efforts were followed up by Japan, US, France, Australia, the European Commission, UNDP, ADB, and the World Bank. They provided assistance to improve rural infrastructures, including roads, schools, and clinics for local communities (JICA Institute for International Cooperation 2008, 116). The improvement of infrastructure and public services reached beyond returnees. In general, health and education conditions greatly improved, as shown in Table 4 below.

These basic socio-economic services provided by external donors during the early reconstruction period contributed to improving security and creating basic conditions for societal empowerment.

Table 4. Improvement of socio-economic conditions in Cambodia

Indicators	**1993**	**2007**
Literacy rate	35.0%	73.6% (in 2003)
Net school enrollment	72.1% (in 1991)	89.4%
Immunization of children aged 12-23 months – DPT	35%	82%
Immunization of children aged 12-23 months – measles	36%	79%
GNI per capita – PPP (current international $)	640 (in 1995)	1820 (in 2008)

Source: World Bank Group 2007, World Development Indicators

(2) Community development and weak societal empowerment

Other examples of the provision of basic socio-economic services to local population include a series of community-development programs also funded by external donors. The Cambodia Resettlement and Reintegration Project (CARERE I, 1993-95) and the Cambodia Area Rehabilitation and Regeneration Project, (CARERE II, 1996-2000) as well as the *Seila* (‘corner stone’ in the Khmer language, 1996-2006) program managed by the UNDP aimed at administrative decentralization and the improvement of people’s living conditions. These were very successful in reducing poverty at the community level (Hughes 2004; Biddulph 2006).

These programs also mobilized and involved village people in the local decision-making process. In practice, however, the programs came to be dominated by local elites connected with the CPP. According to Hughes’s report, “Seila has delivered tangible, popular, and useful benefits to villagers, including the very poor, in response to articulated needs, but has been less successful in delivering transparency, accountability, and, consequently, empowerment, with respect to commune, district, and provincial governments” (Hughes 2004, 57). The community development programs ended up reinforcing the power of the CPP-dominated government.

The improvement of people’s living conditions could serve as a basis on which people would build their capacity to live with dignity and to effectively participate in the decision-making process. For now, however, CPP-dominated authorities still play key roles in

decision-making while citizens' political freedom is quite limited. Communities continue to heavily rely on traditional authorities connected with the central government to secure any delivery of benefits or services.

(3) Constraints of "legal pluralism": Land tenure disputes

The inadequacy of societal empowerment has already become a serious social problem. Because of the underdevelopment of the rule of law, Cambodia is now characterized by "legal pluralism," in which socio-economic and political relationships are regulated by at least three potentially contradictory and competing sets of rules and norms: (1) social norms, (2) neo-patrimonial conventions with political elites, and (3) formal statute. These rules and norms can be mutually supplementary but where these sets of norms compete, conflicts arise among contending parties which base their claims on different normative orders. In these cases, elites are better positioned than ordinary citizens in selecting the normative framework which is most likely to legitimize their claims (Adler et al. 2008, 2-3).

In the context of Cambodian society where patronage structure is still dominant, the problem of "legal pluralism" comes up more frequently as the legal system is formalized. One such symptom is the increased number of land-tenure disputes. Vulnerable groups who occupy lands outside of core residential or farming zones face land-tenure insecurity. In these zones, the land use is subject to multiple conflicting norms, and powerful elites often manipulate various rules and norms against the vulnerable groups, which do not have formally recognized legal rights but base their claims only on social norms (ibid., 2-3). It is reported that about 50,000 people were evicted for development projects in 2006 and 2007 (IRIN 2008). Four million hectares of communal land belonging to indigenous populations have been offered to private developers since 2004 as economic land concessions. If the one million hectares of mining concessions are added, 400 out of 900 indigenous minority families in Stung Treng province are affected (Rith 2009).

The land dispute around the Boeung Kak Lake in Phnom Penh is a showcase of such problems. Most of the residents had lived there for many years, protected by existing social

norms. Their de facto ownership was recognized by local authorities themselves as shown by the fact that they issued house numbers, implemented small infrastructure projects for the residents, and even served as witnesses of land sale contracts. The government, however, planned to build a commercial and residential area in the Boeung Kak Lake district by concluding a 99-year contract of $79 million with a developer called Shukaku, Inc. For this purpose, the government tried to use the Land Law enacted in 2001 to evict 4,225 families from the area. Facing a stipulation of the Land Law that grants the right to claim a private land title to any person who has lived peacefully on "state private land" for five years prior to the enactment, the government claimed that the residents do not have legal rights to land titles because the area is recognized as "state public property." People protested by saying that the "state public property" can not be leased for more than 15 years. The government then issued a sub-decree that reclassified the area from "state public property" to "state private property" on October 7, 2008 and insisted that the residents cannot prove their long-term residence legally. The government insisted on the legality of the 99-year lease contract, although many observers regard the contract as illegitimate and illegal. In spite of the stipulation of the legality of long-term residence on "state private property," the evictees have not been granted land titles to date (Hayman and Rith 2007a and 2007b; IRIN 2008; Sokheng 2008; Strangio and Channyda 2008; Grimsditch and Henderson 2009, 63-65).

In this case, the introduction of a "modern" law contradicted the existing social norms and placed the residents in a weaker position relative to the public authorities. People who lack access to adequate knowledge of their legal rights and of legal means for the rectification of wrongdoing could not defend their legitimate rights. It is clear that the state-building in Cambodia is characterized so far by the contrast between a very strong state machinery and a weakly empowered civil society.

Conclusion

Since the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement, the state in Cambodia has increased its capacity by gaining control over military forces and through the implementation of donor-assisted projects. The financial and technical assistance given by international donors contributed to the stability of the country by nurturing state capacity and by strengthening state-society connections through the improvement of infrastructure and public services. After the violent incidents of 1998 were solved to its advantage, the hegemony of the CPP-dominated government became noticeable. Its legitimacy was reinforced by the continuing improvement of infrastructure and national economic growth.

However, formal and legal institutional links between the state and civil society continue to be weak. They are supplemented by social norms and patronage networks nurtured since the 1980s. Conflict resolution and service delivery at the community level are frequently brought about through these networks. These top-down networks help solve people's problems and reinforce political stability but impede the strengthening of people's political rights and other freedoms, including the freedom of the press. Furthermore, weak oversight from below has been one of the reasons why corruption and nepotism have worsened in the government.

The inadequacy of society empowerment poses a risk of rising social tension. As societal empowerment is stagnant, local communities do not have enough capacity to manage external shocks on their own and continue to depend on the state for protection and service delivery. But the difficulty of satisfying every request for patronage, together with officials' unpunished corruption, will aggravate the risk of instability as demonstrated by the land dispute at the Boeung Kak Lake district. The greatest challenge for Cambodia today is to re-adjust the balance between the state and civil society to avoid the long-term risk of instability.

List of acronyms and abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CARERE I	Cambodia Resettlement and Reintegration project
CARERE II	Cambodia Area Rehabilitation and Regeneration project
CAS	Center for Advanced Studies
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CPP	Cambodian People's Party
CVAP	Cambodian Veteran's Assistance Program
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development
DPT	Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus
ECCC	Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia
GNI	Gross National Income
IDA	International Development Association
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IRI	International Republican Institute
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KPRP	Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMCHC	National Maternal and Child Health Center
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPWSA	Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority
PPP	Purchasing power parity
RCAF	Royal Cambodian Armed Forces
TI	Transparency International
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

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Building the State from the Bottom-up:

Community-Development Projects in Afghanistan

Eiji Wakamatsu*

Abstract

The dilemma in Afghanistan between top-down state-building and bottom-up state building through societal empowerment is examined in this paper with particular reference to the National Solidarity Programme (NSP). The combination of urgent need to reach out to the rural population and weak state machinery has forced external aid actors to implement programs that, like the NSP, bypass formal government structures. As a consequence, although the NSP may have improved local living conditions and fostered community solidarity, it has only partially strengthened the capacity and legitimacy of the Afghan government. To remedy this and resolve the dilemma, JICA has attempted to scale up the NSP while upgrading the human and institutional capacity of line ministries, local governments, and communities.

Keywords: Afghanistan, state-building, National Solidarity Program, community development

* Former Assistant Director, JICA Operations Strategy Department (Wakamatsu.Eiji@jica.go.jp)
Current Advisor, World Bank Executive Director for Japan

Introduction

More than two decades of conflict have destroyed rural infrastructure, displaced millions of people, and left rural communities devastated in Afghanistan. After the 2001 overthrow of the Taliban, the rehabilitation of rural areas, which are home to 80% of Afghanistan's population, became an urgent task for the new interim government. In 2002, with the assistance of the World Bank and under the supervision of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), a community-driven development program, the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), was launched with the aim of reaching every rural village in the country.

The NSP was designed to rebuild the state from the bottom up through direct societal empowerment. The urgency of the need to reach out to the rural population combined with the weakness of state machinery, forced external aid to concentrate on such programs as the NSP that bypass formal government structures. But this disproportionate focus on service delivery at the grass roots hindered development of administrative capacity in the host ministry, MRRD, leaving the Afghan government and donors still facing the major challenge of how to resolve the tension between bottom-up societal empowerment and top-down state building. Moreover, although the NSP has successfully reached out to communities, a more comprehensive and longer-term facility is necessary to consolidate the sustainability of development efforts in communities, districts, and provinces.

This paper will first analyze the positive and negative impacts of the NSP and clarify its challenges with regard to the capacity development of line ministries, local governments, and communities. It will then analyze JICA's efforts to scale up the NSP and to upgrade the human and institutional capacity of the organizations involved. Finally, it will draw lessons for state-building in Afghanistan from the bottom up.

1. State-building from the top down

Between 1747 (when Afghanistan became a "modern state") and the 1970s, the relationship of the central Afghan government with rural leaders was characterized by either suppression or mobilization for war (Saikal 2004). Historically, the central government's control reached only to provincial centers which were ruled by political appointees from the capital. Most local affairs were handled by traditional community elders or local power holders such as *khans* (landlords), *maliks* (quasi-formal village leaders), *mullahs* (religious leaders) and *jirga/shura* (deliberative councils) (Nixon 2008, 35).

The traditional institutions maintained their relative autonomy and sway over rural areas until the Soviet invasion in 1978. In the context of anti-Soviet struggles various armed *mujahedeen* groups and regional warlords emerged who consolidated their power bases by taxing transportation and people, and by growing and trading opium poppies and small arms. In many places these warlords replaced the traditional local leaders and became *de facto* rulers (Marten 2007; Rashid 2008; Schetter et al. 2007). Meanwhile, due to armed clashes and drought, approximately one quarter of the population became displaced.

Following the 2001 overthrow of the Taliban regime, the interim government and the international community attempted to rebuild Afghanistan as a democratic state. In 2003, a Constitutional *Loya Jirga* was convened to ratify a new constitution. The *Jirga* approved the constitution almost unanimously (Rubin 2004, 5), although according to one survey more than 50% of the rural population was unaware of the constitutional process (Tadjbakhsh and Schoiswohl 2008, 256). Despite Afghanistan's history of repeated failures at centralization, the new constitution called for a strong centralized state and a four-tier government system consisting of national, provincial, district, and village levels, as shown in Table 1.

In practice, however, the entire government structure remained weak. One reason for this was the continued influence of the illicit drug economy and unaccountable warlords. In the immediate aftermath of the 2001 Taliban defeat, the US and other external actors tolerated the

continued presence of warlords for the purpose of filling a security gap; as a result, these warlords were able to retain influence at both the national and local levels (Rashid 2008, Lister 2009). Some warlords demonstrated high political and administrative capacity and contributed positively to state-building, but others continued to further their own interests, working through patronage networks established during the conflict. Meanwhile drug-related corruption permeated political and administrative institutions at all levels (Koehler and Zuercher 2007,63). The persistent influence of unaccountable warlords and the illicit drug economy, combined with high levels of corruption, have obstructed such state building efforts as economic and administrative reform, security sector reform (SSR), democratic processes, and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants.

Table 1. Afghan government structure

Tier	Executive	Legislature
National	President (popularly elected)	Two-chamber National Assembly (popularly elected); House of Elders (*Meshrano Jirga*) and House of the People (*Wolesi Jirga*)
Provincial	Provincial Governor (appointed by the President)[1]	Elected Provincial Council[2]
District	District Governor (appointed by the President)	Elected District Council (does not yet exist; District Development Assembly is interim substitute)[3]
Village	*Maliks* or CDC leaders[4]	Village Council (does not yet exist; CDC is interim substitute)

Source: World Bank (2008, 70), The Asia Foundation (2007, 18), Bijlert (2009, 8)

[1] Bijlert (2009, 8) argues that the institutional position of provincial and district governors is ambiguous, particularly with regard to whether they are part of the civil service. Thus, although the President is a central figure in the appointments process, the institutional ambiguity of provincial and district governors has created confusion over who makes appointments and according to which rules.

[2] Provincial Council (PC) elections are held every 4 years by residents of each province. (The first election was held in 2005.) PC members elect from among themselves one person to represent the province in the national *Meshrano Jirga* for a 4 year term (UNDP ELECT homepage accessed November 26, 2009).

[3] According to a recent strategy paper by the Independent Directorate of Local Government (IDLG), which is responsible for supervising sub-national administration, elections for District Council and Village Council will be held in 2010 and 2013, and every three years thereafter.

[4] Traditionally, a *malik* is a representative between a community and the government. A *malik* is elected by the village *jirga* and introduced to the district governor. A *malik* usually is responsible for the affairs of a *manteqa*," a group of villages in a valley" (Brick 2008).

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 Program[5].

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 communities[6]. 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

[5]In 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 exist 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 consultants[7]. Actual community development work was outsourced to Facilitating Partners (FPs), which were mostly international NGOs and Kabul-based national NGOs[8].

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

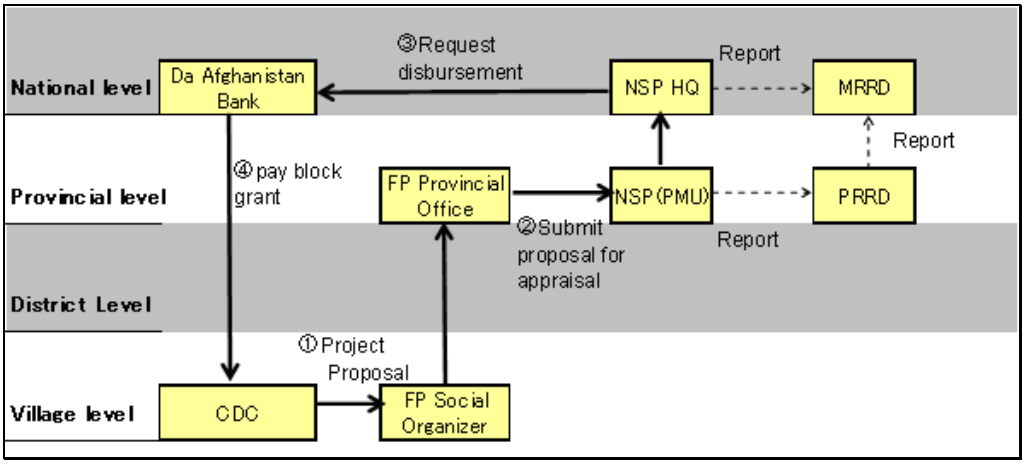
[7] Responsibility for implementation of the NSP was initially outsourced to the NSP-OC. After 2007, the NSP-OC handed its responsibility over to the NSP Management Unit, which is under the jurisdiction of MRRD (MRRD 2006, 28-30) but operationally autonomous from the government.

[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 organizations[9]. 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.

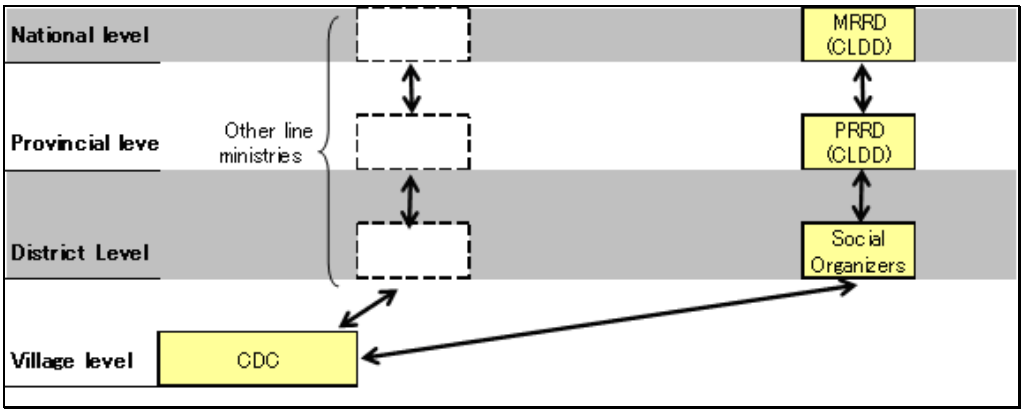
Figure 1. Flow of NSP documents and funding[10]



[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 DDR[11] and DIAG[12] processes, funded the NSP and NABDP[13], 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 training[15] 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 provinces[18], 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	Intra-community (tertiary) roads, irrigation canals, wells, generators, livelihood projects	Inter-community (secondary) roads, clinics, schools, water supply networks, irrigation dams, micro-hydro water electricity plants and grids

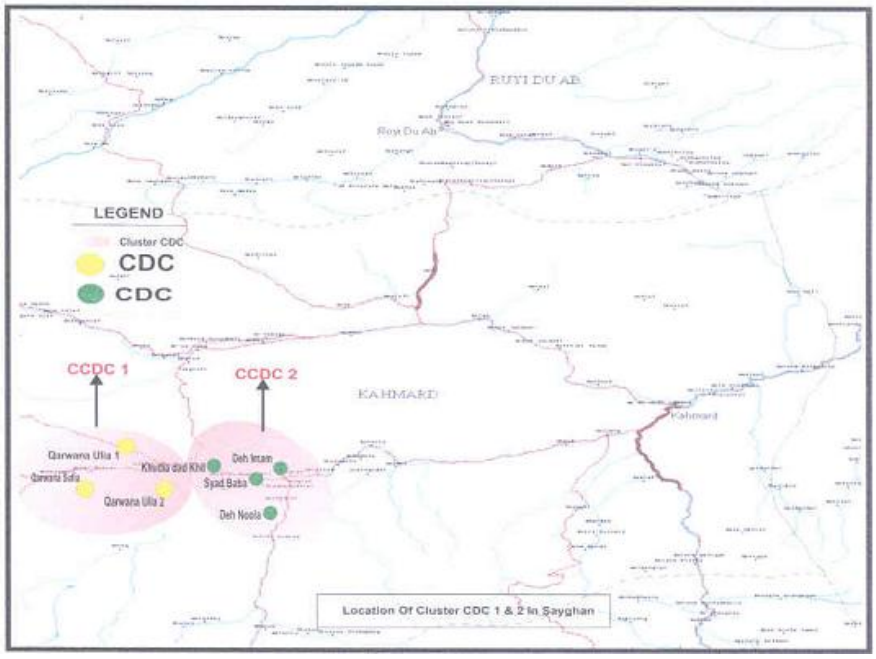
With regard to the first notable outcome, in a number of cases the cluster model fostered solidarity and promoted reconciliation among conflicting communities. Common development needs combined with incentives for inter-community projects helped open up opportunities for dialogue and collaboration among 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 NSP[20] to start a scaled-up pilot cluster-model project[21], 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

Naoyuki Ochiai*

Tomonori Kikuchi**

Masafumi Nagaishi***

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

* Director, Southeast Asia Division 3, Southeast Asia 1 & Pacific Department, JICA. (Ochiai.Naoyuki@jica.go.jp)

** Senior Advisor for Reconstruction and Development of Mindanao to the International Monitoring Team (IMT), JICA. (Kikuchi.Tomonori@jica.go.jp)

*** Deputy Resident Representative, JICA Philippines Office. (Nagaishi.Masafumi@jica.go.jp)

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 army[1], 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

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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 programs[3].

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. Tomoniori 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.

By 2004, residents had begun to return to their homes. Various donor groups assisted their return and provided immediate needs, such as food and housing materials. However, no agricultural support program was implemented. As of 2006, among the 484 households in Barangay Manili, 80% were poor, defined as an average monthly income of Php 1,000–1,500.

Corn is the main crop, representing 70% of the total agricultural produce in the municipality. The remaining 30% is divided among rice, coconuts and vegetables. Most of the farmer residents were farming on a subsistence basis because of the lack of personal financial resources or government subsidies for farm inputs. They had no means other than relying on money lenders who charged high interest rates, nor do they have bargaining power in the crop market since most often money lenders are also traders and control the market prices. Farmers who borrow money from traders have no choice but to sell their produce to them.

Another problem in the *barangay* was the limited post-harvest facilities such as corn shelters, solar dryers, and storage. The *barangay* had only one corn shelter, which could not accommodate the needs of all the farmers. Farmers requiring immediate use of a corn shelter had to transport their produce to other *barangays*, resulting in additional transportation expenses and diminishing the already low income of the marginalized farmers. Moreover, the lack of communal facilities for storage and drying worsened the plight of the farmers, as most farmers needed to use their own houses for storage.

The Project for Provision of Post Harvest Facilities and Equipment for Barangay Manili has been implemented by Japan in order to tackle these problems. By the end of the project, the number of cooperative members increased from 26 to 54. The farmers who before earned an average of Php 5,000 are now earning a net income of Php 8,000 to 10,000 per crop season. The savings or additional income has enabled the farmers to self-finance farming inputs, no longer borrowing from loan sharks. The additional income has also enabled them to buy basic needs and send their children to school. The Project has likewise provided the community with the means to initiate and sustain various self-help efforts.

The cooperative itself can now collect a fee amounting to Php 25,000 annually for storage and rental (drying and hauling) services. With this money, the cooperative is enhancing its facilities to accommodate a larger number of farmers.

Peace and order in the community have also improved to a great extent, as there is now little need to fight for limited drying/hauling or other facilities. When the project reached the final stage, both Christian and Muslim residents in Barangay Manili came out to attend the ceremony and celebrate their achievement.

4. Road Ahead

Generally speaking, successful state-building contains three inter-related processes: strengthening of the institutional and human capacity of the state machinery, empowerment of people and social entities, and consolidation of state legitimacy in the eyes of citizens.

In Mindanao, the effort to build an effective state machinery in ARMM has not been successful until now. The setbacks experienced in state-building from above, together with the continuing violence in the region, seriously threaten human security. To tackle this problem, Japan, together with other donors, continues to help bolster the regional government in ARMM and foster reconciliation and peace negotiations. At the same time, Japan has launched innovative bottom-up projects in the communities in conflict-stricken areas.

In Mindanao today, the ceasefire between the central government and the MILF is fragile. In addition, *rido* violence is as frequent as before, as demonstrated by a recent *rido* massacre. Clans and families fight over land ownership, farming rights, money-lending and personal grudges, thus threatening human security in the region. In the face of these huge challenges, the achievement of Japan-assisted community development projects has been quite limited. However, as the central government lacks the political will to create a truly autonomous region in Mindanao or to infuse adequate fiscal resources for development into the region, and as the regional government in ARMM continues to be weak in both institutional

and human capacities, the sole means to protect, empower and reconcile people is, for now, to work patiently at the community level, which requires the continuous commitment of external actors.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BDA	Bangsamoro Development Agency
GIS	Geographic Information System
GRP	Gross Regional Product
IBNA	In-depth Barangay Needs Assessment
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IMT	International Monitoring Team
J-BIRD	Japan Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LLDC	Least Less Developed Country
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MOAAD	Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domains
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OSA	On the Spot Assistance
Php	Philippine peso
QIP	Quick Impact Project
SERD-CAAM	Socio-Economic Reconstruction and Development for Conflict-Affected Area in Mindanao
UN	United Nations

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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。