

## The humanitarian and development assistance program in Maguindanao province

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**Abstract:** The study aimed to determine the extent of the impact of the implementation of the Humanitarian and Development Assistance Program (HDAP) on social services, economic services, and peace and governance. It also evaluated the challenges encountered by the beneficiaries in the implementation of the program. The HDAP is a program of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) for the Maguindanao del Sur province. The study utilized a descriptive-evaluative design that employed a quantitative approach. It was conducted in the municipalities of Mamasapano and Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao. The researcher employed the purposive sampling technique, where 50 respondents were selected from each municipality, for a total of one hundred (100) respondents. The gathered data was tallied, categorized, and analyzed using frequency, percentage, and mean. Results revealed that the extent of the impact of the implementation of HDAP was extensive, which implied that the program helped the residents of the local governments. The beneficiaries encountered delays in the delivery of services of the project, as well as the presence of peace and order conditions in the localities, which subsequently caused the delays in the services.

**Keywords:** ARMM help, Bangsamoro assistance, Basic services, Humanitarian assistance, Peace and order.

### 1. Introduction

Humanitarian and development assistance program (HDAP) is a program of the then administration of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The program was approved in 2016 under the Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA). It provides assistance to the fifteen (15) municipalities in the province of Maguindanao affected by war in terms of health, education, social welfare, infrastructure, livelihood, community development and peace and governance. HDAP Project Management Office (PMO) was established under the Office of the Regional Governor (ORG) now Office (RPDO) now Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority (BPDA) by virtue of Executive Order No. 022 series of 2016. The HDAP PMO is primarily responsible for the coordination, Management, Supervision, and monitoring of the HDAP. But On December 2018, the PMO was abolished due to transition from ARMM to Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). After the ratification of Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) or RA 11054, there were still ongoing projects need to be pursued, hence, the Chief Minister instructed the Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority (BPDA), formerly known as RPDO where the abolished PMO was under, to help facilitate the unfinished projects.

HDAP was created as a result of frequent human induced and natural calamities in the region which has greatly affected the socio-economic status of the Philippines, especially in Mindanao. According to Philippine Statistics Authority, ARMM now BARMM is the country's poorest region with poverty

incidence of 16.6 percent in 2018. The occurrence of armed conflict and violent extremism activities worsened the poverty condition in the provinces of BARMM.

While government's effort to come to a political settlement with the armed groups and has worked to address the causes of conflict, these conflicts have persisted, thereby affecting the delivery of basic services and creating a large development gap between conflict-affected areas and the rest of the country. Like what happened in Maguindanao, on January 25, 2015 there was an incidence occurred in the Municipality of Mamasapano, Maguindanao in Barangay Tukanalipao that led to the death of 44 members of Special Force of the Philippine National Police (SAF-PNP), 18 Moro Islamic Liberation front (MILF) members, and three (3) civilians. The said incidence resulted to massive displacements and loss of properties, lives, and economic opportunities of people in 2<sup>nd</sup> district of Maguindanao, in the so called "SPMS Box" or the Mustapha and the neighboring municipalities.

There were many programs that have been provided by the government and non-government organizations to the conflict affected areas in the region, nevertheless these development interventions, the delivery of social services were never become enough especially in the far-flung areas. Still there are a lot of poor families with no access to social health facilities like day care centers, school buildings, and health stations. It is for this reason that, the researcher wanted to know the extent of the implementation of the HDAP to the community.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

### 2.1. Philippines Armed Conflict

Based on the the 2013 published report on Armed conflict: Highlight on Philippines by Child Rights International Network (CRIN), stated that the Philippines has been the site of several ongoing conflicts. As well as facing the direct threat of violence, children's rights abuses have included the recruitment of child soldiers, inhuman treatment and detention in relation to the conflict, and attacks on education. Historically excluded from the Christian dominated political, and economic elites, dissatisfaction among the Muslim population of the Philippines (locally known as "Moros") increased after independence from the United States in 1946, when the government started resettling poor Catholic families from the northern islands to the Moro areas of the south, particularly of Mindanao, which started in 1968, when the Philippine Government executed a number of mutinying Muslim recruits in what is now known as the Jabbidah Massacre. This combined with complaints of discrimination in education, housing and government spending, led a group of Moro students and academics to found the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), led by former University lecturer Nur Misuari. In 1971, the MNLF began a fierce armed struggle to establish an independent Moro nation or Bangsamoro in southern Mindanao, fighting against both government forces and Christian militias.

Moreover, in 1972 the elected President of the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos Sr. Proclaimed martial law this brought the entire country dark days. Under the Marcos dictatorship, the conflict would had continued until 1976 when pressure from a number of Muslim countries led to the signing of the Tripoli Agreement. This promised to create a semi-autonomous Moro province, but the promised was almost immediately broken by the Government and rejected by a faction in the MNLF leadership, leading to renewed fighting. After Marcos was forced to stepdown from the office by a popular uprising in 1986, the new Philippine Government embarked on a long negotiation process with the MNLF to end the conflict, which saw creation of the promised Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in 1989, with the MNLF eventually put in place as the effective local government of this region. In the meantime, the faction of the MNLF which rejected the Tripoli Agreement had formed a new group called Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) while they had been active throughout the 1980s, with the MNLF entering negotiations, the MILF would become the main Moro armed group in the conflict. By 1980s they joined by other armed Islamic group such as the Abu Sayyaf and Rajah Solaiman Movement [1].

During the the 2000s, initial attempts to destroy the MILF military gradually gave way to peace talks. These seemed on the verge of success with an agreement to extend the ARMM's powers and

territory in 2009, but this was halted by a legal challenge at the Philippine Supreme Court which ruled against the plan. After a period of renewed conflict, negotiation resumed in 2021 and re thought to be making some progress. The MNLF, on the otherhand, went through internal splits, with Nur Misuari leading several aytempts to renew fighting firstly in 2001, then again in 2013. The latter was triggered by claims that the new peace deal offered by the Government to the MILF would invalidate the exiting arrangement with the MNLF. In September 2013, Misuari declared an independent Bangsamoro in Mindanao, leading an attack on he city of Zamboanga. After three week confrontation, in wwhich it was estimated more than 200 people were killed, Misuari is now reported to have fled the Philippined. The future of peace between the Government and both the MNL and MILF is ubcertain [1].

## 2.2. Leftist Insurgency

In addition to the Moro conflict, the Philippines have also seen an active leftist insurgency. The Philippine Communist Party led guirella fighters against thr occupying Japanese force during the Second World War and against the Phikippine Government in the 1950s. After a period of inactivity, leftist guerillas resumed fighting in the 1980s under the name of the Neew Peoples's Army (NPA). Duribg the 1990s the NPA underwent a round of fighting and purges that reduced numbers and left much of the leadership in exile, but operations resumed in earnest during the 2000s. These included mass extortion, raids on prisons and military bases and assasinatiuons. During this period the NP also began to focus their attacks on foreign business concerns, particularly those involved in mining, hapiung to deprive the government of outside investment. While fighting has resumed intermittently, recent years have seen peace talks between the Government and the NPA, including proposals for joint human rights investigatios between the two, mamasapano [1].

## 2.3. Recuritment of Children as Part of Armed Conflict

In 2013 report of the secretary-gneral to nthe Security Council on Chilkdren and Armed Conflict confirmed that the three non-state armed groups- the MILF, Abu Sayyaf and NPA, possibly continue to recruit and use children as part of the armed conflict. In tital, 11 incidents of recruitment and use of children were recorded in 2012, involving 23 boys and 3 girls between 12 qnd 17 years of age. This continuation has occurred despite the MILF signing an action plan with the UN in 2009. Although this plan has since expired, the UN Secretary geeral's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG), Ms. Leilla Zerrougui, has urged the MILF to continue and fully implement the Action Plan. Both MILF and the NPA officially claim that the only use children in non-combat roles, this is disputed, however, and even were it accurate wiul still represent an unacceptable rights violation [1]. Indeed, the Philippines ha a long history of extrajudicial killings, including the murder of political activists, government officials, religious leaders, journalists, human rights defenders and political figures. These are often related to the wider conflict, particularly the killing of leftists and trade union activities by both government forces and ideological opponents or rivals.

## 2.4. The Humanitarian and Development Action Plan (HDAP)

Based on the 2016 HDAP implementing guidelines reported that on January 2015, the whole country was disturbed by untoward incident that took place in Tukanalipao, Mamasapano, which led to the death of 44 members of Special Action Force of the Philippine National Police (SAF-PNP), 18 Moro Islamic front (MILF) members, and three civilians. The said incodents had triggered an all-out offensive by the government armed forces against the members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) which resulted to the massive dsplacements and loss of lives, properties, and econmic opportunities in the 15 affected municipalities in the province of Maguindanao.

With this incident, the Regional Governor Mujiv S. Hataman directed the Regional Planning and Development Office (RPDO) to take the lead in the formulation of Humanitarian and Development Action Plan. The plan aims to establish a systematic and coordinated approach in addressing and mitigating the effects of future disasters and calamities, towards a more peaceful and resilient

autonomous region (HDAP Implementing Guidelines, 2016). Moreover, the HDAP is part of the programs under the 2016 PAYapa at MASaganang PamayaNAn (PAMANA) being implemented by the Autonomous Regional Government (ARG) which aims to contribute to the attainment of a just and lasting peace as embodied in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2011-2016 [2]. The HDAP provides various interventions such as health, education, social welfare, infrastructure, livelihood, community development, peace and governance projects to bring about resiliency and empowerment towards improved living conditions of people in the affected areas (HDAP brochure, 2016). Humanitarian assistance is being implemented under the banner of PAMANA program.

### 3. Materials and Methods

The research instrument used in this study was survey questionnaire. The questionnaire is composed of three (3) parts; the first part is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, marital status, educational attainment, occupation and family income. Second part the extent of the impact of implementation of ARMM-HDAP in terms of social services, economy and peace and governance, and the last part is identification of the problems encountered in the implementation of the program by the beneficiaries.

The data information collected from the secondary resources were taken from the HDAP implementing guidelines, HDAP brochures, reports and in the internet. The researchers asked permission and approval through letter to the local government units of Mamasapano and Datu Saudi Ampatuan that they distributed questionnaire to respective respondents of the study. Upon permission, the researchers personally distributed the survey questionnaire to the 100 respondents. One-on-one interview was done for validation of the answers of the respondents. The collected data was tallied, categorized and analyzed using frequency, Percentage, and mean. Over all means were interpreted based on the scale provided by the researchers,

### 4. Result and Discussion

**Table 1.**

Indicators of social services associated with frequency, mean and their descriptions.

Indicator	Frequency				Mean	Description
	4	3	2	1		
1. Access to health services delivered.	7	72	21	0	2.86	Extensive
2. Access to safe drinking water provided.	3	59	37	1	2.64	Extensive
3. Access to education services delivered.	10	71	19	0	2.91	Extensive
4. Access on social protection program delivered.	1	70	23	6	2.66	Extensive
5. Access on Gender and Development (GAD) program delivered.	2	37	49	12	2.91	Extensive
Average Mean					2.80	Extensive

**Note:** n=100.

The Table 1 shows the summary of the mean on the extent of impact of the implementation of HDAP as rated by the respondents in terms of social services. Majority of the respondents with a mean of 2.80 is favorably agreed that the extent of the implementation of HDAP in terms of social services is extensive. This indicates that the HDAP social intervention like access to health services, ensuring education and social protection of vulnerable sectors in the community have fairly delivered and benefited by them. Specifically, the indicator number 3 —Access to education services delivered, and 5 —Access on Gender and Development (GAD) program delivered, got the highest rating with the description of —Extensivel with the mean of 2.91. This implies that having the HDAP intervention really helps the respondents to send their children to school because of an easy access on schools established in their community or its neighboring community.

Also, the respondents fairly agreed that the HDAP interventions were gender sensitive and ensured that women are being included and mainstreamed all the time. Similarly, statement number 1, —Access to health services delivered got the second highest rating with the same descriptive —Extensive with a mean of 2.86. This implies that HDAP intervention on health services such as construction of Barangay Health Station and provision of medical equipment fairly address the health related concerns or problems of the community.

Some studies also have similar findings, as reported in the —CDD Impact Evaluation Review and Operational and Research Implications by Wong [3] this review found generally positive evidence for poverty welfare reduction, poverty targeting, and increased access to services. As most of the project objectives and financial resources focused on improving access and service delivery, these projects achieved their stated aims. Evidence is limited and mixed however, on governance, social capital spillovers, and conflict impacts [3].

For education, school participation among children aged 6 to 15 increased by 14 percentage points for all children in the given age group, but girls appear to have benefited even more with a 21 percentage point net increase. The effects are as strong among children from disadvantaged caste/ethnic groups. The authors hypothesized that the program's gains in household income/consumption could have reduced potential constraints of sending children to school. Community mobilization and social networking may also have had spillover effects in motivating households toward child schooling. There were no significant differences on the health side or for child malnutrition [4].

Moreover, schools that received a Social Fund intervention benefited from significant improvements in infrastructure (the condition of classrooms and an

increase in classroom space per student) and in the availability of bathrooms compared with schools that did not receive an SIF intervention. There was also an increase in textbooks per student and a reduction in the student teacher ratio. However, the improvements had little effect on school enrollment, attendance, repetition rates, or academic achievement. Among the student level outcomes, only the dropout rate reflects any significant impact from the education investments. Health impacts were more pronounced. The evaluation found that the share of women receiving prenatal care and the share of attended births increased significantly. The project also financed small scale potable water systems, and later supported training to maintain these systems. The evaluation showed a reduction in the distance to the water source and in one area (Resto Rural) a substantial improvement in sanitation facilities. Both the health and water/sanitation intermediate results appear to have led to a significant reduction in under age five mortality in the areas served by the health clinics receiving a SIF intervention [5]

**Table 2.**

Indicators of economic services associated with frequency, mean and and their descriptions.

Indicator	Frequency				Mean	Description
	4	3	2	1		
1. Increase of income	3	61	35	1	2.66	Extensive
2. Available income for expenditure on basic needs	1	35	62	2	2.35	Less Extensive
3. Access and availability of basic needs	2	45	52	1	2.48	Less Extensive
4. Access on livelihood opportunities	1	55	43	1	2.56	Extensive
5. Access on farm to market roads and other infrastructure support facilities	30	40	21	9	2.91	Extensive
Average Mean					2.59	Extensive

Note: n=100.

Table 2 shows the summary of the mean on the extent of the the implementation of HDAP as rated by the respondents in terms of economic services. In general, the respondents agreed that the extent of the implementation of HDAP in terms of economic services garnered 2.59 mean which is described as extensive. This implies that HDAP economic intervention such as livelihood and employment support specifically capacity building of cooperatives, provision of agricultural

support or post-harvest facilities and distribution of rice and corn seeds have fairly helped the farmers or the community in general.

Specifically, the statement number 5 —Access on farm to market roads and other infrastructure support facilities got the highest rating with the description of Extensive with a mean of 2.91. This implies that farmers can harvest their farm

produces easily at low cost budget, also it can easily transport the harvested crops to market because of FMR roads which it help them save costs for labor and logistics. While, statement number 2 —Available income for expenditure on basic needs, got the lowest rating with the description of —Less Extensive with a mean of 2.35. This indicates that farmer does not have enough income or other alternative income to support their basic needs, although there are some livelihood intervention but it cannot fully support or help increase the beneficiaries' income.

Contrary to this, the midline survey for Afghanistan National Solidarity Program (NSP) was conducted in 2009, measuring after two years of implementation [6]. The midline results show that there are improvements with regard to villagers' perceptions of well-being. Villagers are more optimistic about future economic changes and report that their economic situation has improved.

On the other hand, this paper entitled —CDD Impact Evaluation Review and Operational and Research Implications by Wong [3] agreed that impacts on socioeconomic welfare, most of the 17 projects did not have an explicit objective of affecting socioeconomic welfare during that phase of the project. Only three of the projects those supporting primarily livelihood activities had explicit goals of income poverty impacts [3].

However, there are no impacts on objective measures of economic welfare, such as levels of household income or consumption, which may not all that surprising given that subprojects were not yet fully completed during the interim round and the objective of the program at this stage focused more on local governance and how the creation of CDCs and the selection of development projects affected political and social attitudes and outcomes [3]. In addition, income improvements were considered long-term goals that were beyond the scope of several of these projects. Nevertheless, nine projects reviewed in this study reported on income poverty impacts as part of their evaluations. Out of the nine, seven had statistically significant positive impacts on household living standards and welfare [3].

**Table 3.**

Indicators of peace and governance associated with frequency, mean and their descriptions.

Indicator	Frequency				Mean	Description
	4	3	2	1		
1. Peace and order situation in the community is reduced	2	66	31	1	2.69	Extensive
2. Peace building mechanisms are established and strengthened	2	81	17	0	2.85	Extensive
3. Local Government Units Administrative management is improved	12	73	15	0	2.97	Extensive
4. LGUs involvement in the program is strengthened	12	69	19	0	2.93	Extensive
5. LGUs' disaster preparedness is increased	12	76	12	0	3.00	Extensive
Average Mean					2.89	Extensive

Note: n=100.

Table 3 shows the summary of the mean on the extent of the implementation of HDAP as rated by the respondents in terms of peace and governance. Majority of the respondents with a mean of 2.89 is reasonably agreed that the extent of the implementation of HDAP in terms of peace and governance is

extensive. This implies that peace and order situation in their community have stabilized and claimed that their community are resilient and empowered.

Specifically, the indicator number 5 —LGUs’ disaster preparedness is increased, got the highest rating with the description of —Extensivel with the mean of 3.00. This implies that Local Government Units are well prepared and resilient from the natural or human-induced disaster, also LGUs are actively providing financial and humanitarian aid to the affected residents brought by the disasters. While, the rest of the statements got the same description of Extensivel which indicates that the LGUs are performing well to address the peace and order situation.

Similar study conducted by Arcand, et al. [7] stated that the introduction has said that Community Based Development project like Kapit-bisig Laban sa Kahirapan or KALAHI-CIDSS in areas controlled by the New People’s Army (CPP/NPA) led to an increase in violence. However, in areas where the Moro Islamic Liberation Front is present, the same project led to a reduction in violent incidents.

Drawing on the World Development Report (WDR) 2011: Conflict, Security and Development, study investigates how CBD programs are helping to address violence and fragility by restoring confidence at the community level (e.g., improving social cohesion, and restoring confidence in government) and transforming institutions (e.g., strengthening local mechanisms for problem solving and collective action). These —transformative outcomes are important elements of the Theories of Change used by most CBD projects. By distinguishing between —development outcomes (e.g., reduced poverty, improved health and education) and —transformative outcomes. Based on the WDR 2011 framework, the key to ending protracted cycles of conflict and fragility in the Philippines is to ensure that CBD programs are having a significant, positive impact on transformative outcomes, in addition to the development outcomes that may improve short-term conditions in the conflict area.

## 5. Summary of Mean

This study has 100 total of respondents. Twenty-four percent (24%) or the largest number of the respondents belonged to the age bracket of 31-37 years old while only one (1%) of the respondents fall in the age bracket of 66-72 years old. Majority of the respondents or 56% were male while 44% were females. In terms of marital status, majority of the respondents or 89% were married while only 6% and 5% was single and widowed respectively. Majority of the respondents or 90% reached elementary level while only 2% were college graduates. In terms of occupation, majority of respondents or 48% were farmers and 28% said that they were housewives. This only implies that the most of the respondents’ livelihood were farming. In terms of monthly income, majority or 57% the respondent’s monthly income ranged from 500 to 8,000 pesos which belonged to the very low-income group.

The extent of impact in the implementation of HDAP in terms of social services, economic services and peace and governance got the means of 2.80, 2.59 and 2.89 respectively and therefore is extensive.

**Table 4.**

Summary of Mean of the indicators on the extent of the implementation of HDAP.

Indicators	Mean	Description
1. Social Services	2.80	Extensive
2. Economic Services	2.59	Extensive
3. Peace and Governance	2.89	Extensive
Over-all Mean	2.76	Extensive

Table 4. above shows the summary of mean on the extent of the implementation of HDAP in terms of indicators which have an overall mean of 2.76 with description “Extensive”. It means that the respondents felt that the interventions of HDAP in their community were extensive.

Specifically in the indicators 3 “Peace and Governance” got the highest rating of 2.89 with description as extensive. This implies that the LGUS were able to provide assistance in times of disasters and they are supportive of any projects implemented in their municipality.

**Table 5.**

Indicators on the problems encountered on the implementation of HDAP the implementation of the program associated with frequency and ranks.

Indicator	F	%	Rank
1. Poor coordination between Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGUs) and residents.	39	39.00	2
2. Delay of projects due to peace and order situation	85	85.00	1
3. Lack of support from the Municipal Local Government Unit (MLGUs).	10	10.00	4
4. Poor monitoring of infrastructure projects.	14	14.00	3

Table 5 shows the problems encountered by the beneficiaries on the implementation of the HDAP. Majority of the respondents have experienced problems on delay of projects due to peace and order situation with frequency of 85 and rank as number 1, followed by poor coordination between Barangay Local Government Units (BLGUS) and residents with frequency of 39 and rank as number 2, only 14 responded that they experienced that projects were monitored poorly and 10 respondents said that projects were not sustained or completed due to lack of support from the Municipal Local Government Units (MLGUS) and/or BLGUS.

Similar study on the 10<sup>th</sup> Rapid Field Appraisal (RFA) report for Maguindanao in 2000, revealed that the LGUs’ programs and project deemed responsive to the needs of their constituents are constrained by limited local resource. Planning for development also has been affected due to lack of coordination that results from the LGUs’ having no jurisdiction over devolved national government agency personnel programs. Regional devolved personnel are said to have reasoned out that national programs are flexible enough to be applied to any area in the country. However municipal governments still make an effort to tap their own or the province’s or donor agencies’ resources to deliver services especially for social development [8]. In addition to this report, conflict, a natural result of low social cohesion, exacerbates the already lamentable ARMM situation. With conflict as both a potential and actual threat to Muslim-dominated areas, it is nearly impossible to achieve economic progress and stability for the poor in ARMM. Ultimately peace and development in the Mindanao rests where grassroots support for it is strong and sustained [8].

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the summary of mean, the extent of impact of the implementation of Humanitarian and Development Assistance Program (HDAP) in Maguindanao is extensive. This meant that the program gave benefit to the residents of the local governments. However, there were delays in the delivery of the services which consequently caused by peace and order situations in the localities.

## 7. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

## Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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