

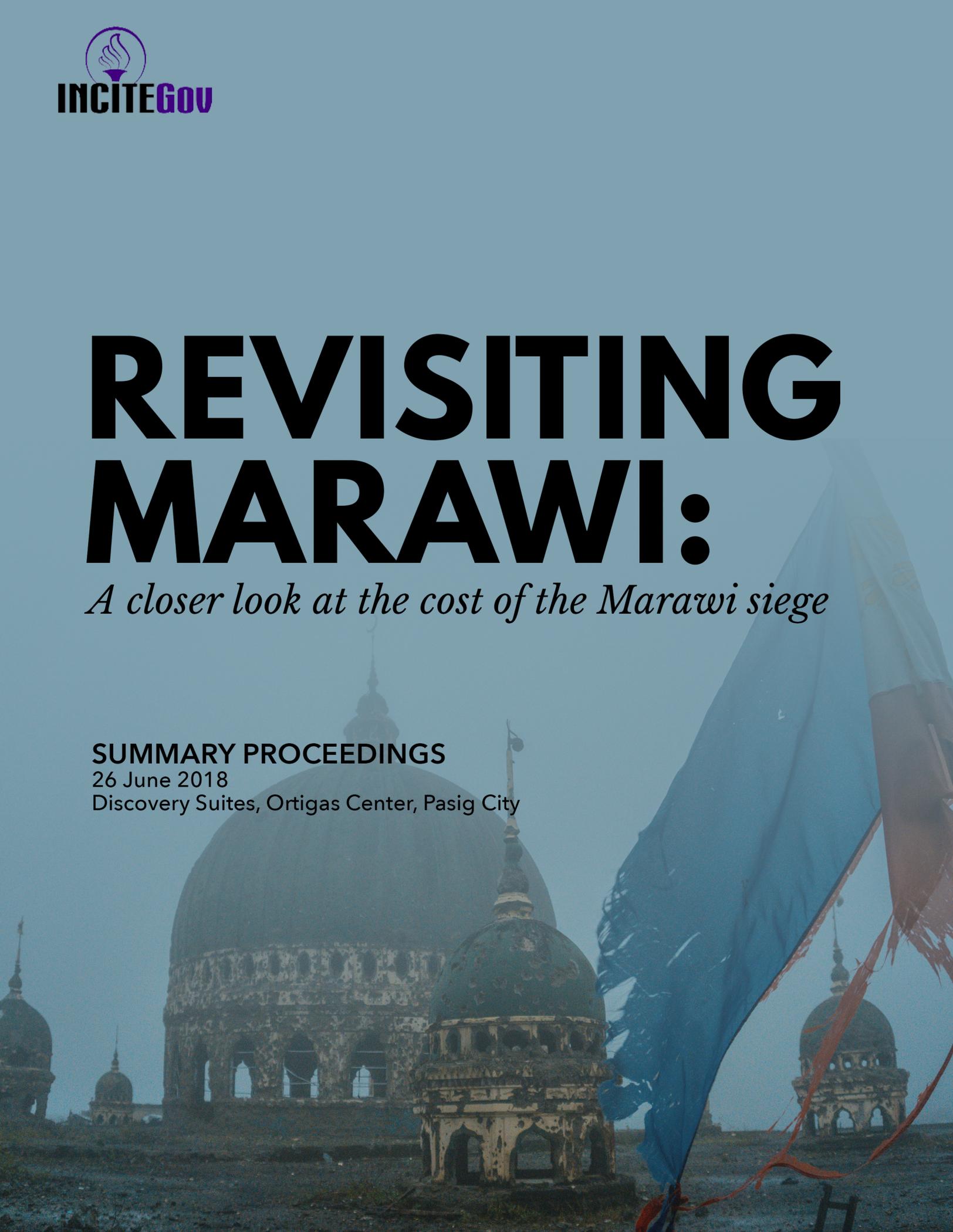
# REVISITING MARAWI:

*A closer look at the cost of the Marawi siege*

**SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS**

26 June 2018

Discovery Suites, Ortigas Center, Pasig City







It has been a year since a band of armed individuals inspired by and aligned with the international terror group Daesh attempted to take over the Islamic City of Marawi. The ensuing clash with government forces led to multiple deaths and injuries, massive infrastructure destruction, loss of properties and livelihood, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of its residents, among others. It likewise triggered the declaration of martial law and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus not only in Marawi, but in the entire Mindanao. The full extent of losses, both physical and intangible, especially those experienced by the displaced residents, escapes comprehensive ascertainment a year after the siege—and even seven months after the “liberation” of the city.

The focus has since turned to rehabilitation and reconstruction, but even this has been problematic. The comprehensive rehabilitation plan released by Task Force Bangon Marawi was met with criticism by some Marawi residents who assert that the plan was formed without satisfactory consultation with the primary stakeholders—the siege survivors themselves. This highlights the need to document and consolidate the articulation of acceptable rehabilitation and reconstruction goals as communicated by the people of Marawi. However, this, in turn, requires a clearer picture of the scale of the losses sustained by the city during the siege and its aftermath—particularly issues of land, human rights, displacement, the loss of property, and the impact on the city as a religious, cultural, and educational center.

Thus, *Revisiting Marawi: A Closer Look at the Costs of the Marawi Siege* aimed to collate the existing expressions of losses by the Marawi siege survivors, provide a space for Marawi residents to themselves document and deepen the discussion on these losses, and disseminate and widely circulate these expressions to a bigger audience by taking it beyond the Marawi residents to those who would traditionally and institutionally learn about them.

The first forum, held in Marawi City in May 2018, provided an opportunity for the survivors to talk about their experiences and the losses that they sustained during the siege. The second forum was held a month later in Manila in June 2018 to serve as an avenue for these stories and experiences to be heard by a broader audience.

## **REVISITING MARAWI:**

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incitegov@incitegov.org.ph | incitegov.org.ph



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### ***Project Team***

Teresita Quintos Deles (*Project Lead*)

Yasmin Busran-Lao

Shebana C. Alqaseer

### ***Copy Editor***

Paulynn Sicam

### ***Writers***

Joshua Carlo T. Pile

Verlie Q. Retulin

Cover and layout by Verlie Q. Retulin

Book cover image courtesy of Najib Zacaria

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Meranao is variously spelled as Maranao, Maranaw, Mranaw and Meranaw.  
This publication will use Meranao for consistency except direct quotation.

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Here's what most Filipinos seem to have forgotten: the destruction of Marawi runs deep, far beyond the already unbearable images you see in television and social media, and even today it runs deeper and deeper still. Because not even the most self-assured and ostentatious declarations of liberation from up high can change the realities on the ground.

The fighting might have ended, but even today, the crisis is far from over.

The bullets might have stopped raining, but  
*even today the tragedy of Marawi still unfolds.*

# OPENING REMARKS

*Teresita Quintos Deles  
Chairperson, INCITEGov*

It now seems so long ago that when I used to speak of Mindanao in front of audiences such as this, I spoke of how the work for peace, though long and winding, was closer than it has ever been to bearing real and tangible fruit. We knew that the journey would be hard, but we had reason for cautious optimism. We knew that pieces of the peace were already there, carefully laid on top of each other, waiting to be held firm and kept tight—to last, to be owned, to be protected and defended.

That was just a couple of years or so ago. So much, it seems, has changed in so short a time.



*INCITEGov chairperson Teresita Quintos Deles delivering her opening remarks at the Revisiting Marawi forum.*

Most people know, even in bare details, what happened in Marawi. In May last year, a band of armed individuals aligned with Daesh or ISIS attempted to take over Marawi—some might even say at the invitation of Mr. Duterte himself, who, months before the attack, with trademark and frankly tiring bravado, reportedly dared the Maute group to attack Marawi while warning that he would be waiting for them in the city.

He was not. And, listening to the stories of the city's residents, it seemed no one was.

The fighting between government forces and the armed group ran for five long months. It caused countless deaths and injuries. It brought massive destruction of infrastructure. It displaced hundreds of thousands of residents. It killed off livelihoods and destroyed properties. It even triggered the declaration of martial law and the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus—that understandably carry more weight in Mindanao, perhaps more than any other place in the country. The full scale of what happened still escapes description.

Mr. Duterte then declared Marawi liberated in October, with characteristically poor grammar—I'm sorry, but I couldn't help but notice; I was, after all, an English teacher, and it seems that old habits, like old dictators, die hard. In any case, for the rest of the country, it seemed the story of Marawi ended there. But it did not.

Many residents still have not been able to return to their homes. Rehabilitation efforts are still underway, slowly. The latter have proven especially problematic, since the comprehensive rehabilitation plan released by Task Force Bangon Marawi has been met with criticism by some Marawi residents. The plan, they said, was formed without satisfactory consultation with the primary stakeholders—the survivors themselves. This, naturally, was denied by the Task Force.

Still, this only serves to highlight the problem even more: we need a bigger, clearer picture of what the city and its people lost if we are to come up with a framework for rehabilitation that is acceptable to its residents, that is truly based on their needs, that genuinely addresses the losses they sustained. We, at INCITEGov, saw the need to document and consolidate sentiments along this vein from the residents themselves. Thus, from a survey of accounts on the siege and its aftermath, we identified the most prominent themes: the issues of land ownership and possession among the Meranao

and within Marawi city; the experiences of the internally-displaced in evacuation centers, with their host families, and in other cities and localities; the effects of the war and displacement on Marawi city as a cultural, religious, and educational center, and on the identity of the Meranao; and, lastly, human rights violations, including losses of properties suffered by the residents of Marawi.

“*We need a bigger, clearer picture of what the city and its people lost if we are to come up with a framework for rehabilitation that is acceptable to the city’s residents, that is truly based on their needs, that genuinely addresses the losses they sustained.*”

Today’s forum is actually the second part of this project we titled “Revisiting Marawi: A Closer Look at the Costs of the Marawi Siege”. Last month, INCITEGov held a forum in Marawi to provide a space for the residents themselves to just talk about the losses they experienced, so we can document and deepen discussions on these. Today’s forum seeks to bring these discussions to a bigger audience. Our forum last month was held in the hope of giving voice to the people of Marawi. Our forum today seeks to provide an avenue where they may hopefully be heard.

Because perhaps right now what they need are more than iron fists, or military solutions, or the glitzy promises of Chinese-funded rehabilitation, or fingers to point, or trending hashtags and viral posts, or grand plans for reconstruction, or whatever else can come from this administration and its president who claims to be of Meranao blood and yet showed not even the slightest bit of remorse and hesitation at the prospect of carpet bombing the city and spilling the blood of the Meranao.

Perhaps, at this juncture, what they need are ears to listen and hearts to hear the stories they tell and the questions they ask to this day.

And we do this not only because we do not want a repeat of what happened in Marawi. Of course, we don’t want that, but here’s what most Filipinos seem to have forgotten: the destruction of Marawi runs deep, far beyond the already unbearable images you see on television and social media, and even today it runs deeper and deeper still. Because not even the most self-assured and ostentatious declarations of liberation from up high can change the realities on the ground. The fighting might have ended, but even today, the crisis is far from over. The bullets might have stopped raining, but even today, the tragedy of Marawi continues to unfold.

And so we are here today to hear stories of Marawi from the city’s residents themselves—not only because we want to avoid a similar crisis in the future, but because we have to address, with all urgency, the one that rages still today.

These stories must be told. Their questions must be asked and answered. Their experiences must be shared. We ignore them at our own peril.

Because what happened in Marawi has costs that go beyond the city, that go beyond Mindanao.

Because, more simply, telling stories is perhaps the most human of all faculties, our refuge from despair since the most ancient of times. Because in the telling and the hearing, we find healing. We find hope. We find the beginnings of answers. We find ways to look at the loss of all we hold dear, and think that maybe, just maybe, while the Marawi of memory is gone and will perhaps never return as it was, the city—and all it can and will still be—is more than brick and mortar, is as strong as its people, is as invincible as their dreams. And though I know today that is of little consolation, this vision of Marawi as it can and will be, is enough to give us a sliver of hope that someday soon, maybe, just maybe, *insha’Allah*, the sun will start shining a little bit brighter over it. Thank you.

# LAND: *The Meranao Territory and Concept of Land Possession*

Dr. Moctar Matuan  
Professor (retired),  
Mindanao State University

*Professor Moctar Matuan's presentation focused on the Meranao's concept of land, its modes of acquisition and ownership, and its importance to the group's identity and culture. He also discussed the divisions of the Pat a Phangampong ko Ranao, the nation-state equivalent of the indigenous socio-political organization of the Meranao. Matuan emphasized that an individual should be able to identify a piece of land within the territory of the group; otherwise, he cannot claim to be a Meranao.*

*Land conflicts are expected to arise after the siege. It is then important for the government to seek the help of the community leaders and elders to clearly identify the occupants of each piece of land before the Marawi siege happened.*

*Why the government continues to prevent them from returning to their homes remains unclear to the residents except, they are supposedly told, for their safety. Still, they expressed the desire to be involved in rehabilitation and development planning.*

Meranao is one of the 13 Muslim ethnolinguistic groups in Southern Philippines. Prior to the establishment of the Philippine Republic, the Meranao already had a relatively well-organized indigenous socio-political organization, the nation-state equivalent of which is the *Pat a Phangampong ko Ranao*. Under this organization, all Meranao speakers are joined in a single structure of institutions, values, and beliefs.

Due to the arrival of Spanish colonizers, a centralized authority structure did not develop among the Meranao, unlike in other areas such as Sulu and Maguindanao. In Lanao, the *inged* (towns) and *agamas* (communities) functioned independently of other *inged* and *agama* resulting in what has been termed a "segmentary society".

The Masiu, Unayan, Bayabao, and Baloi *pangampong* had their own *taritib* (ancient order) and they divided their respective territories according to their own wishes. Each *pangampong* is divided into regions, regions are divided into *inged*, and *inged* are divided into *agama*.

Bayabao, for instance, divided its territory into *suku* or *sukong* (region/district). Each *suku* is composed of



A photo of Dr. Moctar Matuan during the Marawi leg of the forum in May 2018.

several *inged*, which are in turn classified as *pagawidan* (supported) and *pagawid* (supporter). The *inged* is made up of several *agama*.

In contrast, the *pangampong* of Unayan had no *suku*. Instead, its main divisions were the *sebangan* and *sedepan a Unayan* or east and west Unayan which were further sub-divided into supported and supporter. Baloi had no district because it was not divided into east and west; it only had one supported *inged* and four

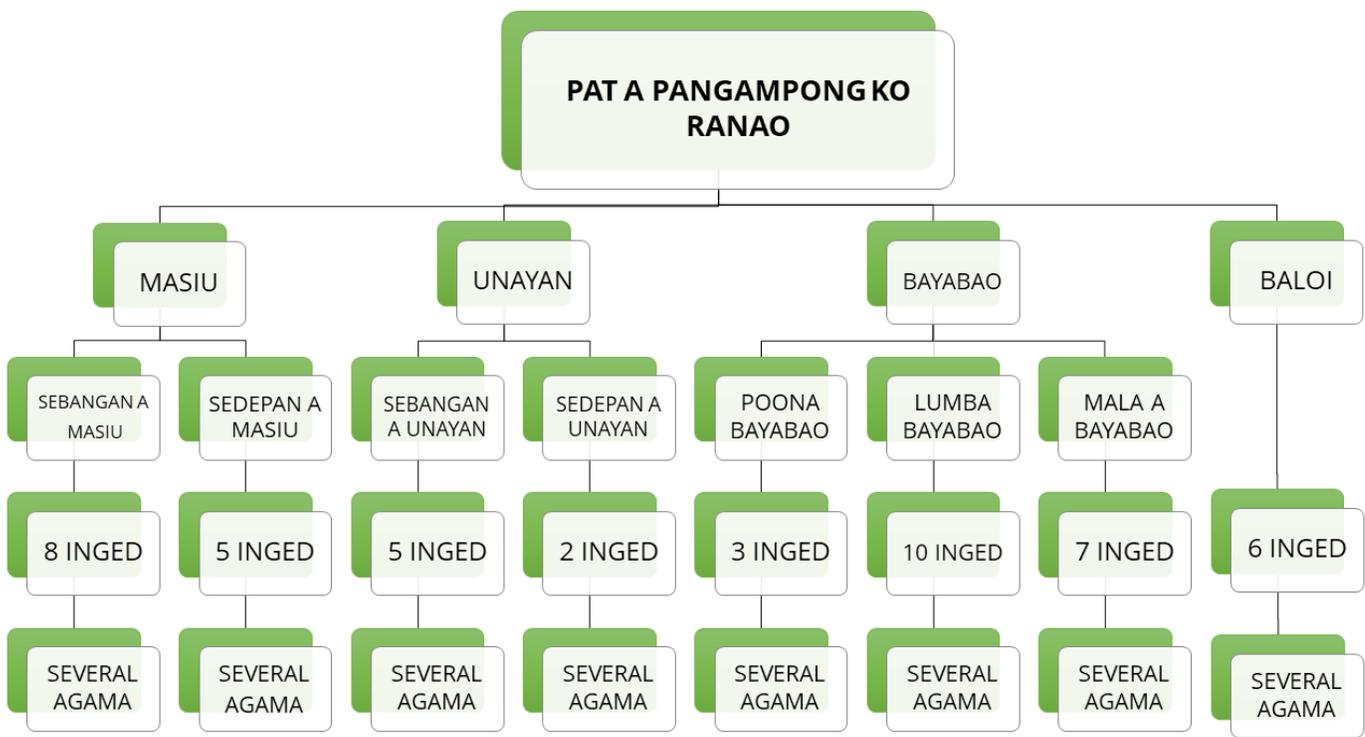


Figure 1. The divisions of the Pat A Pangampong Ko Lanao

supporting *inged*. Masiu, on the other hand, designated a supporter or supported status based on ancestral leaders or apical ancestors instead of by *inged*.

Currently, it is generally accepted that the present four *pangampong* of Lanao are divided into:

- 15 supported *inged*;
- 28 supporter *inged*, which act as some sort of Congress since they oversee revisions and additions to the *Ijma* and *Taritib*; and
- Four *inged*, which serve as boundaries. They are independent from the supported and supporter *inged* and are primarily tasked to settle boundary disputes among the *pangampong*.

Understanding the discussions on these concepts is crucial in examining how the plan for Marawi disregards the way people see their own territory.

The Meranao concept of *agama* is “*Isa ka Datu, Isa ka Masgit, Isa la Agama* (One Leader, One Mosque, One Community).” New communities can be initiated into the structure and, upon satisfying the requirements of “*Isa ka Datu, Isa ka Masgit, Isa ka Agama*,” the new community can be accepted as part of a certain *inged* as well as of the *pangampong* where that *inged* belongs.

Each layer of the *pangampong* socio-political organization (from *pangampong*, to *suku*, *inged*, and *agama*) has its own notion of district territory.

Furthermore, the *agama* territory is divided into several residential lots—the smallest territorial unit in the *pangampong* set-up. These residential lots are classified as *kakola*, *gapa*, *kawali*, and *bangon*.

*Gapa* is a piece of land originally acquired through occupation. When a Meranao refers to a piece of land as “*mianggapa*,” he is, in a way, saying that the said piece of land was originally occupied, cleared, and transformed into a habitat or agricultural area by the original owner, while also implying co-ownership by virtue of descent. In the Adat laws, only the *kakola* (community domain) can be acquired and owned through occupation. *Kawali*, meanwhile, is a piece of ancestral land inherited from the ascending generation. Succession is another mode of acquiring land ownership among the Meranao.

*Lopa* is the general term for land; depending on the context, it may refer to *gapa*, *kawali*, or any piece of land.

The terms *gapa* and *kawali* show how ancestral lands are interrelated to one's *bangsa*—the individual's corpus of genealogical connections. In fact, a piece of *gapa* or *kawali* is not only real property but also a symbol of a person's *bangsa* — a sign of one's nobility class. When a person says he owns a piece of land (whether *gapa* or *kawali*) in a certain community, it implies that he is part of the nobility class in the community where the land is located.

Land is a part and inseparable criterion in the identification of the group. Taking away the land owned by a Meranao is equivalent, in modern state parlance, to terminating their citizenship in the *pangampong*.

“*Land is conceived as part and inseparable item in the identification of who is a Meranao.*”

A person cannot claim to be a Meranao and invoke the rights and privileges bestowed on the members of the community if 1) he cannot identify a piece of land (*gapa* or *kawali*) within the territory of the group, and 2) he does not own land within the *inged* or *agama* of Marawi. To qualify as a Meranao, one must be a member of all layers from the *agama* up to the four *pangampong*.

The Meranao tradition also provides that land can be disposed and acquired through sale, pawn, or mortgage (*sanda*), as part of the “bride's wealth” or inheritance. However, all co-owning kin of a communal land must be consulted first and must give their permission before land can be subjected to any of these transactions. In case of sale, preference is always given to Meranao who have relations to the community, either by lineage or marriage. However, over and above this principle or norm, the Meranao place more emphasis on community recognition that such a piece of land is owned or was acquired under the modes cited above by a certain individual or family.

Marawi is part of Mala-a-Bayabao. It is the capital of Buadi Sacayo, a much larger community whose territorial

claim extends to the municipality of Saguiaran and part of Piagapo. When Dansalan City—later renamed Marawi—was created, the territorial coverage of the city included the following *inged/agama* under the *suku* (region) of Mala-a-Bayabao: Marawi/Buadi Sacayo, Bacolod, Guimba, Toros, Tuca, Madaya, Ibango, and Ambolong.

Although almost all of the residents of these communities evacuated during the siege, only Madaya and Ibango were totally ruined as a result of the armed encounter with the Maute and government troops' aerial bombing. The area covering 24 barangays was recently designated as the Main Battle Area. Today, the residents of the other *inged/agama* have already been allowed to return to rebuild their homes and lives, but not those whose homes are within the most affected area (MAA).

Numerous claims and counterclaims to land will be filed when the residents are finally allowed to return to their homes. In this chaotic situation, only the community leaders and elders can clearly identify the occupants of a *kakola*, *kawali*, *gapa*, and *bangon* before the siege. Traditional community leaders and elders should, therefore, be tapped to identify who the residents were before the siege. Once the area has been mapped to indicate the last known occupants, other claims and counterclaims can be entertained by an Arbitration Committee to be organized by the *inged* or *agama* leaders. Each *agama* should have its own arbitration committee to avoid land conflicts.

No clear reason has been given to justify why the residents are prevented from returning to their land and damaged houses except, supposedly, for their safety. Military and civilian authorities have argued that it is still unsafe to return because some unexploded ordnances are yet to be located, months after the city's liberation.

The slow-paced efforts of the government have not gone unnoticed among Marawi residents who are growing suspicious of the plans for the city and its residents. Task Force Bangon Marawi, the interagency group tasked for the recovery, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of Marawi, is finalizing its plans. There are

fears, however, that these will displace residents. It is even rumored that Chinese and other foreign investors are coming to occupy their land. In addition, the military is constructing an additional military camp purposely to safeguard new foreign investments in the city.

During INCITEGov's first forum held in Marawi, the residents expressed their wish to get their land back and be involved in the rehabilitation and development planning of their city. They also want to invoke their right to their ancestral land using continuous and actual occupancy as proof of land ownership. Moreover, they are willing to accept payment for their damaged houses and other personal properties if a Reparation Law is passed by Congress, but maintain that their lands have a cultural attachment to their individual and family identities, and are not for sale.

The Meranao, for centuries, have defended their ancestral domain, religion, culture, and way of life from the Spanish, American and Japanese invaders. However, the American declaration (Proclamation No. 452, s. 1953, signed by then President Elpidio Quirino) reserved, for military purposes, parcels of the public domain situated in Marawi City (formerly Dansalan). The land area covers roughly the bulk of Marawi City and portions of the towns of Marantao, Piagapo and Saguiaran. Known as the Camp Keithley Military Reservation, it served as a colonial tool and policy to grab the ancestral domain of our people. If the current Philippine government insists on using this policy to forcefully take away the land from

its lawful owners/occupants, the government becomes an automatic extension of the American colonizers in the eyes of the Meranao.

Article XII Section 5 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution states that "The State, subject to the provision of this Constitution and national development policies and programs, shall protect the rights of the indigenous cultural communities to their ancestral lands to ensure their economic, social, and cultural well-being. The Congress may provide for the applicability of customary laws governing property rights or relations in determining the ownership and extent of ancestral domain."

The phrase "ancestral domain" is a broader concept than "ancestral land". The former includes land not yet occupied such as deep forest, but which is generally regarded as belonging to a cultural community or region, as discussed by Commissioner Ponciano Bennagen during the Constitutional Proceedings. The concept of the *pangampong* falls under this.

Whether the Constitutional provision on the Meranao's right over their ancestral land or domain is superior or inferior to the American military declaration and other Presidential declarations, lawyers and lawmakers can seriously consider the principles discussed in protecting ownership of land without the required papers or documents—especially as most Meranao do not possess land titles.

*Dr. Moctar I. Matuan is currently serving his third term as Executive Director of the Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao (IPDM). He holds a doctorate degree in sociology from Xavier University and another on Peace and Development Studies from Notre Dame University. He worked as Research Officer at the Dansalan Research Center (DRC) in 1976, was promoted to Senior Research Officer in 1979 and became the second Director of the institution in 1983.*

*He is also involved in several peace and development efforts and serves as board member of the Kalimudan Foundation, Inc. (1989 to present); secretary of the Ranao Muslim-Christian Movement for Dialogue and Peace (1992 to present); member of the Board of Advisers of Kapamagogopa, Inc. (2004 to present); senior adviser of the Inspired Young Optimist Guild (2005 to present); and President, Panday Kalinao, Inc. (2006 to present). Dr. Matuan was also involved in the formative years of the Bishop-Ulama Conference from 1996 to 1997.*

## LAND:

# *How the Reassertion and Introduction of New Military Installations Complicate Land Issues in Marawi*

*Dr. Tirmizy E. Abdullah  
Associate Professor,  
Mindanao State University*

*In his presentation, Associate Professor Tirmizy Abdullah emphasized the residents' opposition to the construction of a military garrison in Marawi City. The structure, which will require residents to relinquish their lands, will lead to more conflicts and family feuds, he said. Instead of building the garrison, the government should channel its resources to the rehabilitation of the city and the reparation of its residents. The Marawis continue to call for healing and restorative truth, along with the right to justice and the right to know.*



*Dr. Tirmizy Abdullah discusses the building of a military garrison in Marawi City. The amount allocated for its construction is already enough for the IDPs to start rebuilding their lives.*

The government is building a garrison—not just a military camp—in Marawi that can accommodate three to five thousand military personnel. This contradicts an earlier statement made by Assistant Secretary Kristoffer James Purisima, the spokesperson of Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM), who said the building of a garrison in Marawi is “just fake news.” Abdullah said it is puzzling to see how this is being prioritized when there are still a lot of internally displaced persons (IDPs) languishing in evacuation centers.

The 10-hectare military garrison, which is expected to be completed in 2020, will be established in Barangay Kapataran. It will serve as the headquarters of the

Philippine Army’s infantry battalion. It will be equipped with its own artillery storage, billeting and recreational facilities.

Its total funding of P400 million would be enough for evacuees to start rebuilding their lives. Survivors have questioned why the building of a military garrison seems to be more important than efforts to rebuild their lives. In response, the TFBM said the structure is intended “to protect the investors and contractors when they start the rehabilitation.” No part of the plan seems to take civilians into account. What is important is to secure the investments of the Philippine government and other countries.

Abdullah identified several reasons why the building of the garrison should be opposed. First, there is no need to build another military installation in Marawi since there is already the huge Camp Ranao within the city. The government should instead channel its efforts in strengthening Camp Ranao instead of building another camp.

Moreover, many families will certainly be asked to relinquish their lands and properties to build the new camp. This goes against one of the guiding principles of the TFBM that there should be no buying and selling of lands in Marawi during rehabilitation. More problems will arise if the land is sold simultaneously with rehabilitation, and the government will try to buy the land of residents for the camp. It must be remembered

that one of the causes of *rido* (clan feud) among the Mranaw is land. There will be more complications if a family member sells land without informing his kin.

Additionally, there are many cases of Mranaw being open to selling their lands. This, however, has reflected negatively on them as they are now suspected as having “sold” Marawi. Some government officials have asked why several groups and individuals block other residents from selling their own lands. Abdullah maintained that more problems will crop up if the public officials insist on their wrong ways and methods which do not consider the opinion of the residents. The residents do not want to cause any more problems in Marawi and they will not let outsiders dictate what is best for the city.

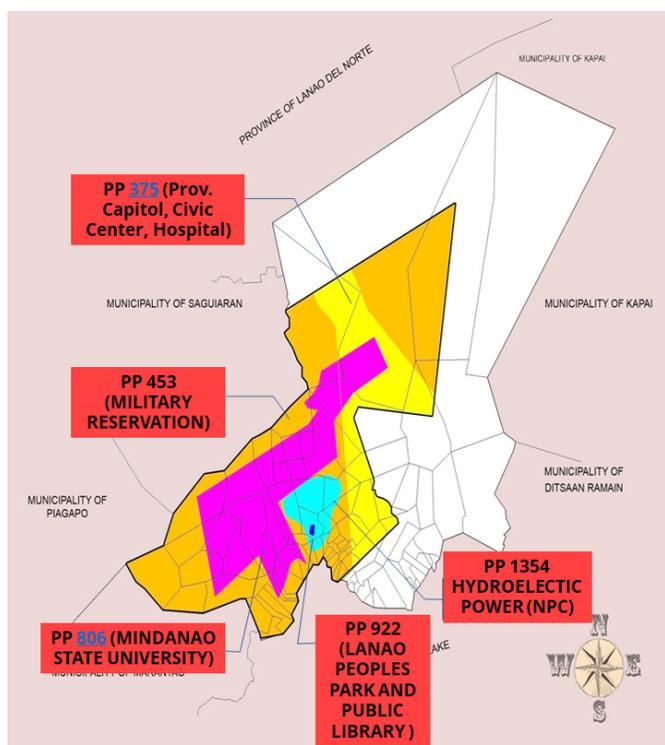


Figure 2. The indicative map of the military reservation, based on Abdullah’s presentation

Abdullah noted that a military garrison is inconsistent with the Annex on Normalization of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro. In fact, there is some resentment among residents that the MILF has not brought this up. This, in addition to the sentiment that the MILF did not lift a finger to help Marawi residents during the siege. In fact, many groups seemed to

become irrelevant when the siege happened. The residents have asked the MILF to tell the government to review the provision of the Annex on Normalization, but to no avail.

The government claims that the military reservation is consistent with correcting historical injustices. Abdullah contradicted this claim, saying the establishment of a new camp will only further the injustices. It will only instill more fear in the residents and suppress the right of IDPs to speak out, especially with martial law still in place.

Unfortunately, a false equivalence is emerging between disapproving the building of the garrison and supporting the Maute. He argued that the establishment of the military garrison will put more people in danger because they will become potential targets of those who want to attack the government. For example, when the Maute came to Marawi, their target was Camp Ranao. Plans to build the garrison in the middle of the city will just endanger the lives of the civilians.

The TFBM generally does not bring up the issue of the military garrison. However, they were forced to because the residents were already talking about it. The people of Marawi do not want the military garrison. In response, the task force suggested in one of their presentations, that “headlining the issue of violent extremism and its potential re-emergence may also facilitate acceptance of the new military camp.” Abdullah branded this response as “a dirty game.” The people of Marawi are already displaced and are now being further terrified into accepting the military garrison. This, Abdullah said, is why some people think that the Mautes were probably funded by someone in government.

### **Problematic rehabilitation framework**

When the residents held a peaceful protest on March 30, 2018, the TFBM claimed that most of the participants were not from Marawi. According to Abdullah, this clearly showed the ignorance of the task force about the Mranaw concept of *bangsa* – “that if you are a Mranaw, you have a *bangsa* that is connected to Marawi.” Abdullah noted the TFBM’s mistake in using a framework that divided the Mranaw people.

**“***When we held the March 30 peaceful protest, klarong-klarang pagiging ignorante ng Task Force Bangon Marawi. Tapos sasabihin niyo sa amin, ‘Huwag kayong mag-alala kasi may billions (of money), may dagdag pa.’ Hindi lang pera-pera ang rehabilitation para sa amin. [When we held the March 30 peaceful protest, the ignorance of the Task Force Bangon Marawi was very evident. Then they had the audacity to tell us, ‘Don’t worry because there are billions (for rehabilitation) and a lot more will come.’ Rehabilitation, for us, is not only about the money.]*

Abdullah argued that TFBM’s framework is problematic since it monetizes the dignity of the survivors. Many organizations and foreign countries have been pouring investments and financial aid into Marawi City, making outsiders think that things are happening in the city. For its residents, however, rehabilitation is not all about money. Aside from the death toll, the siege has ruined many relationships that are now difficult to restore. Residents are questioning the framework being used by government for rehabilitation and reparation.

The residents felt that during the peace rally in March 2018, politics was discussed more than the plight of the civilians. Abdullah noted the vulnerability of IDPs on the issue of land because it gives responding institutions or groups the freedom to decide when and where to relocate them.

During the rally, the residents also appealed to President Duterte to stop the building of the proposed eco-zone and the military garrison in Marawi until the rehabilitation plans take into account the dreams, aspirations, and cultural sensitivities of the IDPs.

Even the dead were affected during the siege because the land owned by the residents also serve as their ancestors’ final resting place. During the peace rally, some residents got emotional, feeling that their departed loved ones were calling to them, asking for their help.

The humanitarian community explained to the residents that there was no request for intervention coming from the Philippine government. Consequently, residents are clueless about where to ask for humanitarian assistance. Because of the neglect that they are experiencing, the youth cannot help but think that their lives mean nothing to the government. It is said that some 900 Maute members and only a few civilians died—but countless residents have relatives who are still missing and are feared dead. Abdullah said Syria is somewhat luckier in this respect, where relatives get to find and give dignified interment to their dead. In the case of Marawi, residents are not even certain if their kin are alive or dead. Particularly disturbing is the official estimate placing civilian casualties at 30 or 40. Even just an official admission that more people are missing has been denied the survivors of the siege.



*The government should prioritize the IDPs that continue to stay in evacuation centers and allow them to rebuild their lives instead of focusing its efforts on the building of the military garrison.*

The narrative remains the same: the Mranaw are at fault because they coddled the Maute. Residents find it difficult to accept this, especially since they did not

oppose the suppression of terrorism. Yet, they were being blamed for the presence of the Maute group in Marawi. Currently, there are still 140,000 IDPs staying in 67 evacuation centers and with their relatives in Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, and Iligan City. They have not been able to return home. They should be prioritized. They are being discriminated against in the areas they have fled to, like Iligan, where many have been told to leave.

The building of the military garrison and other structures raises numerous questions, such as, how can human rights violations be addressed and how can the government regain the trust of the people?

The residents believe in the prevention of violent extremism through more grassroots-level approaches. This can be done by building the trust of the youth in the government. But it is difficult to foster trust between the youth and government if government keeps employing the military approach. Instead of using the P400 million fund for the garrison, the government should fund grassroots-level peacebuilding activities, which, he attested, are effective, having personally known youth who had been de-radicalized through such activities.

He noted that what the residents want is transitional justice, which should be the priority. In line with this, and despite the difficulty, he joined the call of the residents for a Senate inquiry on Marawi, noting that Senate inquiries have been held on less urgent matters. With thousands of people dead from the siege, the chamber is yet to hold a hearing.

The residents are calling for healing and restorative truth, along with the right to justice and the right to know. They demand access to real-time information on the siege. They hold rallies because it seems that all this has been lost in the national conversation. But the residents are resolute and will not let things slide easily. *“Wala kaming pakialam sa dynamics on the national level. Ang alam namin, itong issue namin na Marawi. (We don’t care about the dynamics on the national level. What we care about are the issues here in Marawi),”* Abdullah said.

*Dr. Tirmizy Abdullah is an Associate Professor at Mindanao State University Marawi where he also serves as the Coordinator for Peace Research of its Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao (IPDM). He holds a doctoral degree in Philippine Studies, major in Mindanao Society, History, and Culture from the same university. He is a member of Generation Peace (GenPeace) and the Ranaw Multi Sectoral Movement for Marawi.*

## HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS AND LOSS OF PROPERTIES

# *Human Rights: Collateral Damage in Marawi City*

*Samira Gutoc-Tomarwis*  
*Focal Person, Ranao Rescue Team*

*Along with the destruction of properties, the Marawi siege brought about human rights violations. Apart from the killings, civilians were held as hostages by the Maute group and even tortured. The government, meanwhile, lacked the proper procedures in the handling and identification of the dead. Gravesites were not in good condition, either. Samira Gutoc-Tomarwis urged the government to be accountable, respond adequately to the issues and problems caused by the siege, and conduct proper reporting of what happened before, during, and after the Marawi crisis.*

The timeline given by the government should not be the only narrative through which the Marawi siege should be remembered. The narrative should include hundreds of initiatives on the grassroots level, including the Anti-Crime Watch movement which served as a partner of the Philippine Army until the 2016 beheading of plantation workers in Butig four months before Duterte won the presidency. The beheadings interrupted peace covenants being forged in barangays in Marawi.

The timeline should also be examined without divorcing the developments and incidents before the Marawi siege happened. Prior to the siege, on December 2016, Duterte visited Butig and called on the Maute group to leave the municipal hall. Back then, the Maute's signature black flags were already flying in the town's municipal hall just two hours ride away from Marawi City. The presidential convoy was also attacked around this time, though questions have been raised whether this was actually an ambush as reported or a mere accident.

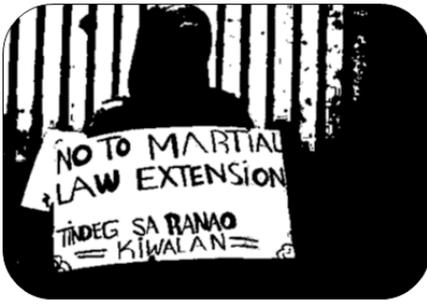
The month before the siege, there were aerial strikes in Piagapo where three barangays were displaced. There was another notable development five months before, when the provincial Peace and Order Council was convened but there was no downloading of support for a joint task force initiative against terrorism, drugs, and crime. In the months before the siege, there were barely any arrests of terrorist leaders—not just members, although, to the credit of the army, they had posted



*A photo of Samira Gutoc- Tomarwis during the Marawi leg of the forum in May 2018.*

On the evening of May 23, Martial Law was declared. It is important to note that it was graduation day in the city and the people were scattered in different places. There were no disaster risk officers on the ground. Military personnel were on an operation in Maguing, one of the city's drug areas. Marawi was essentially empty of security personnel who could counter armed men with long firearms. Then came the *johor* in Basak Malutlut, with Hapilon in attendance despite the bounty on his head. The warrant against him was served, though not by soldiers stationed in Marawi, and the firefight began in a public place.

Marawi is just one highway, which meant that the entry and exit points were closed from Day One. From Basak



## HUMAN RIGHTS ARE UNIVERSAL

- They belong to Everybody



## HUMAN RIGHTS ARE INALIENABLE

- They cannot be taken away
- And Different rights could only successfully exist in combination. All the different human rights are important for human beings to flourish and participate in society.



## INDIVISIBLE AND INTERDEPENDENT

Figure 3. Human Rights Principles

Malutlut and its surrounding commercial spaces, the Maute moved to Amai Pakpak hospital.

Prior to the siege, there had been months and years of killings on the ground, by people who hate homosexuals, Shiites, soldiers, and policemen, and what happened on May 23 cannot be divorced from all of that.

International and Philippine laws are invoked in every conflict and are used in peace talks. Some might argue, however, that there is no jurisprudence when it comes to terrorist attacks.

*“You cannot divorce May 23 from the previous two, three months, even seven years of killings on the ground by people who hated gays, by men who hated Shiites or other sects, men who hated soldiers and policemen. You cannot divorce May 23 from that.”*

Third-party monitoring was not allowed during the siege in spite of the fact that there were people who had

full access to the affected areas and could document incidents. The city’s residents are now hoping to get answers from President Duterte on why Martial Law had to be declared without convening a crisis committee and without calling for any support—intelligence, advisory, recommendation, or endorsement—from the Sanggunian.

### **Human rights violations**

Several cases of human rights violations happened during the siege. From day one, because of limited entry and exit, the Maute group went on a rampage and clusters of killings began. On the first three days, there were groups of four to five men found dead near the entrance to Marawi despite the presence of two checkpoints in between. In one instance, a child who was just praying in a mosque, was killed.

During the early stages of the siege, residents were trapped and were not allowed to evacuate because the military was afraid the Maute would hide among evacuating civilians and escape with them. General Carlito Galvez gave instructions that a white flag should be raised while the civilians were being rescued because the military would not call for a ceasefire. There was already chaos by Day Three.

Those who were physically able managed to leave the city. Some elected to stay. Some wanted to leave but

were physically unable to do so. Since the exit and entry points were very restricted, civilians could no longer return to the city once they got out, even just to retrieve their land titles or their ATM cards. Many decided to stay, however, in spite of what was happening.

In violation of international norms, hostages such as Christians, students, men that the rebel group planned to use, and women, were taken during the siege.

During the July 22 Congressional hearing on the declaration of martial law, the Ranao Rescue Team was not given the chance to show photos of victims. This included a photo of a special child who was picked up and tortured—though he is now secured in an undisclosed location, and the groups of men found dead near checkpoints. Protection for torture victims is now being sought so they themselves can tell the army and the police what really happened to them on the ground.

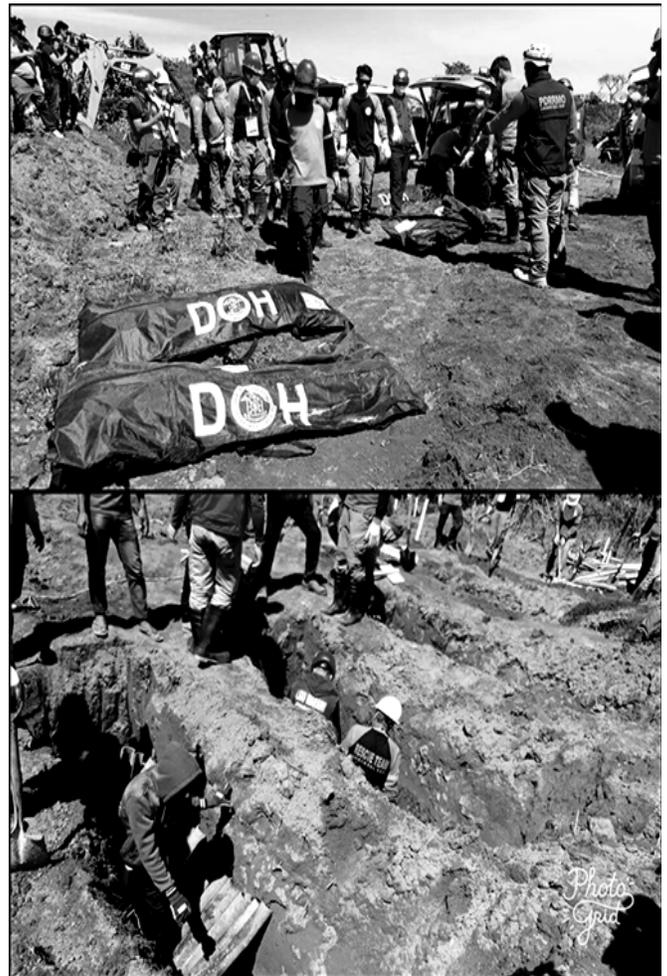
### **Identification of the dead**

No protocols or manuals have been released for dealing with the dead, e.g. whether there will be autopsies and DNA testing. This, despite the fact that the government is mandated to inform civilian survivors what happened to their dead relatives and to collect and identify their remains. Instead, surviving residents found the corpses of their kin and other residents scattered around the city during the *Kambisita*. The government had to quickly facilitate the transfer of remains to the cemetery, which was not ready.

Gravesites have to be protected as well. Months after the siege, it was noted that gravesites were still not properly marked with names. Only number plates were used and are already deteriorating. This could be a problem for the DNA matching being done by PNP SOCO, which has been going slowly, to begin with.

### **Large scale destruction**

At one point, some two or three months before October 2017, there was a debate whether or not the mosque should be targeted. A mosque is supposed to be a protected facility but the Maute group used it as a hideout. The agreement was to avoid bombing the



*Months after the siege, many of the deceased remain unidentified. No protocols or manuals had been released for the proper handling of the dead bodies, either.*

mosque; instead, the security sector struck from the sides, not from above.

It seemed that the full force of the military was used during the siege; it seemed like overkill, Gutoc-Tomawis said. But even then, the Maute group was not eradicated. Now led by Abu Dar, they resurfaced just months after the city was declared liberated. There still are other groups with the same ideology of segregation.

### **Looting**

Looting is an important issue. The question was, what would happen to the property of the residents. One picture that circulated online showed army personnel loading some personal properties onto a truck. When asked about it, the army said some residents had asked

for assistance, and that the soldiers usually bring some items of their own as well.

All the funds for social assistance is now gone—whether for DOH medical assistance, DSWD cash assistance, and other services. People cannot check into hospital wards anymore.

The remaining questions about the siege must be raised and answered, and the government must be pushed to report on the siege, as it is mandated to.

*Hailed as one of the 500 Most Influential Muslims (The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, Jordan), Samira Gutoc-Tomawis has worked with an array of stakeholders in the past 17 years as a journalist, manager, consultant, environmentalist, trainor, activist, organizer and legislator. She obtained her degree in communication and her master's degree in International Studies at the University of the Philippines-Diliman, her law degree from the Arellano School of Law, and a fellowship at the Oxford Center for Islamic Studies. She was named one of The Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS) in 2019 and one of the country's Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) for Leadership in 2018. She was Executive Vice President of the 1st National Youth Parliament and spokesperson of the Reform ARMM Now (RAN) where she helped push for the postponement of the August 2011 ARMM elections to May 2013. She was a regent in the MSU System. She is also a former commissioner of the Bangsamoro Transition Committee.*

# OPEN FORUM

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*On whether a military garrison inside the city will make its residents feel more secure.*

Military presence in the city has always been problematic. Several portions of the current camp overlaps with land belonging to private individuals. To settle this, the army was asked to identify which portions of the land belong to them and which are owned by private residents. Duterte once gave the assurance that the government will only take what it needs. However, there is still no enabling law for this, in the same way that there is still no law for compensation and rehabilitation.

The issue of the second military camp is a matter of perception. It's not easy to say whether the military camp will make the residents feel more secure because the military is involved in a lot of things. What is certain is that not everyone is comfortable with the constant military presence in the city.

The CSOs must pressure the government to amend the executive order that created the TFBM. It would not be useful to disband the task force outright. Residents must be allowed to go back to their homes in the war zone. Discourse must be encouraged to allow more people to speak out, although they are still afraid, with Martial Law still in place. If funders are willing to help, it would be ideal to convene the residents.

— **Samira Gutoc-Tomawis**

The dilemma is that even if the people in Marawi are not in favor of the establishment of a military garrison in the city, they have nowhere else to go. Additionally, there are those who will feel safe with military presence because of the kidnapping incidents and the presence of drug lords in the city. A *MindaNews* article has identified these drug lords and revealed that some of them are known to have contacts with the military. This is alarming since some people think that the military is there to help guard them against lawless elements,

without knowing that the same guys might be linked to these lawless elements themselves.

— **Dr. Moctar Matuan**

Flipping the question might be a more useful method in determining a response to it. How unsafe will Marawi be if there is a military garrison in the city? Definitely, it will not be safe for residents. Furthermore, the issue of a military garrison should be viewed through the lens of land ownership. Camp Ranao is already besieged with land issues, with civilian residential compounds practically annexed by the camp. A new military garrison will surely take civilian lands again and consequently increase the risk of *rido*.

The military approach has been proven ineffective in coming up with durable solutions—that is why the Annex on Normalization is a key component of CAB, which means the garrison will not be necessary. It was also very clear and revealing that the government said the garrison would be established to secure investors and contractors for the rehabilitation—not the civilian residents themselves.

— **Dr. Tirmizy Abdullah**

*On the inevitability of land conflicts during rehabilitation, given the perennial land issues in the area, the lack of genuine consultations, and the non-participation of qualified Meranao in rehabilitation planning.*

Community leaders are the most knowledgeable on land ownership. The city should be mapped, and land possession should be identified by traditional leaders and elders. Other claims can be heard only after the mapping has been completed. *Ijma* and *taritib*—not Philippine laws—must be used to settle these disputes.

— **Dr. Moctar Matuan**

The discussion has raised numerous policy issues which the government needs to focus on. One general issue is martial law in Mindanao and the basis for its declaration. Upholding it gave the President very wide latitude in declaring martial law anytime, whenever he thinks he needs to do so.

Moreover, there are also specific issues on the rights of IDPs. A House Bill on the human rights of IDPs has already passed the committee level, although further amendments may have to be made in light of what happened in Marawi.

In relation to the rehabilitation efforts, a letter was submitted to TFBM chair Ret. Gen. Eduardo Del Rosario regarding the supposed June 21 commencement date. The Task Force sourced unsolicited proposals for the P22-billion, 250-hectare rehabilitation, which is supposedly being taken on by a consortium of eight companies, composed of five Chinese and three Filipino firms. However, the packaging of the plan as presented during the briefing touts turning Marawi into something like Bonifacio Global City.

A basic question in rehabilitation is what legal instrument would be used to acquire private lands from the MAA. Whether or not these parcels of land are titled, it is clear that there was already an element of possession. Resolving land conflict will be very important moving forward. There is the question of who specifically will be given compensation for land if government is unsure which individuals possess which lands. The city government zoned the area and parceled lots a few years back. There is still no comment, however, whether this will be regarded as official or unofficial, or whether this will be taken into account by the TFBM.

The issues on rehabilitation will definitely be raised during the budget season. Persistent questions remain as to why the process seems rushed and whether the government has exercised due diligence. The executive order was signed only in February but there was already a consortium by May. Procurement also seems problematic—it used the Swiss challenge as a mode of acquisition. There seems to be a sinister attempt to railroad the process. It is important to press government

on its justifications and considerations for doing so—although even government agencies themselves are squabbling over the rehabilitation.

There is a proposal to provide P20 billion in compensation to the residents of the city, similar to the compensation for human rights victims under the Marcos regime. However, the Meranao should be consulted to get their opinion on the proposal, particularly on the framework that will be used. It would be ideal if a compensation bill is passed before the infrastructure rehabilitation. Another bill has been filed regarding the 6,600-hectare land for the military reservation in Marawi.

— **AKBAYAN Rep. Tom Villarin**

It's clear that the people in the MAA want to return to their original locations. The UN guiding principle on the right of people to return to their habitual and original locations should be guaranteed. In addition to government rebuilding only its own infrastructure—which already keeps getting postponed—social services delivery has also been absent due to lack of funds, and these will not be delivered unless the people force institutions to deliver on the needs of evacuees.

The rehabilitation framework is not clear, and residents are not being convened to discuss plans for rehabilitation. Their social support systems are not in place anymore. They do not even have public spaces where they used to convene and discuss issues, although there have been efforts to rebuild these. However, the general sentiment is that the people want to return and they want to at least have basic social services delivered.

The compensation bill should come first. The people need compensation for what was lost. If IDPs in Manila will not help, the legal community in Marawi will be ready, especially to help end martial law—which is already limiting debate and discourse, and limiting even the lawyers themselves from filing cases relating to the siege.

— **Samira Gutoc-Tomawis**

## HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS AND LOSS OF PROPERTIES *Looting and Damage to Property*

*Atty. Raifah Pamaloy-Hassan  
Provincial Head for Lanao del Sur,  
Regional Human Rights Commission*

*The aftermath of the Marawi siege saw the total destruction of learning institutions, mosques, business establishments, and the residents' properties, along with their most valued assets. Most, if not all, of the residents lost their identification documents. This has effectively restricted their movement, especially with martial law in place. The trauma also left the Meranao with a dire need for psychosocial intervention.*

*Apart from the damage, looting incidents were also recorded. It remains uncertain, however, whether these were done by private individuals or by members of the security sector.*

*As part of its supposed rehabilitation package for the city, Atty. Raifah Pamaloy-Hassan called on the government to enact a compensation bill for the residents; prioritize the resolution of land issues; and ensure complete documentation of the extent of damage caused by the siege.*



A photo of Atty. Raifah Pamaloy- Hassan during the Marawi leg of the forum in May 2018.

Each IDP has his own story.

On the first night of the siege, Hassan was at home on maternity leave, taking care of her infant child. When the firefight began, she was still awake but everyone else in her family was asleep. She had monitored the earlier battles in Butig, and she got paranoid. She had heard stories of IDPs who lost their children during evacuation. With this in mind, she held her newborn tight, afraid of the possibility of losing him. She stayed up the entire night, as the order then was for residents to stay put. By morning, however, the traffic out of the city was heavy

and Hassan's family decided to leave, too. They packed light, thinking they would only have to be away for a night. The evacuation to Iligan took 10 hours—travel that would normally take only an hour. After some time in Iligan, they decided to move to Cagayan de Oro because her mother's house was not spacious enough to accommodate all of them, including her siblings.

She was ordered to report to work immediately at the Regional Human Rights Commission (RHRC) to monitor the siege. For three months, she took her child to work in Iligan on weekdays and went home to Cagayan de Oro on weekends. Life was abnormal; they were in a daze. She felt the need for psychosocial intervention. She said that the experience might have been especially traumatizing because she had just given birth when the siege happened.

### **Damaged properties**

An estimated 353,636 persons were affected by the crisis in Marawi. Within the main battle area, 10,375 houses were damaged; the total amount of the damaged properties is pegged at P20,425,509,180.00. This data, however, only came from CSO groups; the government, whether the city, provincial or the TFBM, has yet to provide its own estimate. Because of multiple fragmented efforts at documentation, residents are



Photos of a damaged mosque (left) and the Marawi Capitol College (right) after the Marawi siege.

complaining that they are repeatedly being profiled or asked about their experience, but no results are being released.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and its domestic application, Republic Act No. 9851 or the Philippine Act on Crimes Against International Humanitarian Law, Genocide, and Other Crimes Against Humanity, indicate the rules that both sides should follow in times of armed conflict, including the means they can employ and the weapons they can use. While war may be unavoidable, IHL is in place to limit its effects.

The RHRC conducted legal missions in cities and municipalities all over Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte. Once, an acquaintance sought their help to see her house personally. They told her that the house was already destroyed and she really had nothing to go back to. Still, she was insistent, saying she only wanted closure, which was the sentiment of almost everyone. They just want to see it for themselves. Many also approached RHRC complaining that they had used all their retirement benefits to build their houses or businesses, and all of it is gone.

During the legal missions, some IDPs were asked to identify the properties that they lost during the siege—a particularly painful exercise. Some asked for assistance in returning to their houses to retrieve items like

malongs. It must be noted, however, that the residents

*“Ma’am, gusto ko lang ng closure. Kapag nakita ko na wasak na, okay na ako. [I only aim for closure, Ma’am. I’d be resigned once I see that (my house) has really been destroyed.]”*

consider the sentimental value of the things they left behind more than their monetary value.

In total, there were 14,047 recorded complaints even before the *Kambisita*. There is, however, no data yet on complaints related to damage to properties after the *Kambisita*.

Regarding schools, 22,130 public school students were affected, along with 17,390 students from private colleges, according to DepEd data. Many student evacuees were reportedly discriminated against. Dansalan College and the Marawi College Foundation were severely damaged during the siege. IHL prescribes that schools must not be attacked, although there are exceptions. For instance, schools that are used as military camps can be considered military objects. Mosques, too, are supposed to be protected, unless they are used for military purposes.



*Photos of the residents' burnt money (left) and car (right) after the Marawi siege.*

Business establishments were damaged. Padian was especially affected—the area is totally destroyed, because that was where the Maute group was cornered at the end of the siege. Many residents have approached RHRC to complain about their business losses especially since many had stocked up on supplies in anticipation of Ramadan.

In the reporting of cases, psychosocial interventions are important. It can be as simple as listening to the stories of survivors. There was a case—which is identical to most reported cases—in which a resident's house was not hit by bombs but was inexplicably burned inside. The resident had P2 million in cash hidden in a vault inside the house. When they got there, the money was still locked inside the safe but most of it was burned beyond recovery.

Another resident complained about a hard-earned car which he had to leave behind during the siege. Upon returning, the owner found the car wrecked despite the area being untouched and its proximity to a military detachment. Another car reported missing was found during *Kambisita* several barangays away, half-hidden behind plants. Like in many other cases, the car was left behind but the computer box was stolen.

In RHRC's legal mission, many residents asked for help in documentation and reconstruction of identification.

Out of over 14,000 complaints, 5,200 were on legal identification and 1,700 were on documentation. These were residents who left their IDs, birth certificates, and land titles behind during evacuation. The loss of these documents became problematic in claiming their lands. Meanwhile, the absence of identification cards restricted the movement of some residents, many of whom have been arrested because they do not have IDs to present. With martial law in place, people are required to carry their IDs with them at all times. The response, then, was to coordinate with other agencies to provide legal identification for residents.

### **Looting**

The houses in Marawi show clear signs of looting. Almost all of the gates were marked "cleared" or "good." While the meanings of these markings were not clear, residents have their own interpretations and suspicions that the markings had something to do with the looting activities in the city. Hassan's own house was looted. Her TV was stolen—even if it was small, it had tremendous sentimental value because it was a wedding gift from her mother. Also stolen were a stereo set and the piggybanks of her children. The case was reported and the perpetrator, a private individual, was caught. However, it is still uncertain whether the lootings across the city were done only by private individuals left behind during the siege, or also by some members of the security sector.



*The gates of the residential houses in Marawi bore “good” and “cleared” markings.*

The government’s response was to form Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM) and draw up a rehabilitation plan that covered and prioritized government structures more than civilians and residential areas. There was also no inquiry about the siege, despite the residents’ repeated calls for one.

Moreover, the TFBM should have conducted a post-conflict needs assessment (PCNA) and damage and losses assessment (DALA) which are important in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

### **Recommendations**

First, the compensation bill should be enacted—which will require extensive documentation akin to the Human Rights Victims’ Claims Board (HRVCB). The Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP)- Lanao has already drafted a bill which is waiting for a sponsor.

Addressing land issues should also be prioritized. Some parcels of land are shared, leased or rented. Many in Marawi live in houses they do not own but are renting. Given this, how they can claim land has not been addressed; more focus has been given to actual residential owners. As for the business sector, there is a no-build zone. Guidelines should be issued that specifically address these issues.

The extent of damage also needs to be documented, especially since no government agency has documents that fully account for the losses. Ideally, it should be the RHRC that is in charge of this. However, it is confronted with several challenges, including the lack the resources and manpower, and the restricted access to the Most Affected Area—entry to which could have allowed them to conduct extensive documentation of the damage.

As an IDP, Hassan expressed hope that the government will listen to their plight. At the evacuation centers, people often complain that the government has no concrete plan for Marawi, its residents, and their properties. They said the P200,000 assistance is simply not enough for rehabilitation.

Hassan thanked INCITEGov for the opportunity to bring the residents’ issues to the national conversation, and hopefully, the government’s attention. She also called for immediate action on the compensation bill.

*Atty. Sittie Raifah Pamaloy-Hassan is the Provincial Head for Lanao del Sur of the Regional Human Rights Commission (RHRC), a position she has held since 2014. She lends her expertise by being resource speaker on various topics involving human rights, including those that tackle international conventions and domestic laws on the protection of the rights of women and children and other relevant legislation. She is a professor at the Mindanao State University College of Law.*

# COSTS OF DISPLACEMENT

## *Experiences of IDPs in Evacuation Centers and Homes*

*Atty. Sittie Nayilah D. Abduljaleel  
Project Officer, Al Mujadilah  
Development Foundation*

*Atty. Sittie Nayilah Abduljaleel's presentation was on the current situation of IDPs in evacuation centers. To this day, they continue to pay for the cost of their displacement as a result of the Marawi siege.*

*Abduljaleel highlighted the suffering of the IDPs, including their struggle to find adequate and gender-sensitive shelter or homes, insufficient and non-nutritious food supply, their inability to prioritize their health over other pressing concerns, inaccessible educational institutions for their children, domestic and gender-based violence, and the lack of livelihood and financial assistance coming from government.*



*The displaced residents of Marawi continue to suffer from the consequences of the siege, Atty. Sittie Nayilah Abduljaleel said.*

The presentation revolved around five subtopics:

1) Seeking for Shelter, which highlights experiences of IDPs in finding adequate shelter, where they went when they left Marawi and how home-based evacuees persevered; 2) Claiming the Basic Needs, which covers how agencies responded to the basic needs of IDPs, including food security and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); 3) Looking for Social Services, which tackles whether IDPs are able to avail of crucial services like health, legal aid, and distribution of relief; 4) Experiencing Gender-based Violence, which is a snapshot of the state of gender-based violence in evacuation centers; and

5) the Quest for Livelihood and Financial Assistance. The findings presented were taken from the gender snapshot research of the Al Mujadilah Development Foundation (AMDF) and Oxfam, the profiling conducted by community development students of MSU, and the team discussions of AMDF based on their observations during the family conversations they conducted with the IDPs.

### **Seeking for Shelter**

During the exodus, most IDPs initially went to hotels because they thought the attack would be over in one night. They did not expect it to last as long as it did, and many are still unable to return to their homes until the present. Others stayed with their relatives in areas like Saguwaran, Pantar and Balo-i. Only a few of the residents stayed in evacuation centers.

Some of those who left for other cities and municipalities were not able to rent apartments due to discrimination on the part of homeowners who thought that the Meranao should be blamed for the siege. For the first few months, it was really difficult for IDPs to find shelter.

Not all evacuation centers were recognized and supported regularly, especially those in the rural areas. In those places, there was no access to aid or services, compared to those in the nearby municipalities of Marawi. The situation was more problematic for home-



*Internally displaced persons (IDPs) continue to bear the costs of their displacement, from the poor condition of evacuation centers, inadequate food assistance, health-related problems, lack of access to schools and gender-based violence.*

based evacuees and their host families, who received no support at all. It became more difficult for host families as the siege dragged on. And, according to findings, there were significantly larger numbers of home-based IDPs compared to those in evacuation centers.

Meanwhile, the tent homes and temporary shelters were too small to accommodate the residents, considering that the Meranao have large extended families. The shelters do not comply with Muslim values, especially regarding the privacy needs of women and men. Finding a place of worship was also difficult due to limited spaces.

Conjugal homes established in the evacuation centers were regarded as insensitive to the requirements of women. There were reports of physical violence against women, particularly of husbands forcing their wives to have sexual intercourse. The conjugal homes were seen as culturally insensitive, like seedy motels, and caused embarrassing gossip.

Currently, most of the IDPs left in the evacuation centers or staying with host families are those from the MAA. There is no report of regular support for these remaining families, and interviewees said they no longer receive aid.

### **Claiming the Basic Needs**

Food assistance was regular only during the first five months of the siege. At present, there is no assurance where the remaining families in the evacuation centers

can avail of regular food assistance. They have to rely on themselves for food. Home-based IDPs, on the other hand, did not receive any assistance at all.

Many of the affected families complained of the type of food that was distributed, which were mostly canned sardines and instant noodles. They quickly grew tired of eating the same food, which was not even nutritious. IDPs recounted that they resorted to selling or bartering these away to buy vegetables or non-food items.

There were also not enough sources of water for the families in the evacuation centers. Host families, meanwhile, had to deal with increased utility bills. The toilets were insufficient, badly maintained, inconvenient, inaccessible, and unsafe for vulnerable groups like women, children, senior citizens, and PWDs. There was usually no lighting inside and along pathways leading to the toilets, making these difficult to reach, especially at night.

### **Looking for Social Services**

Health care was sacrificed by the affected families. It was only when the worst symptoms began to show that they sought help. This was understandable, since health was not their primary concern. They were more concerned about having food on the table. However, the mental health of the affected families also needed to be attended to with psychosocial support. But until now, many IDPs have not had such support.

Mothers affirmed the need for legal assistance for the



There is high financial need among IDPs to support schooling of their children.

The children of some IDPs left in the tent cities did not continue their education. Due to the lack of access to educational institutions, especially in the evacuation centers in rural areas, some parents decided not to send their children to school anymore. In addition, there was also the fear of losing a child, and the absence of educational and financial assistance for the families. There were also reports of bullying in schools, with IDP children attending schools in Iligan being tagged as “ISIS kids.” Overall, there is great need among IDPs for financial support for the schooling of their children.

Another issue raised was the mobility of IDPs that has been greatly hampered by the lack of identification cards and certifications, which have become especially necessary with martial law in place.

The IDPs also said that relief distribution was chaotic. There was no recognition of the most vulnerable, whose needs were neglected most of the time. Moreover, the relief that the government provided was not gender-responsive. For instance, there were no special lanes for pregnant women or senior citizens, and no separate spaces for men and women.

### **Experiencing Gender-based Violence**

Young men and women are the most vulnerable to violence during displacements. There was no proper gender-based violence reporting in evacuation centers and among home-based IDPs.

Early marriages were also reported inside evacuation centers and among home-based IDPs, which was reinforced by the Marawi siege. There were also instances of physical violence against children and women that were reported to the PNP and Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPATs).

“*Kapag meron ka razo limang DAFAC, makakapag-asawa ka na.* [They said if you already have five DAFAC (Disaster Assistance Family Access Cards distributed by DSWD to families displaced by the Marawi siege), you can already get married.]

There were cases of Muslims with beards, goatees, and long hair who were arrested by the AFP because they were suspected to be members of ISIS. Women wearing niqab were also asked to remove these in front of male soldiers so their faces could be checked.

### **Quest for livelihood and financial assistance**

Both men and women said they need livelihood programs to earn money for food and to seek better shelter. However, cash-for-work schemes and skills trainings are not always made available for women; usually only the men are able to avail of these. Both men and women, including elderly women, are asking for livelihood activities and capital funds to start small businesses.

During the first months of the siege, livelihood programs were not provided in most evacuation centers and for home-based IDPs. The only available program for them was skills training from TESDA. Seedlings were given away, but such help was considered inappropriate since IDPs could not plant in evacuation centers. Residents highly appreciated cash assistance that they used to buy food and non-food items.

The residents also raised the following additional inputs regarding the impact of the siege during the forum in Marawi:

- increase in poverty rate;



Figure 2. The costs of displacement cover lives, properties, livelihood, education, health, dignity, ancestry, and heritage.

- loss of livelihood and job opportunities;
- loss of dignity, territory, identity, and religion;
- non-observance of or weakened Islamic practices and worship; religion suffered the most during the siege;
- loss of interest in education due to bullying, lack of school supplies, and low financial assistance;
- no assistance extended to private academic institutions in Marawi City;
- increase in the vulnerability of IDPs;
- need for psychosocial debriefing or interventions;
- separation of families/missing family members;
- feelings of not being secured at evacuation centers, with regard to both property and welfare;

- concern for missing relatives; the dismantling of social structures, for instance, with diminishing respect for traditional leaders;
- no cash assistance received for some IDPs;
- difficult access to electricity and water supplies;
- limited relief goods distributed to home-based evacuees;
- risks of suffering from illnesses from the relief goods distributed, which were not nutritious; and
- conflicts in the distribution of relief goods, with some IDPs being left out.

*Atty. Sittie Nayilah Abduljaleel is a project officer at the Al Mujadilah Development Foundation and works for its World Peace Project. She hails from Marawi City and is a graduate of BS International Relations at the Mindanao State University- Marawi City.*



## OPEN FORUM

### *On the current state of the relationship between the police and the community in Marawi.*

There is still mistrust in the relationship. Some non-Meranao were transferred to the city. Frequent changes in the chief of police position also made the situation more problematic and the rebuilding of relationships within the community more difficult because the implementation of existing programs gets interrupted with the introduction of a new officer.

The RHRC also received complaints from residents who had been ridiculed and denied access to police blotters because they cannot provide evidence that they own property. In one police station, there are orders to not entertain any human rights group. Residents no longer know who to approach in these situations. Simply put, the relationship is bad.

— **Atty. Raifah Hassan**

### *On whether there are studies regarding the resolution of cases of dead and missing persons, and if the official number of dead Maute fighters might actually include civilians.*

There is no data on that as the research was more focused on gender and other related issues like the management of the dead and cases of family reunification.

— **Atty. Sittie Nayilah Abduljaleel**

The seven men who were found dead near the checkpoints during the early stages of the siege were unceremoniously left in a funeral home in Iligan. The way their remains were handled was indicative of the government's overall response. The LGU was then asked to create a mechanism for the handling of the dead. What would the government do when more bodies start piling up?

The RHRC recorded at least 300 missing or dead, though this figure has not been completely validated. RHRC is working on that, with the goal of issuing a

final list of the missing and dead. Assistance cannot be expected from SOCO, either, because their progress in DNA testing is very slow, even with technical assistance from international organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

— **Atty. Raifah Hassan**

***On whether the 300 number for the dead or missing from RHRC is too low.***

Yes, the figure is too low as this includes only those who testified and were personally interviewed.

— **Atty. Raifah Hassan**

***On an estimate of how many were killed.***

Over a thousand is the current estimate.

— **Atty. Raifah Hassan**

Some are afraid to approach the police because the number of Maute casualties has already been set at 900. There is a fear that if they report the deaths for their relatives, the names will be used to support that number.

— **Dr. Moctar Matuan**

***On whether PNP Camp Crame directly handled DNA testing.***

There is no knowledge of this since RHRC only talked to provincial-level PNP and SOCO.

— **Atty. Raifah Hassan**

***On the best design for the compensation board.***

Elders and traditional leaders should be tapped. The MAA has sultans—they know the residents and can identify the areas so they must be included in the compensation board. It will be more difficult if it is government led. There are already reports that unqualified relatives of politicians are being appointed in housing, for instance, and this must be avoided.

— **Dr. Moctar Matuan**

***On further findings on domestic violence.***

The initial findings showed evidence of domestic violence, though there has been no thorough research yet. The study covered only four selected areas, so it's not that comprehensive; it was just a snapshot looking at gender needs, risks, and vulnerabilities.

— **Atty. Sittie Nayilah Abduljaleel**

***On the status of women on the rebel side.***

There is currently no initiative on women rebels.

— **Atty. Sittie Nayilah Abduljaleel**

# EFFECTS ON THE IDENTITY OF MARAWI CITY AND THE MERANAOS *What Others Do Not Know About Marawi*

*Dr. Moctar Matuan  
Professor (retired),  
Mindanao State University*

*In his discussion, Dr. Moctar Matuan talked about Marawi in reference to its history, as a center for Islamic education, as the cultural center of the Meranao, and as an origin of new innovation.*

*He also identified some of the consequences of the Marawi siege, including the destruction of privately-owned heirlooms, artifacts, old manuscripts, and old mosques; loss of livelihood; and the destruction of learning institutions.*

*“With the assurances from the Philippine Constitution, the Meranao are hoping that the government will soon return their city to them so they can start rebuilding their institutions, society, and lives. They have defended their abode for centuries against foreign invaders and hopefully, similar action is not necessary at this time,” Matuan said.*

The impact of the siege on the city itself as a religious, cultural, and educational center, as well as the key facts that are not popularly known among non-Meranao are discussed in this section.

Dansalan is the old name of Marawi (from 1907 to 1956). The Americans tried to develop Dansalan as the transit point of Mindanao, which is why they placed kilometer zero in the city. Back then, it was the only way to travel from Zamboanga and Cagayan de Oro to Cotabato or Davao, with buses servicing the Dansalan Road.

It was a trading hub for Christian and Chinese businessmen. At the height of its prominence, when Iligan was still a small and struggling community, there were already excellent restaurants and several hotels in the city. Dansalan was the trading hub for the Meranao and Mindanao as a whole, and communities around the lake that connected navigable rivers engaged in trade. This is one of the reasons why it was named Dansalan—which translates to “where the waves dash,” or a port for boats.

Dansalan was also the capital of the undivided Lanao. Economic activity dimmed with the establishment of other trading routes in Mindanao, but the city remained vibrant even after the division of Lanao. This is due to the resilience of the Meranao, who also looked outward



*Dr. Moctar Matuan discussed Marawi’s culture and history during the second part of his discussion.*

and even out of the country to send money back to the city.

Marawi was also a center for Western education. Lanao High School was located in Dansalan where students in nearby areas went for their education. In the 1930s, the Madrasah High School and Printing Press were established by Dr. Frank Laubach in an attempt to introduce the Roman script to the Meranao who, at that time, were already literate in Arabic. Laubach’s efforts, however, were subject to suspicion as some perceived it as a way to prevent the Meranao from reading the



Marawi City is the cultural center of the Meranaos. It is the learning and enrichment center if artists as well as the display center of Meranao craft workers and other artisans.

Quran. Other schools were also established in the 1950s and the 1960s, like JPI and MSU.

Dansalan was also a center for Islamic education. The founding of Madaris was apparently a response to the establishment of the public school system during the American colonial period, which threatened Moro Islamic customs and beliefs. The earliest known madrasah to be established in Dansalan was the Madrasah Islamiyah Kamilol Islam.

Dr. Matuan recounted that Islamic education in Lanao was precipitated by a meeting between then Congressman Domocao Alonto, Sr. and Egyptian President Jamal Abdel Nasser towards the end of the 1960s. Surprised that there were Muslims in the Philippines, Nasser began sending volunteer Arab teachers to Mindanao and offered scholarships for Muslim Filipinos to study in Egypt. The discovery of oil in the kingdoms and emirates of the Middle East and the vast wealth it provided, opened more opportunities for scholarships to the Muslims in Mindanao from the kingdoms and emirates. The majority of the Muslims who received these grants were from Lanao, primarily due to the existence of the *madaris* there that provided the necessary primary, elementary, and high school preparation. Returning scholars from the Middle East, realizing that what they learned could not be used for employment in the Philippines, returned to Mindanao and established their own madrasahs.

With a 98% Muslim population, Marawi has more than 100 small and huge mosques. Although the principle is “One leader, One mosque, One community,” the rising number of residents in the city necessitated the establishment of multiple mosques in an *agama*.

Marawi was the residence of well-known Meranao artists like *Onors* (Bayok singers), *Maongangen* (poets), *Patataro sa lalag* (speakers), and musicians playing *kulintang*, *kutyapi*, and flute, among others. Because Marawi is the center of commerce, people looking for artists and singers to hire would go to the city, which was a learning and enrichment center for the arts. It provided informal learning centers where artists taught one other, and served as their “theater” where they could showcase their talents, while the market became the display center of Meranao craft workers. All this was destroyed during the siege.

Marawi was also the origin of innovations. For instance, the Dansalan Declaration—which asked the Americans to separate the Moros if they decided to grant the Philippines independence—was drafted in the city. The Moros wanted to remain with the Americans because they knew that they would be discriminated against if they were put under the Philippine government. Dansalan also saw the launch of the “Each One, Teach One” literacy program, as well as the establishment of the first Islamic university in the country (Ansar El-Islam), the first state university in Mindanao (MSU), and the first

peace center in Mindanao. The Bishop-Ulama forum also started in the city.

The siege caused the isolation of the city and further loss of its status as a transit point because of restricted movement even for residents themselves. There was also the destruction of privately-owned heirlooms, artifacts, manuscripts, and old mosques. And there was the loss of livelihood. The service sector in the city depended on a sizable population; as the residents evacuated, the service-based industries also left.

Another consequence of the siege is the destruction of public structures, including 16 institutions of higher learning, 20 government elementary and high schools, and 17 *madaris*. Education improves one's chances in life; an educated person has a wider range of choices in finding work or a source of income. What happens now is unclear, with most of the schools and *madaris* in Marawi ruined. The decline in the number of students acquiring higher education could lead to a rise in extremism.

Marawi being one of the centers for Islamic education in the country, there is an emerging suspicion among some Meranao that what happened in Marawi was a deliberate attempt to eradicate Islam in the Philippines. Though unverified, the fact that these sentiments are being aired is disturbing on its own.

“*Kung wala silang magawa sa buhay, mas madali silang ma-aattract ng nasa kabila.*

*[If the students have nothing to do, it will be easier for them to be attract them to join the (extremist) side.]*

“Marawi residents are longing for the immediate restoration and opening of their schools, *madaris*, and *masajid*. Not all students in the *madaris* or Eastern educational system are terrorists. Most of them are peace-loving and are in dire need of assistance.” If Western education students deserve help, then so do the students of Eastern education. This will send a message that it is better to study than to join the rebels.

Despite all the blame and counter-blame on the occurrence of the siege, the Philippine government has an obligation to protect the Meranao as citizens of the Republic of the Philippines under Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution.

# EFFECTS ON THE IDENTITY OF MARAWI CITY AND THE MERANAOS

## *Loss of Identity Among the Minoritized Mranaws*

*Dr. Tirmizy E. Abdullah  
Associate Professor,  
Mindanao State University*

*Associate Professor Tirmizy Abdullah stressed that more than the infrastructure and facilities, rehabilitation efforts should focus on the identity of the Mranaw. Unfortunately, it now seems that being an IDP has become part of the Mranaw identity which brings the Mranaw to greater vulnerabilities, such as allowing certain outside groups and individuals to decide on where and when to relocate them.*

*The IDPs have continuously demanded for a safe and dignified return to their homes. They have repeatedly asked the government to include them in the rehabilitation planning for fear that outsiders will impose their solutions on them.*

Abdullah used the term “minoritized” to acknowledge the long history of Mranaw minoritization. What happened during the siege in Marawi is part of the minoritization of the Mranaw since it caused displacement.

In relation to this, the rehabilitation should be thought of not just in terms of infrastructure and facilities. More importantly, efforts should be focused on the identity of the Mranaw as the “people of the lake.” The very center of Ranao is Dansalan; displacing the Mranaw from Marawi and transferring them to other areas would effectively rob them of their identity as Mranaw.

Sadly, being an IDP now seems to be part of the Mranaw identity. They have been in evacuation centers and temporary shelters for over a year, and they don’t like it. Abdullah noted that being IDPs opens them to great vulnerability since it gives certain groups and individuals the power to transfer them whenever and wherever. There are some news reports that said young people staying in evacuation centers were being recruited by the Daesh. The Mranaw do not want this to happen. During the peace rally on March 30, 2018, the message that the residents emphasized was, one that of the best ways to prevent violent extremism is to allow the IDPs a safe and dignified return to their homes. In asserting their demand for a voluntary and dignified return, they emphasize their identity as Mranaw, not as

IDPs. Because Ranao and Mranaw form an inseparable whole, he said that even Christians born in the city are regarded as Mranaw. It is therefore upsetting that the displacement of the city’s residents has been going on for more than a year.



*A photo of Dr. Tirmizy Abdullah during the Marawi leg of the forum.*

Land is connected with ancestry as well. Historically, Iligan is part of Ranao. However, Iligan is different now and if the residents go there, they would not retain their Mranaw identity. Moreover, there are differences between the two cities. For instance, in Iligan, there is no call to prayer, especially during Ramadan, which, unfortunately, was also lost in Marawi during the siege.

Even more painful is the loss of the knowledge system of Marawi, which cannot be restored. Many of these have already been lost over years of colonization and whatever was left, such as old manuscripts, was destroyed during the siege. Marawi was always a haven for heirlooms, where people thought they would be safe; now, all these are lost.

Another issue is the size of the dwellings, which was previously noted. The temporary shelters are not suitably designed for Mranaw culture and the materials used are substandard. Residents have repeatedly demanded a safe and dignified return to their homes. They don't want relief goods anymore. What they need are groups and institutions that will stand with them and help them fight what appears to be the occupation of Marawi.



Marawi is the grave of the Mranaw ancestors. The Mranaw have followed the tradition of burying their dead beside their houses. The siege disrupted this and many of those who died during the siege were not even buried in Marawi. It is clear that the issues are not only about the dignity of people of Marawi but the dignity of their dead as well.

The people are not included in planning the rehabilitation of Marawi, and the framework being used is not in accord with Mranaw culture and identity. The lingering question is where Mranaw identity is addressed in the rehabilitation. The residents feel that, again, this is a case of outsiders imposing solutions on the city, even if the residents themselves know best what they need and want.

The siege also affected the city's traditional political system. During the presentation of the rehabilitation plans, a certain area was marked for the construction of a boulevard. This area, however, is a traditional *agama*. What happens to its sultan then? The rehabilitation of heritage structures is also problematic. The Task Force once said the destroyed *masajid* cannot be restored because these are religious structures that are off-limits due to the separation of church and state. The Mranaw are well aware that government has been restoring hundreds of Catholic churches, and the TFBM's position is a clear manifestation of the government's double standards. The residents would prefer to restore these on their own since they were also the ones who built these in the first place. Still, it was painful to hear such an excuse, especially since the *masajid* in Marawi may even be older than the Philippines itself.

The siege has also affected their identity as Islam. Religious practices were weakened. Many in the evacuation centers were not able to fast during the last two Ramadan, a time that should have been filled with spirituality. The customary *iftar*, often a communal event, was not observed. Still, they remain hopeful that by the next Ramadan, the city will be back on its feet. Spiritual education has also become problematic. The residents can physically transfer to Iligan but where would they find *madaris* and *masajid*?

“*Marawi was, is, and will always be our pride and our symbol. Marawi that is now in shambles. Devastated. Ravaged by a war we never wanted, but was forced upon us by the exigencies of these times and historical imperatives.*”

Abdullah expressed hope that the discussions would not end with the forum, noting that the event was what the residents of Marawi had been wishing for — a safe space where they could talk about what they really feel, which is impossible in Marawi where martial law is still in place.

# OPEN FORUM

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*On whether the current state of Marawi will lead to more violent extremism.*

This will depend on the government's response to the siege. If the situation in Marawi is neglected, then more people will likely be attracted to the other side. All of the issues brought by the siege are negative. These must be consistently brought out in organized forums so that the residents will gain support and will be able to bring the issues to the attention of the government.

— **Dr. Moctar Matuan**

Though the residents want to be guardedly optimistic that something positive will emerge from what happened, some remain fearful especially since what they experienced was very difficult. Some fear that the problem might just get bigger, and that the siege might be the beginning of the eighth stage of the Moro Wars, the seventh being the all-out war under the Estrada administration. Moreover, many people have died, and many relationships have been ruined, which further aggravates the situation. The basic principle of peace education dictates that more violence always complicates the situation. Violent extremism is not new; it's just a new name for what has been going on for so long. Thus, it is important to go back to the root causes of extremism and determine what conditions lead to it, taking into consideration that what happened in Marawi makes the youth more vulnerable.

— **Dr. Tirmizy Abdullah**

*On whether there is a registry of human rights violations particularly against women, and what particular systems protected women during the siege and its aftermath.*

RHRC does not have that particular registry in question. Instead, it maintains a data system that documents violations, classifies the perpetrators (state or other actors), and categorizes them accordingly, if an incident violates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), or the International Covenant on Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

As for protective systems during the siege, a referral system is already in place. For instance, the RHRC will immediately refer cases to DSWD, if necessary. Reports from the MAA and the evacuation centers surfaced as early as the first few months of the siege. Because of lack of livelihood, many families were forced to marry off their children for dowry. Instances of sexual violence were also reported. Some women are still missing today. Mothers inside the MAA had infants who died due to lack of supplies brought about by restrictions on movement. The RHRC found the mother of one of the seven men who were found dead and dumped, and documented the case. These are just several of the cases and effects of the siege that were documented. Currently, two monitors are specifically covering gender-based violence.

— **Atty. Raifah Pamaloy-Hassan**

# CLOSING REMARKS

*Drieza Lininding  
Founding Convener and Chairperson,  
Moro Consensus Group*



*Drieza Lininding, founding convener and chairperson of Moro Consensus Group, giving his closing remarks for the event.*

As early the first week of the siege, Duterte already said he would not apologize for what happened in Marawi because its residents brought the siege upon themselves. This is painful for the residents since they were the victims of the siege and yet they were being blamed for it. What's more painful is that up until now, the residents' questions remain unanswered. Among high-ranking officials and politicians, only Sen. Antonio Trillanes listened to the residents when they raised questions.

## **Rehabilitation**

The latest news is that the Bangon Marawi Consortium (BMC) composed of five Chinese and four Filipino firms, and pre-selected to rebuild the city's MAA, was found to be ineligible due to its failure to comply with the project's technical, financial, and legal requirements. The government is negotiating again, this time with a Chinese hydroelectric company. Meanwhile, residents

continue to be wary of China's involvement in the rehabilitation of their city.

Another issue with the Task Force's land resource management is that most land titles are mortgaged to government banks, often by unscrupulous relatives, without the knowledge of the rightful owners. A budget has already been set for housing because the National Housing Authority is sure that it will get land. They are confident because they know that many tracts of land have been foreclosed, even without the knowledge of the owners. Because of this, the residents are hoping for a moratorium or, ideally, an amnesty.

Many residents also view the establishment of another military camp as another form of invasion. They simply do not see the need for it; they believe they can exist without it, and anyway, there is the peace process ongoing.

There are also numerous unreported and untold human rights violations. There have been no efforts at systemic data gathering from Day One of the siege until the present; there is no one to run after anymore for accountability. The DILG is supposed to head initiatives regarding this, but now they, along with PNP SOCO and the military, are pointing fingers as to which agency should be responsible. As for the casualties, the maximum figure in the earlier weeks of the siege pegged civilians trapped inside the MAA at 3,000; after several months, the AFP said it was able to rescue 1,780. The deficit, then, is over 1,000. This figure must be validated, though it might be difficult to do so since access to Marawi is difficult.

Looting is also a big issue. Even those areas that were not entered by the Maute were looted. However, it will be difficult to go after looters by now. During the siege,

military units posted in parts of the city were changed every two weeks, and houses were looted at the same rate. The amount looted runs in the billions, with large amounts of cash as well as firearms stolen. Firearms are a big issue: many were taken but only a few were declared by the military, leading to suspicions that these might have been sold in other cities, rendering the process of disarmament useless.

### **Compensation Bill (Adiong draft)**

The bill was initiated by Task Force Bangon Marawi. In its draft, the chair of the Task Force was also designated as chair of the board. However, the Task Force and its chair have proven to be ineffective. Meanwhile, the draft submitted by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines' (IBP) Lanao del Sur- Marawi City Chapter was patterned after the Marcos reparation law. We hope that discussions would return to the particular issue of compensation.

The Task Force claimed that it conducted many consultations with the residents. For instance, NHA Board Resolution 6314 was passed on February 7, 2018, but there were no consultations held prior to it. The consultations since then were simply presentations of plans by developers based on the minimum requirements set by the resolution, and the residents could not do anything about it anymore. These minimum requirements included provisos like the paving of six lane avenues, two-story schools per barangay, and barangay halls, despite the fact that the vacant lots are very small, with no space available for proposed boulevards and promenades. The plans clearly did not come from the residents but were only presented to them, and they were not genuinely consulted in crafting them.

The city's residents need help in amending NHA Board Resolution 6314 to improve the rehabilitation efforts. Proposals from other agencies were actually beneficial but were barred by the resolution. There was the DENR proposal of letting residents help with debris management and allowing them to recycle the materials

they recovered. The DENR cannot push through with this proposal because the minimum requirements say that this is exclusively the role of the developer whose plans include simply dumping the debris in Lake Lanao for a reclamation project, which the residents oppose.

The CSOs cannot be blamed for being supportive of martial law since the turn of events after the siege was very confusing. Residents think that martial law is needed for certain actions to be done when there are already agencies that should be doing the work being done by the military. Because of fear, people were forced to just go along.

The Bangsamoro are "being pushed to the wall." The Bangsamoro Basic Law has been mangled in Congress and is now viewed as less than the ARMM. The recent proposal for a Bangsamoro federated republic was defeated in the Consultative Commission on Constitutional Amendments. The sentiment is that when it comes to legal processes, there seems to be no hope for the Bangsamoro. This is exactly the premise that breeds extremism.

“*When are we going to learn? How many times must a Marawi siege happen before we realize that the best antidote to extremism is to address the historical injustices committed against the Bangsamoro people through a negotiated political settlement?*”

# AFTERWORD

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President Rodrigo Duterte did not talk about his administration's plans for the rehabilitation of Marawi in his 2019 State of the Nation Address. This, despite his pronouncement two years ago recognizing that "the people of Marawi need help."

"They have been through hell and we need to help them rise and move forward," he said in 2017.

Instead, the nation's Commander-in-Chief discussed the matter in the context of his drug policy, citing that during the Marawi siege, "tons of shabu worth millions and millions of pesos" were recovered from the battle area.

"Drug money killed 175 and wounded [2,101] of my soldiers and policemen in that five-month battle," Duterte said in his 2019 SONA.

Earlier in April, he also said the Marawi siege is a "man-made calamity" and "was bound to happen because of what they were doing there." "I don't think that I should be spending for their buildings. [...] Marami man 'yang pera 'yang mga tao diyan. Every Maranao, there is a businessman. Kasali na 'yung shabu. May pera sila," he explained.

Of the P10 billion budget allotted for Marawi rehabilitation in 2018, over P4 billion was left unutilized due to the absence of rebuilding proposals from various agencies, according to HUDCC secretary and Task Force Bangon Marawi chair Eduardo del Rosario. He also said they had problems validating the list of families entitled to receive assistance.

Meanwhile, the Commission on Audit also flagged the Office of Civil Defense for releasing only P10,000 of the P36.92 million worth of cash donations it received as financial aid to the victims' kin. COA noted that "the poor utilization of the donated funds defeated the purpose of the donations." It added that the production of the required documents alone "could be very burdensome for some victims" and might have caused the low utilization of the donated funds.

# 2 YEARS HENCE: KUMUSTA NA ANG MARAWI?

## DUTERTE (JULY 2017 SONA)

"The people of Marawi need help. Caught in the crossfire between government troops and Muslim extremists, they have been through hell and we need to help them rise and move forward."

DUTERTE (APRIL 2019) - "I don't think that I should be spending for their buildings. Hindi ako maggagasto ng ano. Marami man 'yang pera 'yang mga tao diyan."

DUTERTE (JULY 2019 SONA) - "During that Marawi Siege, tons of shabu worth millions and millions of pesos. Drug money killed 175 and wounded [2,101] of my soldiers and policemen."

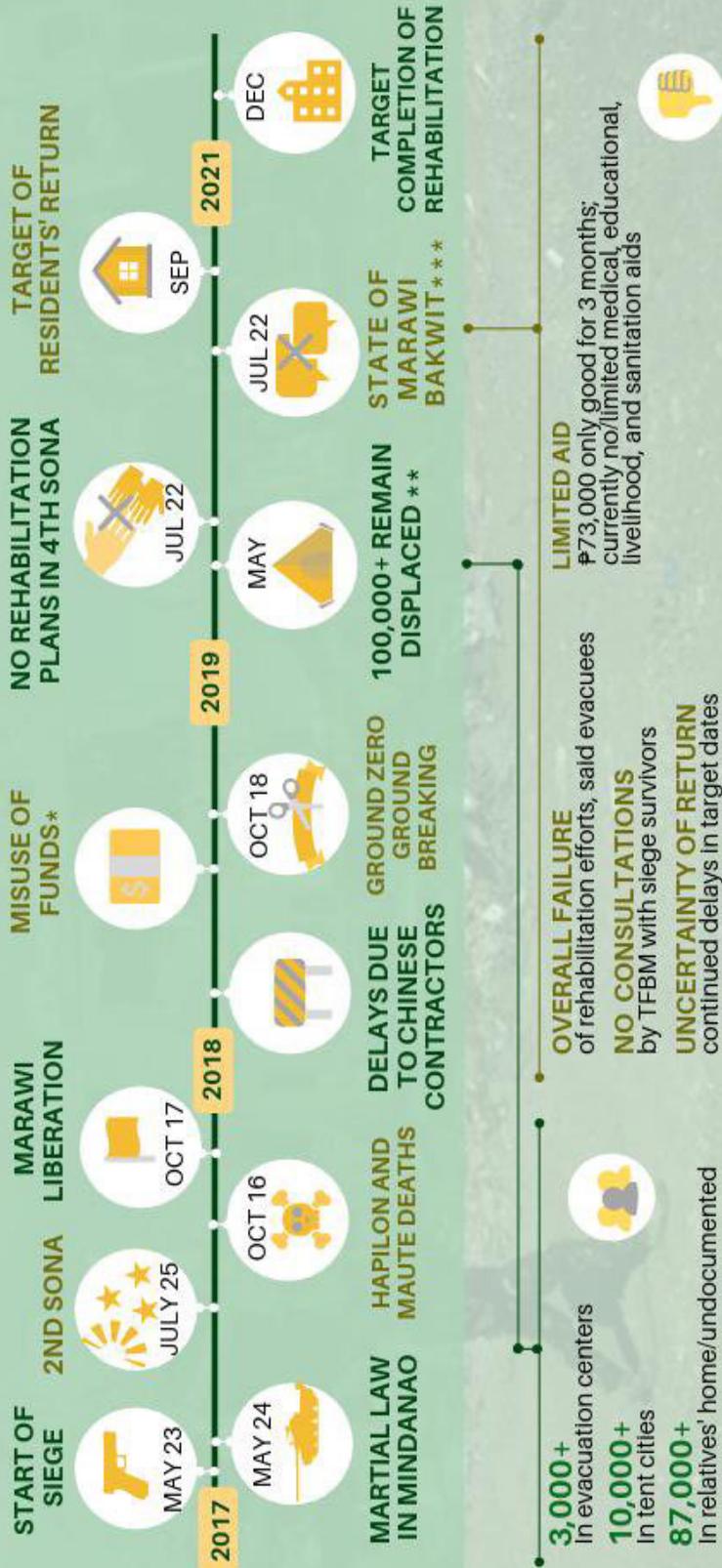
**₱10 B** Allotted for 2018

**₱4.3 B** Left unutilized



**₱36 M** Cash donations

**₱10,000** Dispersed to victims



Sources: \*COA 2018 reports; PCOO 2019 transcripts; Bangon Marawi updates; \*\* UN OCHA, and UN HCR and Protection Cluster Philippines reports; \*\*\* IRC Reports, \*\*\* SoMBak 2019, \*\*\* INCITEGov reports, Rappler, CNN Philippines, ABS-CBN News, Al Jazeera, Manila Bulletin, Indo-Pacific Defense Forum, MindaNews, and Business World news reports



\*INCITEGov released this timeline in time for President Rodrigo Duterte's fourth State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 22, 2019. Research and infographic by Pauline Fernandez.

# APPENDIX A

## INDICATIVE PROGRAM

### REVISITING MARAWI:

#### *A Closer Look at the Costs of Marawi Siege*

9:00 – 10:00 AM	<b>Registration</b>
10:00 – 10:30 AM	<b>Opening Remarks</b> Ms. Teresita Quintos Deles Chairperson, INCITEGov  <i>Introductory video: Costs of the Marawi siege</i> Mr. Najib Zacaria Filmmaker
10:30 – 12:00 NN <b>First Session</b>	<b>LAND</b> <i>The Meranao Territory and Concept of Land Possession</i> Dr. Moctar Matuan Professor (retired), Mindanao State University  <i>How the Reassertion and Introduction of New Military Installations Complicate Land Issues in Marawi</i> Mr. Tirmizy E. Abdullah Associate Professor, Mindanao State University  <b>COSTS OF DISPLACEMENT</b> <i>Experiences of IDPs in Evacuation Centers and Homes</i> Atty. Sittie Nayilah D. Abduljaleel Project Officer, Al Mujadilah Development Foundation  <b>OPEN FORUM</b>
12:00 – 1:00 PM	<b>Lunch and Prayer break</b>
1:00 - 2:00 PM <b>Second Session</b>	<b>EFFECTS ON THE IDENTITY OF MARAWI CITY AND THE MARANAOS</b> <i>What Others Do Not Know About Marawi: Marawi City as a Cultural, Religious, Educational Hub</i> Dr. Moctar Matuan Professor (retired), Mindanao State University  <i>Loss of Identity Among the Maranaos</i> Mr. Tirmizy E. Abdullah Associate Professor, Mindanao State University  <b>OPEN FORUM</b>
2:00 – 3:00 PM <b>Third Session</b>	<b>HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS AND LOSS OF PROPERTIES</b> <i>Human Rights: Collateral Damage in Marawi City</i> Ms. Samira Gutoc-Tomawis Focal Person, Ranao Rescue Team  <i>Damages and Looting of Properties</i> Atty. Raifah Pamaloy-Hassan Provincial Head for Lanao del Sur, Regional Human Rights Commission  <b>OPEN FORUM</b>
4:00 PM	<b>Closing remarks</b> Mr. Drieza Lininding Founding Convener and Chairperson, Moro Consensus Group

## APPENDIX B

# RESOURCE PERSONS



From left to right: Drieza Lininding, Yasmin Busran- Lao (INCITEGov Board member), Dr. Moctar Matuan, Teresita Quintos Deles (INCITEGov chairperson), Samira Gutoc-Tomawis, Atty. Sittie Nayilah Abduljaleel, Atty. Raifah Pamaloy-Hassan, Najib Zacaria, and Dr. Tirmizy Abdullah.

**Ms. Teresita Quintos Deles**  
Chairperson, INCITEGov

**Mr. Najib Zacaria**  
Filmmaker

**Dr. Moctar Matuan**  
Professor (retired), Mindanao State University

**Dr. Tirmizy E. Abdullah**  
Associate Professor, Mindanao State University

**Atty. Sittie Nayilah D. Abduljaleel**  
Project Officer, Al Mujadilah Development  
Foundation

**Ms. Samira Gutoc-Tomawis**  
Focal Person, Ranao Rescue Team

**Atty. Raifah Pamaloy-Hassan**  
Provincial Head for Lanao del Sur,  
Regional Human Rights Commission

**Mr. Drieza Lininding**  
Founding Convener and Chairperson,  
Moro Consensus Group

# APPENDIX C

## LIST OF ATTENDEES

### ACADEME

Balabagan, Lahmodin (*UP- Institute of Islamic Studies*)  
Guerzon, Agustin III (*University of Santo Tomas*)  
Lubiano, Juoy Ann (*UP- College of Social Sciences and Philosophy*)  
Luistro, Armin (*De La Salle University*)  
Mabandes, Omuhani (*UP- Institute of Islamic Studies*)  
Mendezabal, Abid (*UP- Institute of Islamic Studies*)  
Mendoza, Ron (*Ateneo de Manila University*)  
Pira, Kricia Lurisse (*University of Santo Tomas*)  
Reyes, Jasel Rubie (*Asian Institute of Management*)  
Sanchez, Reigner (*De La Salle University*)  
Shakil, Anna Marcelita (*UP- Institute of Islamic Studies*)

### CIVIL SOCIETY

Abbas, Jihad (*Bangsa Moro Federal Business Council, Inc.*)  
Ala, Yassen (*Ranao Rescue Team*)  
Almonte, Kathleen (*Philippine Business for Social Progress*)  
Banico, Francis (*Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue*)  
Camagay, Pia (*SPARK*)  
Cap, Jamil (*Ranao Rescue Team*)  
Castillo, Louise (*Consultant, Peace Process*)  
Guevara, Dindo (*Synergeia*)  
Idia, Albert Lawrence (*Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility*)  
Ramirez, Marlene (*ASIADHRRA*)  
Rivadelo, Kristine (*Philippine Business for Social Progress*)  
Tago, Abdul Hannan (*Bangsa Moro Federal Business Council, Inc.*)  
Tanada, Karen (*Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute*)  
Tolentino, Noriel Victoria (*Philippine Business for Social Progress*)

### EMBASSIES

Lyons, Emily (*Australian Embassy*)  
Moreno, Kath (*British Embassy*)

### GOVERNMENT

Alejano, Gary (*Representative, Magdalo Party-List*)  
Alejano, Minnie (*Magdalo Party-List*)  
Dy, Philip (*Office of the Vice President*)  
Estonio, Camille (*Commission on Human Rights*)  
Orangan, Boyet (*Magdalo Party-List*)  
Soliva, Rica (*Office of the Vice President*)  
Waban, Robin Jr. (*Office of the Vice President*)

### INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Aguilar, Maricel (*UN Women*)  
Broad-Cavanagh, Jesse (*International Alert*)  
De Pano, Jean (*British Council*)  
Flores, Malcolm (*U.S. Embassy Manila*)  
Jalijali, Iona (*Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue*)  
Kuipers, Nicolas (*UC Berkeley*)  
Lacuesta, Maureen (*International Alert*)  
Mercado, Emily (*European Union*)  
Ong, Regine (*International Alert*)  
Pendatun, Amirah (*National Commission on Muslim Filipinos*)  
Sano, Yukiko (*Japan International Cooperation Agency*)  
Silbert, Carla (*UN Women*)

## LEGISLATORS

Alcala, Aleix (*Office of Senator Bam Aquino*)  
Deles, Paola (*Office of Senator Bam Aquino*)  
Gumba, Fay (*Office of Senator Risa Hontiveros*)  
Ipac, Lean Carlo (*Office of Rep. Kit Belmonte*)  
San Pascual, Ellaine (*Office of Senator Leila de Lima*)  
Tarobago, Arnold (*Office of Rep. Tom Villarin*)  
Villarin, Tom (*Representative, Akbayan Party-list*)

## MEDIA

Alaba, Nelson (*ABS-CBN*)  
Alindogan, Jam (*Al Jazeera*)  
Alvarez, G Sevilla (*CCJD – DRRNetPhils*)  
Batnag, Dana (*Jiji Press*)  
Dennis Mariano (*Al Jazeera*)  
Fonbuena, Carmela (*Rappler*)  
Gagala, Ron (*ABS-CBN*)  
Gotinga, JC (*Al Jazeera*)  
Lacorte, Germelina (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*)  
Mendoza, Diana (*Freelance*)  
Rivas, Ralf (*Rappler*)  
Salarda, Lottie (*NUJP*)  
Tibiden, Bernard (*ABS-CBN*)

## TINDIG PILIPINAS

Claudio, Sylvia Estrada (*EveryWoman*)  
Garchitorena, Vicky (*Manindigan Na!*)  
Reyes, Soc (*EveryWoman*)  
Yang, Elizabeth (*PILIPINA*)

## INCITEGov

Abad, Julia  
Aguirre, January  
Almine, Janice  
Alqaseer, Shebana  
Avenir, Christine Nicole (Intern)  
Azotes, Jenel  
Barrete, RJ  
Chu, Meanne  
De los Reyes, Johanna  
Deles, Jojo  
Ibanez, Marilou  
Judan, Luigi (Intern)  
Oleza, Cecile  
Pangilinan, Nicole  
Pascual, Michael  
Rey, Anne (Intern)  
Sandoval, Gettie  
Verzosa, Nino  
Villavicencio, Veronica

Telling stories is perhaps the most human of all faculties,  
our refuge from despair since the most ancient of times.  
Because in the telling and the hearing,  
we find healing.  
We find hope.  
We find the beginnings of answers.

We find ways to look at the loss of all we hold dear,  
and think that maybe, just maybe, while Marawi of memory  
is gone and will perhaps never return as it was,  
the city—and all it can and will still be—  
is more than brick and mortar,  
is as strong as its people,  
is as invincible as their dreams.

And though I know today that is of little consolation,  
this vision of Marawi as it can and will be is enough  
to give us a sliver of hope that someday soon, maybe, just maybe,  
*insha'Allah, the sun will start shining a little bit brighter over it.*



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info@incitegov.org

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INCITEGov is a policy research and advocacy center providing support to democratic movements and spearheading democratic reform coalitions and initiatives. It was founded in August 2005 as a membership-based, non-profit organization.

INCITEGov applies the P-G-D lens in its analysis of key national issues, seeking to probe and underscore the links between Democratic Politics, Good Governance, and the achievement of targeted Development Outcomes.