

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF Barangay Justice Service System V Dalan sa Kalinaw Mindanaw (Road to Peace) Project

**GERRY ROXAS FOUNDATION
REPORT TO USAID
November 13, 2006**

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE BJSS- V DKM PROJECT

The implementation by GRF of the BJSS V- DKM Project in the ARMM under USAID assistance in September 2002 was envisaged to complement the Government's peace and development efforts in Mindanao by improving the ways by which the poor can access justice and ultimately facilitate increased economic productivity. The grant was completed in September 2005.

The BJSS V-DKM Project is largely hinged on the training and mobilization of Barangay Justice Advocates (BJAs) who are citizen-volunteers trained and deployed in project areas for three major functions. These are:

- (1) to facilitate actual conflict resolution for disputing parties in communities;
- (2) to assist parties look for options to resolve subject conflict given the rule of law, whether referral to the legal system or allied government services; and,
- (3) assist in enhancing community awareness and encourage availment of the Katarungang Pambarangay and appropriate justice delivery system.

The BJA Training involves a series of capacity-building activities by accredited Local Resource Partners (LRPs) currently numbering 20 in the six project areas. The training module generally covers four areas of justice delivery namely: The Katarungang Pambarangay Law, Paralegal Course (Bill of Rights, Family Laws, Penal/Remedial Laws), Basic Counseling and Mediation, Alternative Modes of Dispute Resolution and the Shariah Law. The target groups are the Community Justice Service Providers such as the KP members (particularly, the Punong Barangay, Barangay Secretary and 3 members of the Lupong Tagapamayapa) and at least 5 BJAs per barangay covered by the Project. The objective is to equip service providers and trainers with competence to undertake counseling and mediation and impart knowledge and enhance level of awareness of the community on the various aspects of barangay justice delivery.

As of September 2005, the three major outputs reported under the DKM Project were as follows:

- (a) Covered 100 percent or 700 targeted barangays in various stages of DKM implementation activities (i.e social marketing, baseline survey, community mobilization, BJSS Training and project sustainability action planning);
- (a) Completed selection of and mobilized 20 LRPs in Sulu (3), Lanao del Sur including Marawi (10), Maguindanao (3), Basilan (2) and Tawi-tawi (2); and,
- (b) Trained 5,905 community volunteers as BJAs exceeding the total number of BJAs targeted for the project by 69 percent.

With the completion of these outputs, the anticipated project outcome is a significant reduction of violent conflicts in the BJSS areas as a result of the promotion of good governance, strengthened rule of law and sustained family and community peace.

2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

Previous studies have been undertaken to measure impact of the BJSS Project but these have been limited to assessing institutional capacities developed by the stakeholders and effectiveness of training interventions based on qualitative evaluation tools. With a view towards strengthening program implementation under the newly approved EDKM grant, a comprehensive Impact Assessment of the BJSS V-DKM Project was proposed by Gerry Roxas Foundation to be undertaken by external evaluators. USAID requested GRF to focus its inquiry on assessment of impact at the goal level in terms of attainment of family and community peace through a reduction in violent conflicts using empirical data and econometric tools in the evaluation process. This is an executive summary of the report.

2.1 Objectives of the Impact Assessment Study

The overall objective of the Impact Assessment Study is to measure the degree to which the BJSS V-DKM project has contributed to enhancing community peace and the extent to which conflicts have been averted and /or resolved by the BJAs.

The key performance indicators in the Project Logical Framework served as benchmark for the impact assessment. These will focus on attainment of objectives at three levels:

Goal level: impact in terms of reducing violent conflict as a result of improved access to justice and resolution of disputes of marginalized and disadvantaged groups

Purpose level: effects in terms of creating the pre-conditions for economic development as a result of reduced conflict, good governance, strengthened rule of law and family and community peace;

Institutional level: enhanced project management capabilities of stakeholders to sustain the flow of project initiated activities

The specific objectives of the assessment are as follows:

1. Confirm that BJSS communities are better than non-BJSS communities and identify in what specific ways they are better off
2. Confirm that the Project has helped reduced violent and/or bloody conflict in the target area
3. Confirm that the BJAs helped prevent disputes from escalating into violent conflicts
4. Confirm that the Project generated positive attitudinal and behavioral changes between and among ethnic groupings

5. Confirm that the Project institutionalized reforms in the community justice system
6. Confirm that the Project enhanced women involvement in dispute resolution
7. Confirm that the Project resulted to increased economic productivity
8. Confirm that sustainability mechanisms are currently in place and will be continued even after project completion;

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Sampling Design

The Impact Assessment Study is based on a survey of sample barangays from out of 53 municipalities and 784 BJSS barangays in the five (5) provinces and one (1) city in the ARMM.

The study used a two- stage sampling design in the selection of sample sites in the six project areas. Table 2 below shows the breakdown of the sample barangays.

Table 2. Number of Sample Barangays, By Province, By Type of Funding, by Sampling Strata, 2006

Province/City	EXPERIMENTAL		CONTROL	Total
	BJSS-funded	LGU-funded	Non-BJSS	
Marawi City	5	0	2	7
Lanao del Sur	23	18	10	51
Maguindanao	18	3	8	29
Sulu	12	11	5	28
Basilan	8	8	4	20
Tawi-tawi	4	0	1	5
Total	70	40	30	140

Four sets of respondents were identified for the survey. These included the following groups: (1) **LGU officials**- the Barangay Captains, Secretary or Treasurer (2) the **BJAs**; (3) **Household heads** in the BJSS and non-BJSS areas; and, (4) **Key Informants** - selected Mayors, Barangay Captains and BJAs for the Key Informant Interviews (KII).

The aggregate number of respondents for the survey in the sampling plan was 2,613. Actual number surveyed was 2,438 representing 93 % of the total targeted respondents and 1.7 % of the total households in the project area. Table 3 below presents a summary of survey respondents per province and city by type of sampling strata.

Table 3. Summary of Survey Respondents, all provinces/city by sampling strata, 2006

City/Province	Households				BJAs	LGU: BC Sec Treas	KII	Total
	BJSS	LGU	Non-BJSS	Total				
Marawi City	68	0	21	89	39	7	2	137
Lanao del Sur	135	58	66	259	338	47	3	647
Maguindanao	308	74	68	450	131	25	5	611
Sulu	180	138	73	391	175	25	3	594
Basilan	72	97	76	245	74	20	3	342
Tawi-tawi	50	0	29	79	20	5	3	107
Total	813	367	333	1513	777	129	19	2438

For the BJA survey, some 777 BJAs were included as respondents in the study representing 85 % of the total number of BJAs in the experimental barangays and 13 % of the total number of BJAs in the BJSS V-DKM Project.

For the LGU survey, barangay officials representing 92 % of the sample barangays were covered by study.

For the KII, 19 respondents representing each project area were selected to triangulate findings from the primary survey and secondary data.

2.2.2 Survey Instruments

Four sets of survey instruments were prepared by the Study Team. The three primary survey questionnaires were for BJSS households, BJAs, and the LGU officials. The same set of questionnaires was administered for non-BJSS households in the control barangays to establish the “with and without” conditions in the survey area. The fourth instrument is for the KII for a select group of informants from each province/city.

The questionnaires were pre-tested among selected BJAs and LGU officials from the five project areas.

2.2.3 Survey Plan

The Study Team deployed three local Research Coordinators to supervise the administration of the survey: 1 for Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi, 1 for Maguindanao and 1 for Lanao del Sur and Marawi City. A total of 66 local survey enumerators who were not associated with the Project were hired to conduct the survey.

2.2.4 Estimation Procedures and Plan of Analysis

Approach

Impact analysis was addressed with the use of primary and secondary data including results of the KII. Primary data came from the KII and sample survey of the BJSS V-DKM and LGU-funded barangays and non-BJSS barangays. The non-BJSS barangays with comparable BJSS barangay characteristics enabled the study team to compare a “with project versus without project” assessment. Primary data was also generated using the “pre-DKM” (November 2003-December 2004) and “post DKM” (June 2005-May 2006) time period in BJSS and LGU funded areas.

Statistical Analysis

To determine the impact of the BJSS V-DKM Project based on primary data, the following statistical tools were used:

1. t- test for paired samples was used to determine the effects of the BJSS V-DKM Project on the “before and after” situation regardless of the source of funding.
2. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the effects of the BJSS V -DKM Project among provinces, and among different sources of funding for the Project. The Duncan’s Multiple Range Test was used to isolate significant differences among provinces and fund sourcing. Descriptive statistics were used in all research questions.

The estimation of the parameters of the model was done using STATA statistical package program.

2.2.5 Problems and Limitations

Security threats mostly because of on-going rido, prevented the interviewers from completely adhering to the sampling plan. The interviewers did not attempt to cover those areas considered high security risk upon the advice by the local government units.

2.3 The Study Team

The GRF solicited bids and expression of interest for the Study Team and selected the most qualified based on the following criteria:

Academic Background	20%
Professional Experience	30%
Track Record in Similar Studies	40%
Consultancy Fees	<u>10%</u>
Total	100%

The Study Team is composed of the following experts:

Edmundo B. Prantilla, Team Leader

He completed his BS in Agriculture (cum laude) and Masters in Agricultural Economics at the University of the Philippines in Los Banos, and Doctorate Degree in Economics at the Iowa State University, USA.

He was Regional Executive Director of National Economic and Development Authority Southern Mindanao Region from 1974-79, UN Technical Advisor and FAO consultant in various capacities serving local and overseas posts from 1982-1992, President of the University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP) from 1993 to 2001 and a current professorial lecturer at the School of Applied Economics, USEP.

Edgardo D. Cruz, Statistician

He completed his B.S Agriculture (cum laude) at the Central Philippines University, Iloilo City, MS in Statistics at the University of the Philippines at Los Baños in 1983, MS in Econometrics at the University of New England, New South Wales, Australia and Ph.D in Research and Development Administration at the University of Southeastern Philippines, Obrero, Davao City.

He is currently Associate Professor at the University of Southeastern Philippines Obrero, Davao City.

Rufa Cagoco-Guiam, Anthropologist

She finished her college degrees in Bachelor of Arts, Major in Political Science and Bachelor of Science in Education, Major in English (cum laude) at the Divine World College in Bohol, Master of Arts in Anthropology at Siliman University, and completed the course work leading to PhD in Anthropology as an East-West scholar at the University of Hawaii.

She is currently Director for Center for Peace and Development Studies, Coordinator for the MPA Program and Associate Professor at the Mindanao State University, General Santos City.

3.0 SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACT

Survey results confirmed that the DKM Project generated the following impacts:

IMPACT 1: THE PROJECT HAS REDUCED VIOLENT AND/OR BLOODY CONFLICTS IN THE TARGET AREA

According to LGU respondents, the incidence of violent and/or bloody conflicts declined among the barangays covered by the BJSS by 41%, from 129 (pre-DKM period) to 76 cases (post-DKM period) (Table 16).

In Maguindanao, the total cases of disputes declined from 32 to 10 or a drop of about 69% after DKM Project.. In absolute terms, the most remarkable decline in disputes cases were observed in land conflict which dropped from 6 to 1 and murder from 10 to 6. Family and political conflict disappeared or none was reported after the DKM Project.

In Lanao del Sur, a 75% reduction in agrarian conflict was noted.

The LGU responses were confirmed by BJA and household respondents as seen by a general increase in indicators involving family and community peace and community participation.

The assessment of the BJAs on the impact of the Project on family and community peace is that the incidence of disputes and the escalation of disputes in the Project areas have significantly declined. In particular, incidence of disputes dropped by 65% and escalation of disputes declined by 38% after Project. These were accompanied by a 106% increase in community cooperative activities, a 94% increase in attendance in community meetings, an 86% increase in civic organization activities, a 160% increase in participation in community projects, and an increase in school enrollment/attendance of 58%. In short, after BJSS, there has been a perceived improvement in the family and community peace in the communities surveyed.

Household respondents generally confirmed BJAs assessment of reduction in conflicts after the BJSS V-DKM Project. Three sub-indicators for family and community peace when taken as a whole, declined after BJSS V-DKM Project. However this is true only when the survey results on five provinces and one city are combined. Two provinces, namely: Lanao del Sur and Basilan, and to a certain extent Maguindanao, registered a very strong perception of the respondents that the BJSS have significantly lowered the incidence and escalation of disputes/rido. Respondents from Tawi-Tawi, on the other hand, perceived no appreciable change in the three indicators of community peace after BJSS V-DKM Project. What pushed the aggregate result to indicate the increased perception of a high/very high level of incidence and escalation of disputes/rido was the survey results in Marawi and Sulu .

In contrast to the mixed results on the impact of BJSS on family and community peace indicators in the project areas, the six sub-indicators for community participation were

straightforward and unambiguous. On the aggregate, there was a 74% increase in the number of respondents who perceived that a high/very high level of community cooperative activities occurred after the BJSS V-DKM compared to the period before the BJSS. Similarly, high perceptions were recorded in civic organization activities (137%); participation in community projects (110%); and attendance in community meetings (86%). The institutional impacts of the BJSS V-DKM as exemplified by the sub-indicators of community participation are highly positive providing the enabling environment for peace and development in the communities. In addition, because institutional impacts produce positive changes on the attitudes and values of community members, they provide a strong foundation for the sustainability of peace and order in those communities.

It can also be noted that the negative perception on community peace by the households in Marawi City and Sulu and partly in Maguindanao was reversed by institutional changes in the community within the same period in Marawi City, Sulu and Maguindanao.

IMPACT 2: THE BJAS HELPED PREVENT DISPUTES FROM ESCALATING INTO VIOLENT CONFLICTS

Based on the high/very high level of incidence scale, the BJAs perceived an 89% increase in the number of disputes resolved and a 38% decrease in the number of disputes escalating into rido after BJSS V-DKM. The BJSS has produced an impact on the resolution of disputes in the BJSS barangays.

The aggregate perception of households confirms BJAs perceptions that the DKM Project has significantly increased the resolution of disputes and improved community harmony after the DKM Project.

The deployment of BJAs has also caused a significant shift in the way disputes are settled. Before the BJSS V-DKM Project, disputes were either settled through the Katarungang Pangbarangay (KP), Traditional Leaders/Relatives, Government Agencies, or referred to the Courts. During this period, the KP settled 71.4% of the 1,439 disputes reported during the said period. This was followed by Traditional Leaders/Relatives with 18.9%; and government agencies with 5.2%. The remaining 4.5% of the disputes were referred to the legal system and appropriate agencies.

After the BJSS V-DKM Project, the total disputes reported in the sample barangays dropped from 1,439 to 924. The disputes settled by the KP dropped from 71.4% to 25.6% after the DKM Project. In the same period, the BJAs settled 56 % of the total number of disputes. A significant reduction in the disputes settled by Traditional Leaders/Relatives was also observed, from 18.9% to 8.9%.. It is significant to note that the number of disputes referred to the legal system dropped from 65 before the BJSS V- DKM Project to 26 after the BJSS V-DKM Project or a decline of 2.8%.

A confluence of contributory factors may have made this impact of BJAs on dispute resolution possible. First, the selection of the BJAs was participative and was focused on obtaining from the broad spectrum of possible candidates at the local level those who are most qualified and most trusted by the residents of the area. Second, the training and sense of purpose given to the BJAs may have been instrumental in enhancing their capacities and motivating them to provide the services they are trained for. And third, as a new innovation, the BJAs were motivated to prove their worth. The BJAs success and the apparent decline on the services of traditional community justice service providers may also be due to the fact that the most qualified BJAs may have been recruited from existing community justice service providers. Nevertheless, it is clear that the BJAs have made an impact on dispute resolution processes in the barangays.

IMPACT 3: THE PROJECT GENERATED POSITIVE ATTITUDINAL AND BEHAVIORAL CHANGES BETWEEN AND AMONG ETHNIC GROUPS PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF INTER-ETHNIC PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Taken as a whole and using only the high/very high level of incidence scale, the BJAs reported a significant change in the attitudes and behavior between and among ethnic groups after BJSS.

General increases in change were perceived in:

- equal opportunity for jobs (32%)
- equal opportunity for education (38%)
- equal opportunity for housing (34%)
- equal opportunity for health care (51%)
- inter-ethnic participation in community Activities (120 %)
- increase in inter-ethnic marriage (26 %)
- Increase in inter-denominational marriage (89%)
- inter-ethnic harmony (86%)
- inter-ethnic dialogue (73%)
- common festivals (49 %)
- community peace covenant (40%)

Household respondents' perceptions confirmed BJAs perceptions that the BJSS V-DKM project has generated a positive impact on the attitudes and behavior between and among Muslims, Christians and Indigenous Peoples (IPs) according to household respondents. Using the high/very high level of incidence of the two periods as point of reference, it is found out that the participation of ethnic groups in community activities increased by 64% and in the implementation of community projects, by 97%. The same significant increases are observed on the perception of household respondents on

equal opportunity for jobs, equal opportunity for education, and equal opportunity for health care.

The positive changes in attitudes and behavior after BJSS were also manifested with the 107% increase in the respondents' perception on inter-marriage between ethnic groups and a 173% increase on inter-marriage between members of different religious denomination. Similarly, inter-ethnic voluntary cooperation is perceived to have increased by 132%; inter-ethnic harmony by 54%; inter-faith dialogue by 119%; Duyog Ramadan by 27%; community peace covenant by 58% and common festivals by 39%.

The changes in these indicators strongly suggest a very strong positive impact of BJSS project on the attitudes and behavior between and among ethnic groups indicative of an improved social climate in the Project areas.

IMPACT 4: THE PROJECT INSTITUTIONALIZED REFORMS IN THE COMMUNITY JUSTICE SYSTEM BY INCREASING THE NUMBER OF SERVICE PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The community justice service providers present in the area before the BJSS V-DKM Project include barangay officials, national line agencies (i.e DILG, DSWD), civil society organizations based in the area, academic institutions and traditional leaders and sultans who assist in the delivery of community justice. After the DKM Project, the total number of service providers increased from 512 to 1463. The increase was mainly attributed to the presence of BJAs and BJA trainers. Table 17 provides a picture of the movement of these service providers before and after the BJSS V-DKM Project.

BJAs perceived a 129% increase in the promotion of individual responsibilities in justice system; a 65% increase in the promotion of family responsibilities in justice system; a 102% increase in the awareness of the barangay justice system; an 82% increase in the number of disputes settled by traditional leaders; a 10% increase in the awareness of the role of the LGUs, and 48% increase in the awareness of individual rights.

As a whole, the BJSS has produced a strong impact on institutionalizing reforms and promoting individual and family responsibility on the community justice system. These responsibilities include the recognition that the interaction of an individual among other members of the community is governed by both written and unwritten laws and it is the responsibility of individuals and families to be aware of these laws and to act within the bounds of these laws.

IMPACT 5: THE PROJECT ENHANCED WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN MEDIATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The impact of the BJSS V-DKM project on women yielded positive results measured in terms of the role of women in settling disputes, number of women trained to settle disputes, number of cases settled by women mediators, number of women volunteering as mediators, preference for women mediators due to trust and effectiveness,

involvement of women in BJA training, and involvement of women in the resolution of disputes. While there were more male than female BJAs, there is an increasing recognition of the role of women in dispute resolution.

The BJAs perceived an important role of women in mediation and dispute resolution. As a whole, the role of women in settling disputes has been assessed by BJAs to have increased by 134% and the number of women trained to settle disputes was perceived to have increased by 173%. Cases settled by women mediators were also perceived to have increased by 400%; women volunteering as mediators 309%; preference for women as mediator due to trust 282%; preference for women as mediator due to effectiveness 204% ; involvement in training 106%, and involvement in disputes resolution 536% (Table 29).

There were four areas where enhanced women involvement in mediation and dispute resolution were noted. These areas include Sulu, Basilan, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao. This is most pronounced in Sulu where the role of women in settling disputes was perceived to have increased by 250% while the number of women trained in settling disputes was perceived to have increased by 350% after BJSS.

The perception of the BJAs on the role of women in dispute resolution means that women are important partners in peace and development. This is a significant perception considering that these were results generated from survey responses of predominantly male BJA respondents.

BJAs perceptions were shared by household respondents. The role of women in settling disputes, as perceived by household respondents, has increased by 232% after BJSS using the high/very high level of incidence scale. There were also considerable increases in cases settled by women mediators (395%); women volunteering as mediators (729%); preference for women as mediator due to trust (442%); preference of women as mediator due to effectiveness (596%), and involvement in dispute resolution (967%) after BJSS as perceived by respondents. The perceived increased on the participation of women in dispute resolution is further underlined by the perception of the respondents that the number of women trained to settle disputes and the involvement of women in training has considerably increased.

IMPACT 6: THE PROJECT RESULTED TO INCREASED ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY

The general trend in the BJSS V-DKM barangays is an increase in economic activities in terms of number of establishments and number of persons employed as a result of the project. The changes in the differences of perceptions in this aspect were higher in experimental areas than the control areas. Between experimental barangays, respondents from BJSS funded areas felt that the project has increased the number of establishments and the number of employed than the respondents from the LGU-funded areas.

While this may not be directly attributed to the BJSS V-DKM Project, the promotion of family and community peace has created an enabling environment for certain economic activities to flourish.

Effects on Farming and Fishing Activities

The survey on the effects of the BJSS V-DKM Project on farming and fishing activities may not provide a good estimate of the economic impact of the project because in some cases the household respondents refused to give the information asked. In addition, the effect on farming and fishing is based on the assumption that the environmental factors that affect farming and fishing remained the same during the periods studied. This assumption however is not realistic, thus lack of adequate rainfall could decrease production and bad weather could affect fishing and fish farms, factors which are beyond the influence of the project.

IMPACT 7: SUSTAINABILITY MECHANISMS ARE IN PLACE AND WILL BE CONTINUED EVEN AFTER PROJECT COMPLETION

Results show that even if the BJSS V-DKM project implementers are phased out from the different project areas, the project can be sustained based on the following indicators:

- Presence of sustainability action plan conceptualized by area stakeholders
- Willingness of local officials and community volunteers to contribute, either in cash (voluntary donations) or in kind, e.g. voluntary services for mobilizing people, conducting meetings and community trainings
- Support of many stakeholders in the community, especially LGU officials, starting from the BLGU level.

Key informant interviews further showed that sustainability action plans numbering 493 have been completed for the six BJSS areas. Out of the total, 115 plans or 23 % of the total have been adopted by the respective barangays through a barangay ordinance ensuring funding allocation to sustain project activities. These were mostly in Lanao del Sur and Sulu. Other sustainability mechanisms in place include the organization of federations or joint councils as point of convergence for peace efforts. These include:

- Iranon Joint BJA-LGU-ULAMA Peace and Order Council covering the municipalities of Buldon, Matanog, Barira and Parang in Lanao del Sur
- Joint ULAMA-BJA-LGU Council in Maguindan
- Basilan BJA Federation
- Lanao BJA Federation

4.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the overall findings of the study, it can be concluded that the BJSS V-DKM Project has achieved its goal of promoting family and community peace through a reduction in violent conflicts. As a result of the Project, access to justice by marginalized and disadvantaged groups was improved leading to the promotion of harmony and cooperation among inter-ethnic groups in the Project areas. The Project has also equipped BJA in dispute resolution processes and enhanced the role of women in assuming greater responsibility for the delivery of community justice.

Survey results show that at the household level, respondents from the BJSS barangays perceived that they had better indicators of family and community peace than non-BJSS barangays. This is evident in their increasing involvement in cooperative activities, attendance in community meetings and attendance in organization activities.

It has also been observed that women in the BJSS barangays areas are more involved in training and dispute resolution compared to the Non-BJSS barangays. Positive indicators were seen in the increasing: role of women in settling disputes, number of women trained to settle disputes, number of cases settled by women mediators, number of women volunteering as mediators, preference for women mediators due to trust and effectiveness and involvement in BJA training in the BJSS barangays.

In terms of dispute resolution and promotion of community harmony, households in the BJSS barangays are perceived to be assuming greater individual and family responsibilities in the promotion of the community justice system. Study also shows that awareness of barangay justice system is higher in BJSS barangays compared to the Non-BJSS barangays.

BJSS barangays are better than non-BJSS barangays in the following areas:

- (a) The BJSS barangays registered a significantly higher number of disputes resolved compared to the Non-BJSS barangays.
- (b) The BJSS barangays have significantly scored higher in the promotion of individual responsibility in the justice system compared to the Non-BJSS barangays.
- (c) The BJSS barangays registered a significantly higher score in the promotion of family responsibilities in the justice system compared to the Non-BJSS barangays.
- (d) Awareness of barangay justice system is significantly higher in the BJSS barangays compared to the Non-BJSS barangays.
- (e) Awareness in the role of the LGU in the justice system is statistically equal in both BJSS and Non-BJSS barangays.

(f) Awareness of individual rights and responsibilities in the justice system is significantly higher statistically in BJSS barangays compared to Non-BJSS barangays.

(g) The households in BJSS barangays have statistically significant perceptions of affordability and physical access of community justice system compared to the households of Non-BJSS barangays.

(h) The role of women in settling disputes is statistically higher in both BJSS barangays than Non-BJSS barangays.

(i) The number of women trained to settle disputes are significantly higher in BJSS barangays compared to Non-BJSS barangays.

(j) The number of disputes settled by women mediators are significantly higher in BJSS barangays when compared to those in the Non-BJSS barangays.

(k) Women volunteers as mediators have significantly higher number in BJSS barangays compared to the Non-BJSS barangays,

(l) Preference of women mediators due to trust and effectiveness, involvement of women in BJA training and dispute resolution registered significantly higher values compared to the Non-BJSS barangays.

(m) Community cooperative activities are statistically significant) in BJSS barangays compared to the Non-BJSS barangays.

(n) Attendance in community meetings is significantly higher in BJSS barangays compared to the Non-BJSS barangays.

(o) Barangays under the BJSS have significantly higher attendance in civic organization activities compared to both the LGU-funded and Non-BJSS barangays. Attendance in civic organization activities in LGU-funded and Non-BJSS barangays is statistically equal.

These results show that at the household level, respondents from the BJSS barangays perceived that they had better indicators of family and community peace than non-BJSS barangays. This is evident in their, increasing involvement in cooperative activities, attendance in community meetings and attendance in organization activities.

It has also been observed that women in the BJSS barangays areas are more involved in training and dispute resolution compared to the Non-BJSS barangays. Positive indicators were seen in the increasing: role of women in settling disputes, number of women trained to settle disputes, number of cases settled by women mediators, number

of women volunteering as mediators, preference for women mediators due to trust and effectiveness and involvement in BJA training in the BJSS barangays.

In terms of dispute resolution and promotion of community harmony, households in the BJSS barangays are perceived to be assuming greater individual and family responsibilities in the promotion of the community justice system. Study also shows that awareness of barangay justice system is higher in BJSS barangays compared to the Non-BJSS barangays.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Project Management

Sustaining BJSS activities after project phase out means that an alternative management scheme should be installed in the communities where the project is being implemented. The alternative management scheme can include the officials of the BLGU as the implementers of project activities and programs. A community-based secretariat may be organized to oversee project implementation. The secretariat can be funded by a regular allocation from the BLGU's IRA share for development funds (20% of the IRA). The over-all supervision of the project can be provided by the Department of Justice (DOJ) through the employees of the Municipal Trial Courts, or if not, by a personnel specifically assigned to oversee BJSS activities in the different communities covered by the Trial Courts or the Circuit Courts.

The DOJ and DILG should establish a BJSS Secretariat at the barangay level. The Barangay Secretariat shall be responsible for formulating the operational plan of BJSS at the barangay level. This operational plan shall include, among others, the continuous upgrading of BJAs, scheduling of BJAs' activities, and coordination of the local or barangay-based information drives to popularize the community justice system.

5.2 Project Sustainability

A strategy that could lead to a project's sustainability is to increase project stakeholderhip, by allowing project partners, and in this case, the community members themselves, to take the driver's seat in project implementation. For the BJSS project this will not be a problem since the results of the survey show that the elements favorable to family peace and community harmony are already in place in most of the project barangays.

The survey results showed also that the community justice system is a vital component of the local development process, i.e. economic activities are promoted if there is peace and harmony at the local level. Accordingly, this provides a strong rationale for the local barangay government to include a regular annual budgetary allocation for the community justice system. This will ensure the funding component of the community justice system and its continued sustainability.

Still another mechanism to ensure sustainability of BJSS is the formulation of a barangay resolution adopting the Sustainability Action Plan to enable BJSS activities to continue, even after the project phases out. The resolution should contain a provision on the allocation of a regular funding for BJSS activities that could be taken from the 20% Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) fund that a barangay LGU is entitled. If the funds from this source are inadequate, the Barangay Development Council can identify resource generation schemes and pass a resolution adopting such schemes.

Sustainability of the community justice system will be ensured also if it has taken into account the tradition and values of the community. It is recommended therefore, that in places where there is a visibly high level of Islamic consciousness like in the city of Marawi and in the entire province of Lanao del Sur, and where respondents and informants tend to favor the integration of traditional practices of conflict resolution and mediation as well as customary law (*adat/taritib/igma*) and Islamic jurisprudence in BJSS programs, these traditional practices and customary law be integrated into the local justice system. It is, of course, accepted that the constitutional laws of the Republic of the Philippines shall prevail in cases where they apply.

5.3 Project Replicability

On the whole, there is consensus on the crucial role of the BJSS Project in maintaining community peace. That is why both BJA respondents and key informants are unanimous in saying that the project can be sustained or replicated given some factors and suggested strategies for expansion.

Despite the high level of acceptability of the BJSS in terms of promoting community harmony, increasing the level of project awareness among household respondents has been identified as a challenge that need to be addressed. For this reason, one key strategy to intensify information and education campaigns among community residents is to promote popular methodologies and strategies like the use of popular education strategies through komiks, “*peryodikit*,” and even house to house information drives.

BJSS offers a restorative justice system that addresses the lack of access to justice among impoverished and marginalized communities. The project has been successful in reducing court backlogs since some community level conflicts can be settled or mediated through the trained BJAs. Replicating this type of justice to all rural poor communities is therefore an imperative.

5.4 Policy Recommendations

From the project implementers to the households, there is a consensus on the need to provide a legal mechanism that will entitle the BJAs to an incentive whether it will be considered an allowance or honorarium. This is understandable in the present context of economic crisis, where every individual in many rural and depressed communities is reeling from financial difficulties. The profile of the BJAs shows almost all of them live below the poverty threshold as shown by the survey. The legal mechanism suggested

by the BJAs is an official appointment from the MLGU chief executive (the Mayor). This is the basis for allowing the BJA to receive a regular remuneration, whether it will be in the form of an honorarium or a traveling allowance.

Another recommendation is to do policy advocacy with the Department of Justice (DOJ) to make BJSS one of its regular programs. Again, if DOJ funds are insufficient to include BJSS as part of its regular programs, a scheme can be devised to mobilize resources either from the private sector or from civil society to augment funds for BJSS regularization. Then, a partnership arrangement could be made between the academe (law schools) which could be tasked to provide free para-legal trainings and other seminars for BJAs and other BJSS volunteers.