

Study of the Development Plan of Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Philippines

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Abstract

This paper presents a preliminary examination of the ARMM's development plan, strategies, and vision, focusing on understanding the region's demography, profile, location, history, poverty incidence, and income-generating resources. It also provides an analysis and evaluation of its components, weaknesses, and strengths. The focal point of the study is the 2013-2016 development plan of the region taking into account the five key areas of development plan as provided in Executive Order No. 43 issued by President Benigno S. Aquino III on July, 2011 which stipulates the administration's Social Contract with the Filipino people, namely: a) transparent, accountable, and participatory governance; b) poverty reduction and empowerment of the poor and vulnerable; c) rapid, inclusive, and sustained economic growth; d) just and lasting peace and the rule of law; and e) integrity of the environment and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Keywords: Development Plan, Local Government, ARMM

Introduction

The Development Plan serves as a guideline for every local government unit in the Philippines to implement policies and programs that will elevate the quality of life for the people, especially the majority who are poor. It aims to uplift the drastic condition of the community in terms of economic, social, and political contexts. It aims to achieve rapid and sustainable economic growth and development, while empowering the poor and marginalized sectors, as outlined in the Philippine government's 2011-2016 Development Plan. It cannot be denied that while other regions in the Philippines are gradually advancing economically, there are still far-flung regions in the Southern Philippines that continue to be consigned to the backwaters of development administration. Today, corruption, inefficiency, poor and limited access to social services, political instability, a lack of peace and order, poverty, unemployment, and family feuds, among others, are just a few of the numerous problems facing the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Regional Governor Mujiv S. Hataman even contends that before he assumed the position in 2011, the same region was plagued by ghost projects and ghost employees. In the same year, His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino III pointed out that the significant issues in the same region include "political patronage, huge cash advances, ghost teachers, ghost infrastructures, continuing poverty, and electoral fraud." Despite the existing development plan, there appears to be little to no improvement in the economic, political, and social structures of the same region. This, therefore, raises the question of the effectiveness of the region's ground plan in terms of sustainable development.

This paper presents a preliminary examination of the ARMM's development plan, strategies, and vision,

focusing on understanding the region's demography, profile, location, history, poverty incidence, and income-generating resources. It also provides an analysis and evaluation of its components, weaknesses, and strengths. The focal point of the study is the 2013-2016 development plan of the region taking into account the five key areas of development plan as provided in Executive Order No. 43 issued by President Benigno S. Aquino III on July, 2011 which stipulates the administration's Social Contract with the Filipino people, namely: a) transparent, accountable, and participatory governance; b) poverty reduction and empowerment of the poor and vulnerable; c) rapid, inclusive, and sustained economic growth; d) just and lasting peace and the rule of law; and e) integrity of the environment and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

It can be said that the creation of the ARMM was based on the Bangsamoro's struggle for self-rule and self-determination. Article X, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides for the establishment of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. On August 1, 1989, Republic Act No. 6734, an act providing for an organic act for the ARMM, as ratified in a plebiscite on November 17, 1989, was signed into law by President Cory C. Aquino. Initially, it was comprised of the following four (4) provinces, namely: Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi. Thereafter, Marawi City (within Lanao del Sur) and the Province of Basilan had joined the expanded autonomous region through Republic Act No. 9054 in a special plebiscite on August 14, 2001 (<http://www.armm.gov.ph/history/>).

The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is situated in two geographical areas in Southern Mindanao: the Inland Provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao, and the Island Provinces of Basilan (excluding Isabela City), Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi, covering a geographical area of 12,288 km². It is further politically subdivided into the following: two (2) component cities; one hundred sixteen (116) municipalities, and two thousand four hundred ninety (2,490) barangays. According to the 2010 Census and Housing Population report, there are a total of 3,356,140 people (National Statistics Office, 2010). Fishing and farming are the two primary sources of income in ARMM. Some invest in small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as in industries such as agricultural product processing.

While it is true that the Eastern Visayas dislodged ARMM as the poorest region in 2015, it cannot be denied that, since time immemorial, such a region has been experiencing destitute living conditions. The National Statistical Coordination Board revealed that there was a substantial increase in poverty threshold and poverty incidence among families in ARMM from 2006, with 43%; 2009, with 42%; and 2012, with 46.9%. This was further exacerbated in 2013 when drug trafficking and the pyramiding scam of the infamous Jacob "Coco" Rasuman surfaced in the said region (Unson, 2013). In 2014, the region's poverty incidence rose again by 1.2 percentage points, as food prices increased faster than the incomes of people experiencing poverty (<http://www.armm-info.com/2015/06/armm-steps-up-anti-poverty-drive.html>).

ARMM Development Plan

Inayatullah (1967:101) defined development as "the process through which society achieves increased control over its environment, increased control over its political destiny, and enables its component individuals to gain increased control over themselves". In 2011, Todaro also contends that such a process may include improving the quality of all human lives and capabilities by raising people's levels of living, self-esteem, and freedom. For this reason, it is undeniable that development makes it a desirable change in society. As society becomes more complex, the government should likewise develop plans, programs,

and projects that are conducive to the immediate needs of its constituents. This is to be achieved through a responsive development framework that is responsive to the organization's strengths and opportunities. The 2013-2016 Development Plan of ARMM envisions "to empower its people and community" as a whole within the principles of good governance. Its mission is to "promote a long lasting peace and security, ensure access to quality services with emphasis on the poor and the disadvantaged, and sustain economic, political, and socio-cultural gains within the context of good governance, human environment, and sustainable development". When Mujiv S. Hataman assumed the position as Regional Governor of ARMM, "he immediately laid down his priority agenda focusing on three (3) pillars of reform such as: Governance, Peace and security, and Socio-economic development". Based on these reforms, the operational guidelines and implementation strategies of ARMM were anchored on the Executive Order No. 43 "which formally establishes the five Cabinet clusters that will address key priority areas, such as: Good Governance and Anti-Corruption; Human Development and Poverty Reduction; Economic Development; Security, Justice and Peace; Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation".

a. Good Governance and Anti-Corruption

Good Governance has been one of the priority programs of Hataman's Leadership in ARMM. As a result, various policy directives and issuances have been issued by the Office of the Regional Government. Sixty-five percent of the ARMM's total budget of P69,750,953,277 from 2010-2014 has been allotted for Personnel Services (PS); 18% for Maintenance and Operating Expenses (MOOE); and 17% for Capital Outlay (CO). As shown in Table 1, a substantial amount is allocated for the PS, which is a manifestation of the government's commitment to improve and enhance the region's performance output.

Table 1. ARMM Budget, 2011-2014

Year	PS	MOOE	CO	TOTAL
2011	8,539,830,232	2,417,518,974	1,890,485,638	12,847,834,844
2012	8,945,922,443	2,156,802,000	1,365,899,000	12,468,623,443
2013	10,384,909,000	2,103,898,990	1,571,111,000	14,059,918,990
2014	10,650,205,000	4,272,826,000	5,602,908,000	20,525,939,000
TOTAL	P45,495,295,675	P12,943,028,964	P11,352,628,638	P69,750,953,277

Source: Department of Budget and Management

As part of the regional governments' policy of promoting a transparent and accountable government, the ARMM also launched its official websites and even mandated its local government units to do the same where projects, programs, updates, latest developments, and budgetary allocations and expenditures concerning its agencies are timely and accurately published. Another innovative programs initiated by Gov. Hataman in as far as good governance is concerned includes the following: the establishment of the ARMM Development Academy; the partnership of Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) and ARMM on providing technical assistance to LGUS to come up with a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and Zoning Ordinances (ZO) among others.

However, as the cliché goes, if one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favorable. According to the ARMM Regional Development Plan Midterm Update 2013-2016, the region has faced numerous challenges in terms of its commitment to good governance and anti-corruption. These include the following: poor implementation of RA No. 9054 or an act to strengthen and expand the organic act for

the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, amending for the purpose Republic Act No. 6734, entitled “an act providing for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao” as amended, specifically on the retention of ARMM share in local revenues generated; incomplete and non-devolution of major agencies; incomplete implementation of Executive Order No. 125 (an act defining the approach and administrative structure for government’s comprehensive peace efforts), as amended by Executive Order No. 125-A (an act enhancing the devolution of powers and functions, programs and projects of national government agencies to the autonomous regional government of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao) and its IRR; and lastly, the necessity to enhance capacity on operations, financial and performance management, and in the implementation of laws and policies such as weak observance of good governance condition, lack of small are statistics, weak civil registration management and services, poor monitoring and evaluation of LGUs performance, and weak spirit of volunteerism for Public Service.

The reluctance of some government officials to promote good governance may be a reason behind the piecemeal administrative improvements in the region. This was reinforced by Li (2015), who contended that many government officials are reluctant to apply sound governance principles, as it could reduce their control over decisions. The unwillingness of these local officials would likewise result in an ineffective and unresponsive delivery of services to the people, sluggish performance in policy and decision-making, and a weak, professionalized bureaucracy that has reduced the effectiveness of the ARMM in tackling the immediate problems facing its citizens (Co et al., 2013).

Hence, there must be a serious and transparent re-evaluation of the performance of every agency, especially the local government units, if the regional government is sincere enough in reforming the ARMM. The Results-Based Performance Management System, which monitors the performance of government agencies, as well as the Local Government Performance Management System, which assesses the performance and state of development of an LGU, may be considered as a benchmark and tools in monitoring the performance of ARMM as a region. It is equally essential that the issues of dirty politics in most provinces, municipalities, cities, and barangays be seriously investigated by the national government. In the previous 2010 election in Lanao del Sur, for instance, vote buying, with the price pegged at anywhere from P10,000 to P15,000 per family, proliferated, and violence erupted, such as when a nine-year-old girl watching from her window got hit by a stray bullet in her left shoulder (Gloria, 2010).

b. Human Development and Poverty Reduction

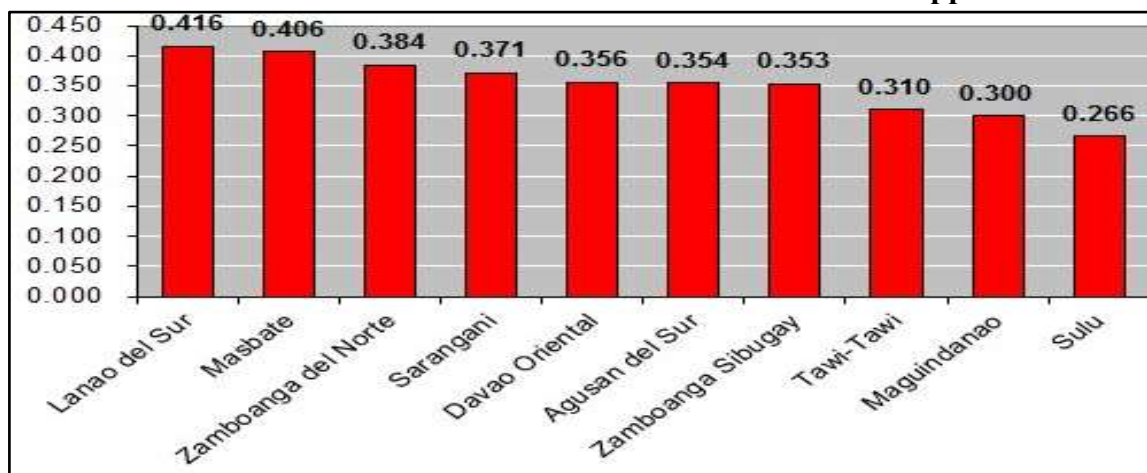
The conflicts in the southern part of Mindanao further aggravated the drastic conditions in ARMM. Solita Collas-Monsod (2009), as cited in Dearn (2009), pointed out that:

The number of people living in poverty in the Philippines is growing, despite sustained economic growth and a rising GDP. Growing economic inequality looks all the starker in the midst of the world's second longest running internal conflict, the ongoing violence in the south of the country. The seemingly intractable internecine war, centred on the southern island of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago, stems from a variety of historical grievances and modern injustices.

On July 29, 2013, the Human Development Network (HDN), in cooperation with the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), released the 2012/2013 Philippine Human Development Report (PHDR). As shown in Figure 1, Sulu posted the lowest HDI at 0.266 followed by Maguindanao (0.300), Tawi-Tawi (0.310), Zamboanga Sibugay (0.353), Agusan del Sur (0.354), Davao Oriental (0.356), Sarangani (0.371), Zambonga del Norte (0.384), Masbate (0.406), and Lanao del Sur (0.416). All provinces in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) are in the bottom 10, except for

Basilan (Albert, 2013). The bottom 10 provinces in almost every aspect of human development can be explained by the unstable peace and order situation in the region which according to Sinarimbo (2010) as cited by Arguillas (2010) is triggered with the presence of internally displaced persons, recurring armed confrontation, proliferation of loose firearms, presence of lawless armed groups and family feuds or rido. With these, it was recommended during the 2010 ARMM Peace Summit that the resumption and conclusion of the peace process between the GRP and Moro fronts, the implementation of a comprehensive rehabilitation program for internally displaced persons in the ARMM, the dismantling of private armed groups, and the imposition of a gun ban (Arguillas, 2010).

Figure 1. Bottom Ten Provinces with the Lowest HDI Levels in the Philippines: 2009



Source: 2012/2013 Philippine Human Development Report, Human Development Network

Furthermore, numerous development efforts have been undertaken to improve and maximize constituents' access to social services, aiming to uplift their dire conditions. The ARMM HELPS, "a banner program of the current Hataman leadership intended for more coordinated and focused interventions at the local level to achieve maximum impact of services," was conceived. Primary social services identified include the following: education; technical skills development; health and nutrition; social welfare such as Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) or Conditional Cash Transfer, transition investment support program (TISP), social pension for indigent senior citizen program, social welfare regular programs, official development assistance; labor and employment; cultural communities and cultural development; and women and children's welfare development (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, 2015). In the same report, challenges were also identified as follows: low probability of attaining the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets: Goal 1, 2, 3, and 7; high incidence of poverty; poor access to health services; poor access to quality educational services; less employment opportunities; and lastly, insufficient social welfare services such as inadequate social housing and core shelter program, weak implementation of policies or lack of it for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups including Indigenous People thus increasing the number of women and children in need of special protection.

However, there are also issues now on the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) or Conditional Cash Transfer, specifically in identifying its beneficiaries. According to Punongbayan (2012), the supposed beneficiaries are not the ones enjoying the benefits of the program. There are cases in Lanao del Sur, as revealed by a key informant, where a government employee who is receiving a monthly salary is

also a 4Ps beneficiary. Only to find out that the concerned employee happens to be an immediate relative of the barangay chairman, who also plays a role in the program's implementation. Hence, it is not surprising that poverty remains apparent in the region due to the weak implementation of social welfare programs, such as 4Ps. For this reason, a strong political will, such as support from the LGUs for its implementation, as well as awareness of registration, membership, and monitoring on the part of the beneficiaries, which should be done in every barangay, is needed to strengthen the implementation of programs and projects in ARMM.

Another prevailing problem that the regional government did not recognize is the weak promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. In a traditional community like the ARMM, while we see women nowadays occupying positions in the government, the majority of women are still in the far-flung areas of the region without any idea of the so-called "women's empowerment". Firstly, cultures and traditions are reluctant to change. They thought that participating in masculine work, for instance, is taboo; secondly, it could be because they want to maintain that conservative image, which is a norm in their society. These scenarios can be considered as hurdles to development, according to Davis. One way to resolve this is through coordination with the "Bae a Labi," who are traditional leaders in most areas of the region. The "Bae a Labi" is a woman equivalent to a Sultan, where they could equally partake in the decision-making concerning their community. Hence, a multi-cultural development approach must be realized to empower women in the ARMM.

c. Economic Development

In the same ARMM Report, it was stated that "about 57% of regions' GRDP comes from Agriculture, Fishery, and Forestry. Given its agricultural resources, the ARMM has to focus its development directions in agri-industrial development". In 2013, the ARMM's economic growth was remarkable at 3.6%, higher than the 1.1% growth recorded in 2012 and a reversal of the 0.3% contraction in 2010. Agriculture, which included hunting, fishing, and forestry, accounted for 61.3% of the region's economy, followed by services at 33.6%, and the industry sector at 5.1% (Manlupig, 2014). This economic growth was facilitated by the vast crops available in the region, including palay, coconuts, and cassava. The region's service sector growth appreciated to 6.6% in 2013 from 5.9% in 2012. Mining and quarrying (2.6% from 2.3%) and manufacturing (3.9% from 3%) also made significant contributions to this growth. With this, Secretary Luwalhati Antonino, chair of the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA), sustained that the conspicuous economic growth in the ARMM only mean increased confidence among investors, improved systems, and better institutions in the ARMM, thereby ushering in investments that will increase infrastructure, provide jobs, and jumpstart the economy towards our goal of long-term inclusive growth. Other indicators of the economic growth in ARMM comprised of the following: promotion and facilitation of investments (e.g. the pool of capital from the business name registration of small and medium enterprises engaged in trading, manufacturing and services), trade and industry through the DTI-ARMM; halal industry development which by far has been a primary concern of the same region due to its being a Muslim community (as of this date, DTI-ARMM was able to access to P9.8M from the stimulus fund for the procurement of laboratory equipment for halal testing); the implementation of Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SET-UP) in collaboration with the DOST System; the cooperative development with a total of 42, 386 members; and the tourism development. In the 2013-2016 ARMM Regional Development Plan Midterm Update, challenges continue to hinder its development process. These include: low agricultural and fisheries production resulting in low family income; limited investment and employment opportunities; inadequate infrastructure and support facilities for agricultural

and fisheries production; a shortage of skilled/ semi-skilled workers, limited scientific and technological advancements; and a lack of support for industry production, packaging, and marketing.

In terms of economic growth, investment and employment are closely linked. In other words, to solve the unemployment problem, the region should attract more investors to invest in the area. Considering the vast natural resources of the region, investors may invest in projects such as palm oil production, banana plantations, agri-ventures, oil refineries, Napier grass plantations, cassava starch milling plants, among others, which are all prevalent in ARMM. However, investment, as operationally defined in this study, connotes a just and equal sharing of economic growth between the investors and the constituents, apart from the employment opportunities it could provide in the realization of this business deal. The sharing of growth must be discussed and settled among the local government, investors, and the area's constituents, so they can come up with a collective decision where everyone's interests are recognized and considered.

d. Security, Justice and Peace

Armed conflict, political instability, presence of terrorist groups like Abu Sayyaf, high threat of kidnapping, endless clan wars or family feud 'rido', drug trafficking are just a few of the common scenarios in ARMM. Gov. Hataman even commented that security remains a concern in areas known to be infested by the presence of the Abu Sayyaf group and the other kidnap gangs in the region (Pareño, 2014; Mabasa, 2014).

With the proliferation of this kind of problems, the regional government of ARMM with the national government strengthened its safety and security programs like the resumption of peace talks with the MNLF and MILF through the PAMANA (PAYapa at Masaganang Pamayanan or Peaceful and Resilient Communities) program which aims to contribute to lasting peace in by achieving the following objectives: a) reduce poverty and vulnerability in the conflict-affected areas, b) improve governance, and c) empower communities through and strengthen their capacities to address issues of conflict and peace through activities that promote social cohesion ; the AFP's 6th Infantry Division which maintains the peace and order on areas conducive to development; the establishment of the Regional Reconciliation and Unification Commission (RRUC) to pursue conflict settlement and resolution of the internal conflict cases (rido); the reduction of illegal drug supply which has been the focus of the operatives of ARMM-PDEA; the Regional Human Rights Commission which has been the front lines of human rights promotion and protection in the region (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, 2015). However, like any development effort, some problems continue to deter its development process. These include: a) incomplete implementation of the provisions of the 1996 Final Peace Agreement (FPA) and R.A. 9054; poor community awareness of the peace process and the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB); crime-related incidents; election-related violence; weak policies and inadequate programs and interventions for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of conflict-affected areas; and poor justice system (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, 2015).

e. Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

It is a known fact that ARMM is rich in natural resources. Undoubtedly, many mining and quarrying companies intended to extend their activities in the same region due to its vast resources. In Tawi-Tawi, for instance, nickel, iron, chromite, gold, and sand and gravel are considered the primary resources, which have led to the mining industry recording investments worth P1.227 billion (Dinglasan, 2014). However, the extraction of resources may threaten the marine life of the region, and to some extent, even the lives of the constituents whose livelihoods depend on fishing. However, it does not stop there, because climate change is now also one of the main obstacles faced by many countries.

In a study conducted by the DOST in 2011, it was deduced that:

“Climate change impacts’ are already being seen and may intensify exponentially over time if nothing is done to reduce further emissions of greenhouse gases. Decisively dealing now with climate change is key to ensuring sustainable development, poverty eradication and safeguarding economic growth. Scientific assessments indicate that the cost of inaction now will be more costly in the future. Thus, economic development needs to be shifted to a low-carbon emission path.”

Through the initiative of the DENR-ARMM, “several community-based programs and activities were implemented to prevent the continuous degradation of the region’s natural resources”. Other than that, programs like “reforestation management, total log ban order, and conservation, protection, and rehabilitation of the environment and natural resources in the region are one of the major tasks of the DENR. Moreover, effective and efficient land management programs, protective areas, wildlife management, forest land boundary delineation, cadastral survey, disaster risk reduction and management/relief and rehabilitation efforts, among others (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, 2015).

Development Plan: It’s Formulation Process

Shakya (2007) defined planning as a suitable development path to enhance the lives of ordinary people. It involves the formulation of a national program of action for achieving development objectives. In a different but related argument, Waterson (1971) defines planning as, in essence, an organized, conscious, and continual attempt to select the best available alternatives to achieve specific goals. For further enlightenment of the Development Planning as a concept, Shakya (2007) contends that:

“Development planning is of two types: the central planning and the indicative planning: the former is practiced in a centralized economy where the role of the state is dominant in the socio-economic life of the people. Such types of planning were pursued in socialist countries like the then Soviet Union, North Korea and so forth. In mixed economics like Nepal, planning takes the form of indicative in nature. Economics decisions are partly guided by the ‘invisible hand’ and partly done by the state intervention. The state sector and the private sector both remain active and play their respective roles. The role of the public sector is conceived as that of a facilitator to promote development in the country. The private sector on the other hand is involved in providing goods and services needed for economy to move on the growth path”.

The Development Plan of ARMM became possible through the continuous efforts of its regional government and the immeasurable support of its local governments. Although some local government units may be reluctant or non-participatory in the formulation of these programs and policies, cooperation from the former is more important than the latter. Through the collaborative efforts of the Regional Planning and Development Office (RPDO) and guidance from the National Government, including the President and the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), the region succeeded in addressing the strengths and weaknesses of ARMM as it progressed through the stages of development.

The RPDO “spearheads the preparation of plans, programs, and projects for the development of the region”. Accordingly, they are guided by laws like the Republic Act. No. 6734 (an act providing for the Organic Act Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao); Executive Order 463 (establishing the relationship between the Regional Planning and Development Board of the ARMM and NEDA Board); Executive Order 207 (providing for the representation of the ARMM in the formulation of social and

economic policies, plans and programs); Regional Act No. 4 (an act strengthening the operation of the Regional Planning and Development Board (REDPB) and creating the Regional Planning and Development Office (RPDO) to serve as the technical secretariat of the board) (<http://www.rpdoarmmgov.ph/>)

Such a plan is formulated for a long-term period. The formulation of its development plan is anchored to the vision, mission, and goals of the region. The RPDO “coordinates and attends to development needs/concerns of several Technical Board or inter-agency Council/Committees at the national, Mindanao, and regional level”. Conversely, “the REDPB as the mandated agency will formulate comprehensive and integrated regional development policies, plans, programs, and projects responsive to the needs, aspirations, and values of the people in the autonomous region” (<http://www.rpdoarmmgov.ph/rpdo/>).

Conclusion

The Regional Development Plan Midterm Update for 2013-2016 provides a glimpse into the current status of ARMM. Was there a development in terms of the political, economic, and social dimensions of development? Are these indicators enough to concede that such fruits of development have trickled down, especially in the rural areas? What other alternative reforms and innovations of the regional government will finally take off in the development process? Was there a consultation with grassroots stakeholders during the formulation of this development plan? What are the hindrances that have prevented this region from overcoming poverty, despite numerous efforts by the national government and the international community to improve its living conditions?

These are just a few of the questions that any student seeking an ideal development model might consider when assessing a development plan. In this case, ARMM still has a long way to go before it can achieve the pinnacle of development. That makes a development desirable. The initiatives of Gov. Hataman in reforming ARMM should be a collective action. Development is a multidimensional process where everyone in society should discharge their duties and responsibilities in the name of sustainable development. Discharging of duties and responsibilities is true to both 'those who are in the government' and 'outside the government'. Citizens' participation is also an essential ingredient for significant changes in the social structure, popular attitudes, and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of poverty. Through citizens' participation, we can strengthen our politico-administrative system by supporting the programs and aspirations of the government; promoting and maintaining peace in society; and engaging in activities that help sustain the available resources in ARMM.

On the other hand, even if society participates in the development process, if the people in the local government are reluctant to change, then the development plan will still be ineffective. The development plan serves as a guide that must be decided upon by the people as part of their social contract. After all, it is the public interest that must be considered first in every action and decision-making of our leaders.

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