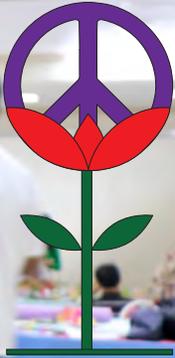


2018 ANNUAL PEACEBUILDING TRAINING REPORT

Creating a Culture of Peace
Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute



May 7 – 25, 2018
Mergrande Ocean Resort
Davao City, Philippines



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Director's Message

During the 19th Annual Peacebuilding Training with the theme “Creating a Culture of Peace,” the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute created the sacred space for 149 peacebuilders from around the world to share and learn together about how they can create a culture of peace in the face of world trends and movements that demonize and dehumanize “the other” out of fear and insecurity, and negate values of compassion, justice, respect and human dignity. MPI took to heart the United Nations Resolution 52/13 on the Culture of Peace, adopted on November 20, 1997, that called for nations to reject violence and build a culture of peace within their societies.

Through the collective efforts of facilitators, volunteers, partners and staff, MPI again fulfilled its mandate to build the capacities of individuals and their institutions for the creation of just and peaceful communities throughout Asia-Pacific and the world. By creating a welcoming and safe environment for all those who participated in the 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training, MPI nurtured the formation of strong and caring relationships that will sustain the 2018 alumni as they confront the culture of violence that permeates so much of the fabric of our societies.

Through this training, these peacebuilders have been equipped to tackle the root causes of conflict and to resolve differences through dialogue, active nonviolence, the arts, and religious traditions, creating the synergy to transform broken, oppressive relationships into liberating, just and respectful ones. They are now part of a critical mass of peacebuilders, intertwined and connected, strong and enduring, overcoming adversities and building peace. They have joined the MPI family and committed themselves to personal and communal transformation and to the recognition that we are all sisters and brothers, transcending the barriers of culture, religion, ethnicity and gender.

To all the participants, facilitators, volunteers, partners and staff, MPI extends its deepest gratitude and heartfelt thanks for making this year’s Annual Peacebuilding Training a resounding success!

Christine Vertucci
Director

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Introduction

Once again, the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute (MPI) brought together a diverse group of people from different walks of life and from different parts of the world to a place where they experienced practical, participatory, creative and meaningful learning about peacebuilding. A total of 149 individuals, 24 facilitators, 17 secretariat volunteers and staff, representing 27 countries from five continents participated in the 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training of the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute (MPI) in Davao City, Philippines, from May 7 – 25, 2018.

For the participants, it was such a moving and meaningful experience because of all the valuable learning they gained from the training and the new friendships that were formed, which crossed borders, religions and ethnicities. The participants were intensely engaged in the dynamic classroom activities, open sessions and one-on-one exchanges where they shared their experiences, knowledge and insights with each other. They were immersed in the process of learning and rediscovered their potential to be peacebuilders, using the acquired skills for self, community and organizational development. MPI never stops providing a safe space for everyone to nurture, grow, reflect and take action towards building just and peaceful communities.

The conduct of the 19th Annual Peacebuilding Training is yet another milestone for MPI as it continues moving forward towards its vision of a just and peaceful world through the collective effort of the MPI 2018 participants, facilitators, volunteers, and staff.



A QUICK LOOK AT THE STATS

Participants: 149



National: 89
Male: 66

International: 60
Female: 83



Christians: 106
Buddhists: 2

Muslims: 22
Hindus: 2

Facilitators: 24

National: 11
International: 13



2018 Secretariat Team: 17



10 Volunteers
7 MPI Staff

Organizations Represented: 64



Academe: 16
INGOs: 19
GOs: 4

Faith-Based: 10
NGOs: 9
Religious Insts: 6

MPI 2018 Courses and Facilitators

MPI offered 13 courses this year, which included one new course. Each course was taught by two and in some cases three facilitators. These courses are selected on the basis of their applicability, relevance, and necessity to and social impact on peacebuilding work. MPI also takes into consideration the recommendations and suggestions from the alumni and MPI's Board of Trustees in the process of designing and developing new courses.

For MPI 2018, there were 24 facilitators whom MPI invited from the Philippines and abroad, six of whom were new. MPI has a resource pool of seasoned international and national facilitators with expertise in various areas of peacebuilding and conflict transformation at both the academic and practical levels. MPI continues to seek new facilitators as a way to expand its resource pool and keep it dynamic. This year MPI tapped its alumni network, with four out of the six new facilitators being alumni of the Annual Peacebuilding Training Program. This is a clear example of how MPI strives to engage its alumni in a mutually beneficial process and actualizes its commitment to multiply its resources and sustain its work.



Week 1: May 7–11, 2018 | FOUNDATION COURSES

From Understanding to Action: Designing Conflict Sensitive Interventions (FUA)

Joan McGregor (South Africa/United Kingdom) and Phyu Sin Ngwethaw (Myanmar)

Fundamentals of Peacebuilding (FPB)

Paulo Baleinakorodawa (Fiji) and Miriam L. Suacito (Philippines)

Introduction to Conflict Transformation (ICT)

Wendy Kroeker (Canada) and Michael Frank A. Alar (Philippines)

Mainstreaming Peace Education in Communities and Schools (MaPEC)

Orson Sargado (Philippines) and Kathy Matsui (Japan)

Week 2: May 14 – 18, 2018 | THEMATIC & FIELD-BASED COURSES

Be the Change: Designing Transformative Justpeace through the Power of Nonviolence (ANV)

Jonathan Rudy (USA) and Mohaledin Ross Dimaukom (Philippines)

Bottom-Up Transformation: Experiences and Practices of Grassroots Peacebuilding in Mindanao (BT) (Classroom and Field-Based Course)

Catholic Relief Services Peacebuilding Team (Philippines) and MPI Partners

Conflict Resolution Skills: Mediation and Dialogue (CRS)

Paulo Baleinakorodawa (Fiji) and Wendy Kroeker (Canada)

Digital Peacebuilding and New Media (DPNM)

Zon Vanel (Indonesia) and Foundation for Media Alternatives Team (Philippines)

Understanding Culture and Identity as a Resource for Peacebuilding (UCIRP)

Joan McGregor (South Africa/United Kingdom) and Baht Latumbo (Philippines)

Week 3: May 21 – 25, 2018 | THEMATIC COURSES

Arts Approaches to Community-Based Peacebuilding (AACP)

Babu Ayindo (Kenya) and Kyoko Okumoto (Japan)

Dealing with Trauma in Times of Conflict (DTTC)

Gladston Xavier (India) and Florina Xavier (India)

Human Centered Security: Reimagining Conflict Stakeholder Relationships (HCS)

Jonathan Rudy (USA), Tala (Twinkle) Bautista and Rev. Fr. Noel R. Ponsaran (Philippines)

Interreligious Peacebuilding: Approaches for Cooperation, Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (IRPB)

Shamsia Ramadhan (Kenya), Jean Baptiste Talla (Cameroon) and Myla Leguro (Philippines)



New Course Offered at MPI 2018

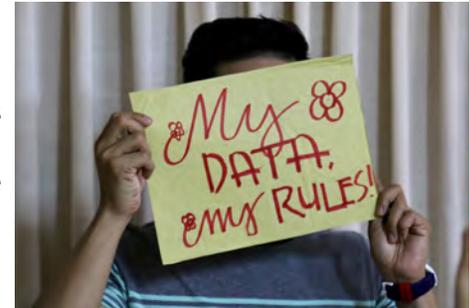
Digital Peacebuilding and New Media (DPNM)

“This course is useful in terms of peacebuilding needs regarding digital peacebuilding within CSOs’ landscape and awareness about it, in receiving concrete tools and applications, in having different perspectives on how we can bring this into our own organizations.”

A group of six persons coming from four countries explored together how media plays a role in peacebuilding efforts and development.

What was unique about DPNM?

- Provided a review of the recent technological developments with emphasis on safe and secure communication;
- Explored various digital platforms that offer security measures for those working in high-risk settings; and
- Presented the use of technology in peacebuilding work.



Who were the facilitators?

Zon Vanel, who is a lecturer at the Public Relations Program of the Information Technology Department at Satya Wacana University in Central Java, Indonesia and an alumna of MPI, was one of the two facilitators for this course. Zon has been developing a new approach in interreligious dialogue and intercultural dialogue by using new media and technology. She was joined by **Christina Lopez**, the Program Officer on Gender and Information and Communication Technology of the *Foundation for Media Alternatives (FMA)*. FMA is a non-profit NGO in the Philippines that focuses on giving assistance to individuals and groups in their strategic and appropriate use of different information and communications media for democratization and empowerment.

Foundation Courses

Courses at MPI are classified into three categories: foundation, thematic and field-based. Foundation courses are those that lay out the fundamental parameters, approaches and processes encompassed in the area of peacebuilding. This year, four foundation courses were offered in Week 1.



From Understanding to Action: Designing Conflict Sensitive Interventions (FUA)

“ The course provided analysis tools that are basic, yet can be a good foundation for a more robust programming in a conflict setting. Underlining the tools are good principles to take into account such as the sensitivity and complexity of the situation. A constant reminder of how change constantly happens in fragile settings is also very helpful to factor in dynamism and continuous learning. ”

Thirty individuals from nine countries gathered to learn about the different frameworks and approaches in designing appropriate conflict sensitive initiatives.

What was unique about FUA?

- Enhanced understanding of the range of interventions undertaken at different levels in complex and fragile situations;
- Provided various conflict analytical tools for assessing situations in order to design conflict sensitive interventions while also taking into account the Do No Harm concept; and
- Gave space for personal and organizational assessment.



Who were the facilitators?

On their third year, **Joan McGregor** and **Phyusin Ngwethaw** co-facilitated this course once again. Joan has been working in the field of conflict transformation for more than 40 years. She is currently working as a freelance conflict transformation practitioner and consultant. Co-facilitating with her was Phyusin, who is the Director of a local NGO in Myanmar and an MPI alumna. She facilitates program design, planning and evaluation of her organization’s development and humanitarian assistance projects.

Fundamentals of Peacebuilding (FPB)

“The course was interactive and participatory, which really encouraged everyone to participate, foster cooperation and build the spirit of camaraderie. It was well conceptualized.”

FPB had 29 people coming from seven countries, who learned about the basic concepts of peacebuilding in a dynamic classroom environment.

What was unique about FPB?

- Provided a comprehensive overview of peacebuilding;
- Tackled the theories, analyses and practice of peacebuilding at different levels—interpersonal, communal, and societal—as well as the dilemmas and challenges; and
- Assisted participants in developing a strategic framework for peacebuilding.



Who were the facilitators?

Paulo Baleinakorodawa and **Miriam “Deddette” L. Suacito** co-facilitated the FPB course. Deddette, who is one of MPI’s core facilitators, stepped in to replace **Maria Ida “Deng” L. Giguiento**, who was not able to facilitate due to medical reasons. Deddette is currently the Executive Director of Nagdilaab Foundation that focuses on community development and peacebuilding activities among Muslim communities in Basilan Province in Mindanao, Philippines. Paulo, who has facilitated at MPI since 2008, is the Executive Director and co-founder of Transcend Oceania in Fiji in the South Pacific.

Introduction to Conflict Transformation (ICT)

“ It really engages us to understand how conflict may be transformed in various ways and methods. We just have to open a new lens and see the number of possibilities in solving a conflict. ”

Twenty-eight people, representing seven countries, enthusiastically joined the ICT class this year to learn about conflict transformation and its role in peacebuilding.

What was unique about ICT?

- Presented a comprehensive introduction to the field of conflict transformation;
- Focused on the theoretical understanding of conflict and conflict transformation, including the application of conflict transformation in the field of peacebuilding; and
- Gave opportunities to practice and enhance skills on conflict transformation.



Who were the facilitators?

Wendy Kroeker and **Michael Frank A. Alar** co-facilitated ICT for six years now. They are known to be one of the most energetic pairs of MPI facilitators. Wendy is the Co-Director of the Canadian School of Peacebuilding and a faculty member of the Canadian Mennonite University and has facilitated at the Annual Peacebuilding Training since 2003. Mike is an Independent Consultant for the World Bank Philippines' Stability, Peace and Security team for its support to the Mindanao Peace Process and an MPI alumnus as well as former member of the Annual Peacebuilding Training secretariat team.

Mainstreaming Peace Education in Communities and Schools (MaPEC)

“ The teaching methods in mainstreaming Peace Education are very helpful and can be applied in our different activities (trainings and workshops), which bring awareness and promote human rights, gender equality, etc. in our community...”

In this class, a diverse group of 16 individuals from seven countries exchanged ideas on how to mainstream peace education in their context and build a culture of peace.

What was unique about MaPEC?

- Focused on approaches to develop a culture of peace as embodied in the UNESCO Program of Peace;
- Explored ways in mainstreaming peace education in both schools and communities; and
- Helped participants hone their competencies in developing and implementing peace-oriented programs in their respective organizations.

Who were the facilitators?

Orson Sargado is the Head of Office of Catholic Relief Services Philippines and serves as the Treasurer of MPI's Board of Trustees. **Kathy Matsui**, who co-facilitated this course with Orson, is a Professor at the Department of Global Citizenship Studies, Seisen University in Tokyo, Japan. She also is a key facilitator at the Northeast Asia Regional Peacebuilding Institute (NARPI), a sister institute of MPI, located in South Korea.



Thematic Courses

In Week 2 and 3, MPI offers thematic courses which expand and deepen the learning gained by participants during the first week. For MPI 2018, eight thematic courses were offered, four in Week 2 and four in Week 3. These courses present thematic topics in peacebuilding and its application and offer opportunities for skills development and practice.



Arts Approaches to Community-Based Peacebuilding (AAP)

“ It is a provocative approach to the needs of people. Made us aware of our surrounding and how best we can engage others in peace work but using a fun method or way that would generate more information and connection. It's the best. ”

There were 19 participants from nine countries who were exposed to the creative and artistic side of peacebuilding.

What was unique about AAP?

- Examined different theories of arts-based approaches to peacebuilding;
- Learned different art forms and how these intersect in building peace with community-based efforts; and
- Witnessed through a field visit with pioneering artists in Mindanao the intersection of arts and peacebuilding.

Who were the facilitators?

For six years, **Babu Ayindo** and **Kyoko Okumoto** have co-facilitated this course. Babu is a storyteller, teacher, facilitator, researcher and writer and has over two decades of experience in the field of arts and peacebuilding. Kyoko is a Professor of Peace Studies, Conflict Transformation and English Literature at Osaka Jogakuin University in Osaka, Japan. She is also one of the core facilitators at NARPI and the current Chairperson of NARPI's Steering Committee.



Be the Change: Designing Transformative Justpeace through the Power of Nonviolence (ANV)

“The course can really help us understand the importance of nonviolence in our life and the stories of success using nonviolence that were shared to us that touch our heart and give us encouragement to practice more nonviolence.”

From six countries, these 17 individuals learned the concepts and best practices of active nonviolence.

What was unique about ANV?

- Focused on the theories and strategies of active nonviolence;
- Highlighted personal transformation as a starting point for any nonviolence approach; and
- Helped participants design active nonviolence strategies according to their respective contexts.



Who were the facilitators?

Jonathan “Jon” Rudy and **Mohaledin Ross “Bobet” Dimaukom** teamed up for the first time to co-facilitate this course. Jon is the Peacemaker-in-Residence at Elizabethtown College in the USA. He has worked with communities around the world seeking to transform conflict and bring about social change for 30 years. 2018 marks Jon’s 16th year facilitating at MPI. Bobet is the Project Manager of the Cotabato City, Mindanao, Philippines, office of forumZFD, an international NGO. Since 2012, he has been connected to MPI as an alumnus and an Annual Peacebuilding Training secretariat volunteer.

Conflict Resolution Skills: Mediation and Dialogue (CRS)

“ The course is culturally sensitive; has personalized learner support; and uses participatory methods. ”

In this class, a total of 20 participants from eight countries equipped themselves with conflict resolution skills.

What was unique about CRS?

- Focused on imparting skills on mediation, dialogue and negotiation, including its conceptual framework;
- Provided skills on facilitation and other conflict resolution methods; and
- Included large and small group discussions, role plays, interactive exercises, and case analyses.

Who were the facilitators?

Paulo Baleinakorodawa and **Wendy Kroeker**, who were both facilitators of different courses in Week 1, combined their expertise to co-facilitate this skills course. Both Paulo and Wendy have extensive peacebuilding experience on the ground and in the classroom. Paulo has served as a specialist in various peacebuilding and development organizations and institutions, while Wendy has over 20 years of experience as a community mediator, conflict transformation trainer, peace program manager, and program manager for peace and development projects around the world.



Dealing with Trauma in Times of Conflict (DTTC)

“ What I like best about the course is that I am being able to be out from my comfort zone, being able to understand myself, being able to acknowledge that I too need some support and most especially I realized that I don't judge anyone/I am not being judgmental for the whole duration of our training. I loved them all wholeheartedly regardless of their color, smell or anything. I love the way they are. ”

Representing 10 countries, 17 individuals with their facilitators formed a safe space where they learned about dealing with trauma and how to heal themselves as well as others.

What was unique about DTTC?

- Focused on trauma healing: basic understanding, tools and skills in handling and breaking from the trauma;
- Explored personal trauma as an important component in understanding others' traumas; and
- Explored and experienced healing and reconciliation processes.

Who were the facilitators?

Gladston “Ashok” Xavier and **Florina Xavier** co-facilitated this course for the third year in a row. Ashok is the Head of the Social Work Department of Loyola College in Chennai, India. Florina has worked as a Program Adviser for Tabish, an NGO located in Afghanistan. Both of them conduct workshops on trauma awareness and recovery, psychological support, arts-based approaches to peacebuilding, and strategic planning and management.



Human Centered Security: Reimagining Conflict Stakeholder Relationships (HCS)

“ I like the description given by the facilitators, reimagining HCS from the perspective of stakeholders. From what we have discussed on power dynamics, certain barriers may stand in the way of the stakeholders that pose as blind spots of the government to the constituents it is supposed to serve, and in the context of the peace process, the peace actors that are part of the peace process. The course, through the team of facilitators led by Prof. Rudy, was able to highlight that, in peace work, it is always good to check your assumptions, look at the connections and the things that disconnect, as well as entry points that bridge the gap. ”

A group of 16 individuals from five countries learned together the essential components of human centered security: relationships, structures and cultures.

What was unique about HCS?

- Provided a nuanced understanding of the concepts of security and human centered security;
- Looked at best practices and successful implementation of a human centered security approach; and
- Gave space for participants to design take-away plans that enhance human centered security in their respective areas.

Who were the facilitators?

Jonathan “Jon” Rudy, the Senior Advisor for Human Security at the Alliance for Peacebuilding, was the lead facilitator of this course. MPI invited two new facilitators to be part of the facilitation team for 2018, **Rev. Fr. Noel R. Ponsaran**, an alumnus of MPI, and **Tala “Twinkle” Bautista**, a member of the Kalinga tribal community in Northern Luzon, Philippines. Fr. Noel is a Police Chaplain in the Philippine National Police, holding the position of Division Chief in the Spiritual Ministry and Pastoral Division. Tala is a community peacebuilder and member of the Peacebuilders Community, Inc., engaged in nonviolence training for the past seven years.



Interreligious Peacebuilding: Approaches for Cooperation, Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (IRPB)

“ [I liked] the sharing of best examples, personal experiences and applications of social cohesion and interfaith dialogue activities among the participants and the invited resource speakers. ”

An interesting group of 18 individuals from nine countries explored different processes on how to engage religious actors and institutions to support peace in settings where religion is a key factor in conflict and is a driving force for communal cooperation.

What was unique about IRPB?

- Explored the role of religion in promoting peace and its role in conflict and violence;
- Examined the different tools, theories and approaches of interreligious peacebuilding, and its application in various contexts; and
- Helped participants contextualize and plan for interreligious peacebuilding action in their respective communities.

Who were the facilitators?

Shamsia Ramadhan, Jean Baptiste Talla and **Myla Leguro** again co-facilitated this course as they had done in 2017. Shamsia works for Catholic Relief Services (CRS) based in Kenya and heads a multi-country interreligious peacebuilding project as the Program Manager. Jean is a member of the Africa Justice and Peace Working Group serving as CRS' Peacebuilding Advisor for Africa. Myla, the President of MPI's Board of Trustees, is the Program Director of a CRS global program on Advancing Interreligious Peacebuilding.



Understanding Culture and Identity as a Resource for Peacebuilding (UCIRP)

“ *The issue of culture and identity is seen as very relevant for peacebuilding work. It is a very powerful resource for peacebuilding. It is important to learn more about yourself and your own culture. Culture is not perfect.* ”

A diverse group of 24 participants from 11 countries journeyed together to explore their own identity and culture, and created a space to practice essential skills for cross-cultural communication.

What was unique about UCIRP?

- Explored the interplay of culture and identity as it relates to conflict and peacebuilding;
- Probed understanding of one’s culture and identity and how these can become tools for building peace; and
- Practiced cross-cultural communication as an approach in working in multi-cultural societies.



Who were the facilitators?

Since 2016, **Joan McGrgeor** and **Baht Latumbo** have co-facilitated this course. Joan is an experienced conflict transformation practitioner who has been engaged in this field for over 40 years, conducting trainings and undertaking consultancies in many parts of the world. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Birmingham in recognition of her contribution to conflict transformation internationally. Baht is presently with the International Center for Peace at Balay Mindanaw, a local partner of MPI. He is a well-respected consultant and trainer in the field of conflict transformation, peacebuilding and nonviolence advocacy, and one of the founding members of ACTION-Asia.

Field-Based Courses

Field-based courses provide learning opportunities for participants by engaging in real world communities where peacebuilding practices and initiatives are being implemented, challenged and refined. These courses draw on the diversity of peacebuilding initiatives present in Mindanao, Philippines, and help the participants consolidate their classroom-based learning. This year, one field-based course was included in the curriculum.



Bottom-Up Transformation: Experiences and Practices of Grassroots Peacebuilding in Mindanao (BT)

“ Great field experience. Visiting and even driving through the landscape of Mindanao provided us insights directly from the context; direct encounter with stakeholders; getting to know their different programs. ”

These 15 individuals from nine countries consolidated their learning from the classroom and related it to the real context on the ground. They listened to the community peace actors’ testimonials and struggles in sustaining their peacebuilding efforts, exchanged ideas, and learned about how these communities met their challenges.

What was unique about BT?

- Combined classroom and field-based learning that explored best practices of grassroots peacebuilding in Mindanao;
- Provided an opportunity to interact with community peace actors engaged in grassroots peacebuilding initiatives; and
- Applied their learning from the course to concrete initiatives implemented in the field.



Who were the facilitators?

James Baay and **Alexandra Medina**, staff from Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Philippines Peacebuilding Team and graduates of MPI, jointly facilitated this course. James is engaged in the development and implementation of CRS’ peace training platform. Alexandra is responsible for managing programs funded by international donors as well as connecting CRS with various program partners. The two facilitators have extensive grassroots peacebuilding experience in Mindanao.

MPI 2018 Secretariat

The Annual Peacebuilding Training is like a jigsaw puzzle that is completed by putting together all its pieces in order to assemble a beautiful creation. One of the most important pieces is the secretariat team, without which the training would not be successful. Each year, MPI recruits volunteers interested in peacebuilding as members of the secretariat team for the Annual Peacebuilding Training. These volunteers serve as class assistants, class documenters, social/special events coordinators, and photographers/videographers. MPI provides this avenue as a training ground for volunteers to enhance their knowledge and skills about peacebuilding, learn from their interactions with participants from diverse religions and cultural backgrounds, and develop their confidence and character.

In 2018, the secretariat team was composed of 10 volunteers and seven MPI staff, who worked together collaboratively to organize the training as well as accommodate the needs and concerns of the participants during the training. Of the 10 volunteers, nine were Filipinos from the cities of Cotabato, Davao, Marawi, Midsayap, and Zamboanga and the province of Maguindanao, and one was an international volunteer from Canada. Everyone came from diverse backgrounds, varied educational experiences, and different international and local non-governmental organizations.

Prior to the actual training, the secretariat had a team building session to emphasize the importance of teamwork, camaraderie and the ability to solve problems in a culturally sensitive way. It was followed by an orientation for everyone to better understand their tasks and responsibilities expected of them during the training.

The secretariat team's untiring support, passion, dedication and commitment were one of the key pieces that made this year's Annual Peacebuilding Training a success.



MPI 2018: The Participants

One hundred forty-nine participants coming from all walks of life gathered and learned together during the three-week long 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training in Davao City, Philippines.

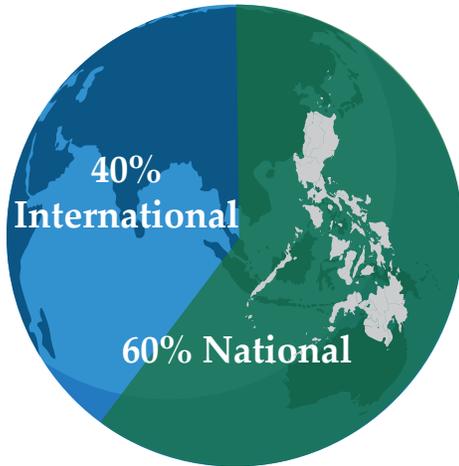
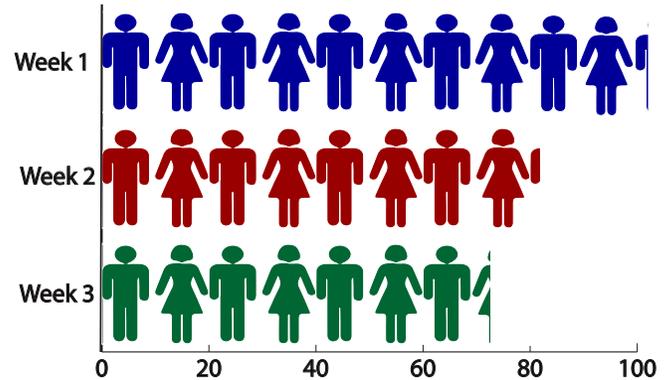
The **Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP)** of the Philippines sent a total of 50 employees from various offices around the country to take one peacebuilding course over the three-week period, with Week 1 having the largest number of OPAPP staff. **Mennonite Central Committee**, one of the international organizations that supported the establishment of MPI, sent 18 staff from MCC program offices and partners in Asia to participate in MPI 2018. Ten educators from four Asian countries received scholarships from the **United Board of Christian Higher Education in Asia** to attend courses for the entire three weeks. **Catholic Relief Services (CRS)** Philippines also supported three of their staff and two individuals from their partner communities to join the training. Also, **Mensen met een Missie**, a Dutch Catholic organization, supported five participants from their partner networks to attend the MPI 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training.



MPI 2018 by the Numbers

Participants per Week

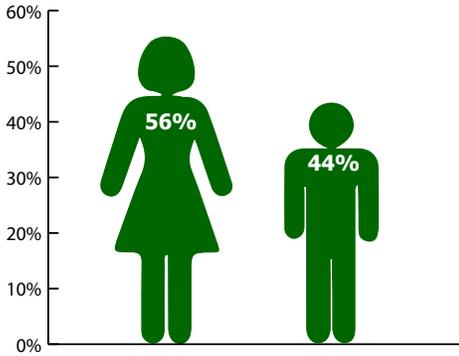
Of the 149 participants, 103 participants attended Week 1, 82 in Week 2 and 73 in Week 3. The participants had the option to attend for just one, two or all three weeks, depending on what interested them most.



National vs. International

This year, the number of Filipino participants exceeded that of international participants, as they did in 2017, but with a decrease of 7%. Last year, Filipinos represented 67% of the total number of participants, but this year, they only represented 60%. As was noted last year, the trend up until 2016 was the reverse, with internationals outnumbering Filipinos. With organizations like OPAPP sending more participants, Filipinos have been the majority.

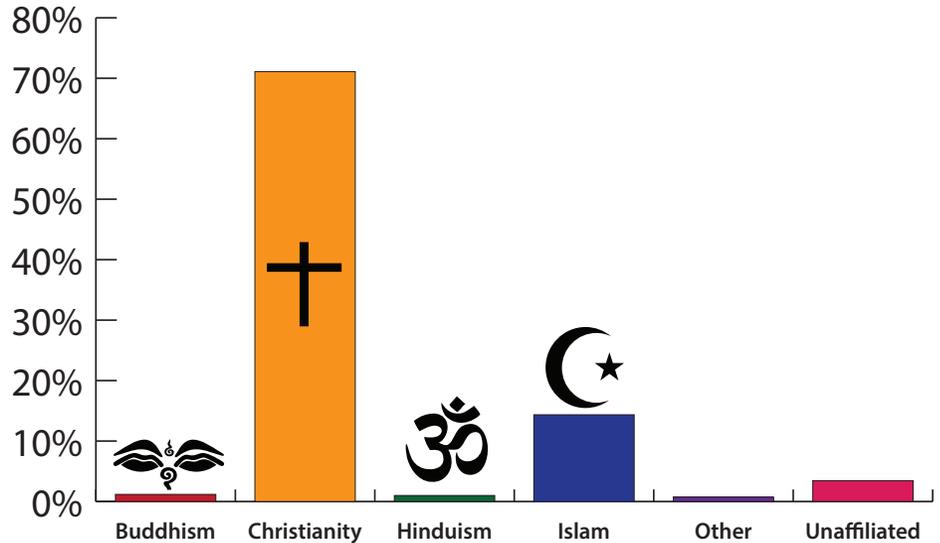
Gender Distribution of Participants



This year, women outnumbered men at the 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training, with female participants representing 56% of the total number of participants and men only at 44%.

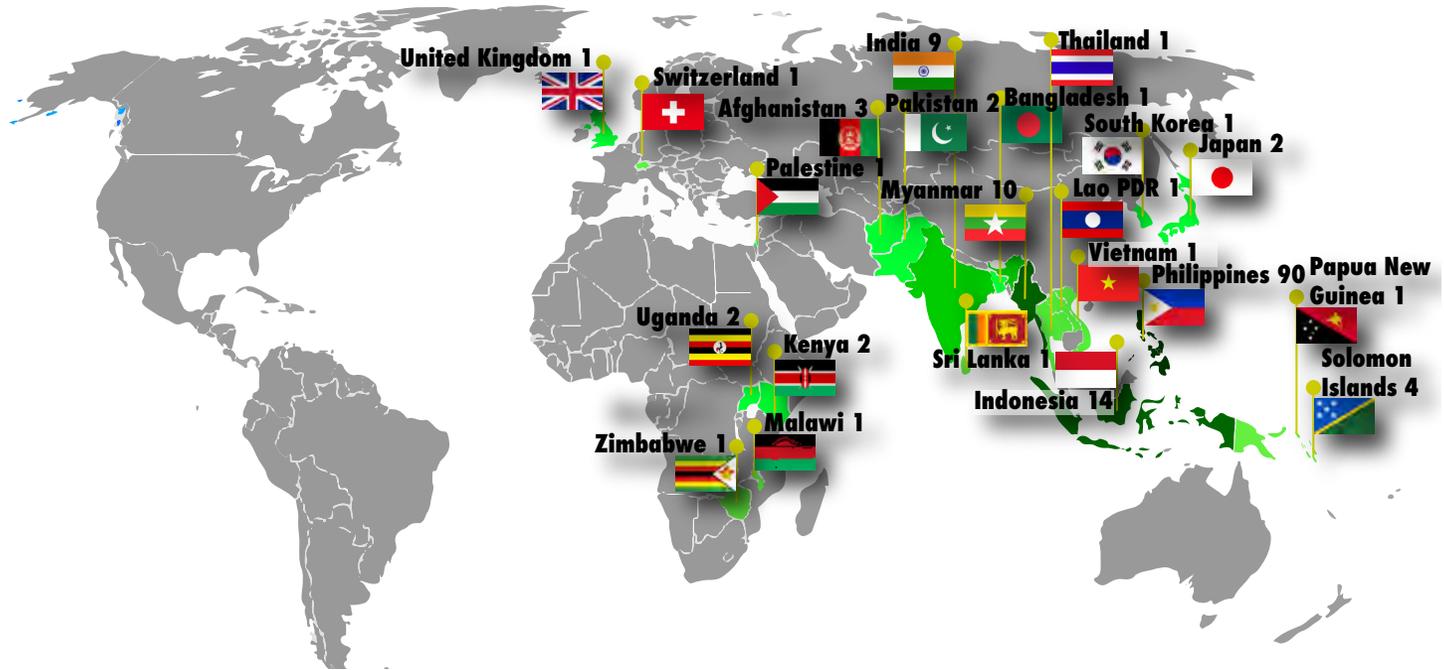
Participants by Religion

For the MPI 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training, the majority of the participants were Christians at 71%, up by 10% from last year. Muslims followed at 15% of the total population. One possible reason for the decrease in Muslim participants could have been due to the fact that Ramadan started in Week 2.



Participants by Country

There were 22 countries, including the Philippines, represented at the MPI 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training. These are shown below with the corresponding number of participants present by country.



Organizations by Sector

Sixty-four organizations from six sectors sent participants to MPI 2018, with the international non-governmental sector topping the list with 19 organizations.

INGOs 19 **NGOs 9**
Faith-based 10 **Religious Institutions 6**
Academe 16
Governmental Institutions 4



MPI 2018: Learning Engagements Outside the Classroom

Opening Ceremonies

Kabilin Mindanaw, a dynamic performing arts youth group from Cabantian National High School in Davao City, brought beautiful traditional Filipino and Indigenous dances, music and vigor to the opening ceremonies of the 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training as they welcomed everyone with beautiful and vibrant colors and movements and earth-shattering sounds. The participants enjoyed the vitality and energy that permeated these performances and brought to life the diversity of the Philippines.

The opening ceremonies are never complete without the *Parade of Nations*, where participants, accompanied by the *Kabilin Mindanaw* members, are welcomed into the activity hall. It has been a longstanding tradition of MPI as a way of acknowledging those who are present and the countries they represent. The Parade of Nations is a symbolic way of receiving the participants into the sacred space of openness and respect.

During every opening ceremony, messages are given by notable speakers to inspire the participants as they begin their week full of intense learning and sharing of experiences. Invited inspirational speakers for MPI 2018 were MPI facilitators **Kathy Matsui** (Week 1), **Zon Vanel** (Week 2), and **Gladston Xavier** (Week 3), all of whom shared words of wisdom and stories to inspire participants on how to be agents of change and peace.

“ MPI reminds us that the future is in our hands and teaches us to make the right choices. ”

Kathy Matsui

“ Peacebuilders need to be creative. Peacebuilders need to be the reference points for action. ”

Ashok Xavier



Open Sessions

MPI creates a less formal avenue for those who wish to gather, learn and share together through Open Sessions. These are evening presentations after the formal classes where participants, facilitators, and even the MPI secretariat organize sessions or workshops to share about their culture, traditions, history, current situation and other issues that interest them.

During the first week of this year's training, MPI organized a session on the History of Mindanao to enable the participants, especially the internationals, to have an understanding of the conflict and current peace processes underway. In a systematic and comprehensive manner, journalist and human rights activist, **Mags Maglana** traced the history of Mindanao from the pre-colonial era to the present, explaining the root causes of the conflict in Mindanao and its impact on today's complex realities.



During Week 2, participants had the opportunity to hear about the history and current situation in Palestine. **Marcelle Zoughbi**, a student of Masters of Global Affairs at the University of Notre Dame in the USA, shared her personal experiences and perspectives about the situation in Palestine as well as her peacebuilding efforts. During the same week, **PK Madheswari**, assistant professor and head of the Department of Media Studies at Christ University in India, showed a series of video clips about and led a discussion on the conflict between humans and animals and the effect on our environment.



During Week 3, there was a film showing of an inspirational documentary entitled "Peace in our Pockets." The documentary showed how Kenyan activists used the SMS text-messag-

ing platform as a way to promote civic engagement during the 2013 national elections. This session was facilitated by **Rolax Onyiego**, governance and economic justice program officer of the Inter-Religious Council of Kenya.

The participants and the MPI secretariat showed great support for the open sessions through their attendance and their interactive participation during the question and answer periods.

Marawi Commemoration

In the midst of MPI's 2017 Annual Peacebuilding Training, the Philippine Government declared martial law for all of Mindanao on May 23, 2017. The declaration was prompted by an eruption of fighting and violence between government forces and a militant group called the Maute in Marawi City in northwestern Mindanao that lasted for months. This unexpected event is now referred to as "the Marawi Siege." The military responded with great force. Thousands were displaced; innocent civilians were killed; and homes and businesses were destroyed. Many residents who evacuated are in still in evacuation centers or living with relatives. Several peacebuilders attending the 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training were directly and indirectly affected by this tragedy.

On the anniversary of that unfortunate event on May 23, 2018, MPI organized a solemn remembrance and reflection about the Marawi Siege for the participants so that those who were involved in recovery, assistance and peacebuilding efforts could share how they were affected by these events, what they felt, and what their hopes were for the future. This event was facilitated by **Gladston** and **Florina Xavier**, MPI's facilitators for the Trauma Healing course. Those who participated were grateful to MPI for providing them the space to share their deep feelings about what happened and to feel the support and concern of their fellow peacebuilders.



Closing Ceremonies

The closing ceremony that is held on the last day of each week is, at the same time, a festive and solemn conclusion of the week's training. The highlights are the class presentations where the participants artistically and resourcefully present the insights and knowledge gained through their five-day courses. This year the classes used mime, music, dance and skits to convey the essence of their learning and left the audience in awe of what they had created. Another feature of the closing ceremony are the testimonials. Participants from Afghanistan, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and Vietnam shared their reflections about the training and their gratitude to be part of this inspiring endeavor. To close the evening, everyone bid farewell to those participants who would not be returning for the following week, sending them off with a stronger commitment to continue their work for justice and peace.

This year, MPI integrated the weekly cultural celebrations into the closing ceremonies. In between the class presentations and testimonials, participants celebrated their cultures, traditions and identities through folk songs and dances, storytelling, and a display of traditional clothes.



“ Since the time I came to this place at MPI, I learned a lot. First, the manner as to how we sleep, I expected to be assigned in my personal room. But, what I appreciate now is how MPI assigned people from different nations, people from different continents to share the same room. It was a learning point for me. It showed me that for peace to be achieved, we need to put aside our differences. ”

John Ojao

Weekend Outings

During the 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training, MPI organized weekend outings for the participants so that they would be able to see the famous sights and attractions of Davao City. For two weekends, participants were able to relax and enjoy some of the popular sites in the city. On the first weekend, participants went to Eden Nature Park and Resort, a mountain resort and ecological sanctuary, where they enjoyed walking on nature trails, exploring the butterfly and aviary centers, and riding the zip line. The following weekend, participants were taken on an island-hopping tour where they swam in the crystal clear waters of the Davao Gulf, admired the beautiful corals, and frolicked in the sun, surf and sand of Samal Island. It was a refreshing break from the intensity of the weeks' courses for the participants to see and enjoy the wonders of Davao City.



MPI 2018 Public Forum

Creating a Culture of Peace was the theme of the 8th MPI Annual Training Public Forum where speakers and participants explored the underlying cultural values and norms that concretize a culture of peace, especially given the level of violence in our world. The United Nations in 1997 stated that a culture of peace “consists of values, attitudes and behaviors that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy ...”



The keynote speaker of this year’s public forum was **Professor Rufa Cagoco-Guam**, a retired professor from Mindanao State University in General Santos City, Mindanao. Though retired, she continues to work for, speak about and write on peace and development issues. Professor Guiam approached the topic from what might be considered the “opposite direction.” She focused much of her presentation on the “culture of violence.” In particular, she discussed the rise of authoritarianism and “strongman” rule. Thus, Professor Guiam concluded that achieving a culture of peace requires countering the culture of violence.

Following Professor Guiam’s speech was a panel discussion. The three panelists were from among the participants of this year’s Annual Peacebuilding Training, working with different non-governmental organizations. **Vanlizar Aung** of *Women for the World* in Myanmar shared how their work with housing was a way to develop a culture of peace. Their organization not only addresses the felt needs of displaced communities, but also promotes inclusive processes where those affected feel they have a stake in the developments that affect their communities, transforming conflict into local development.



Mary Mamatau from Bougainville/Papua New Guinea discussed her work with the *Bougainville Refer-*



endum Dialogue Project. Mary emphasized the importance of working with women in creating a culture of peace. **Harriet Ahalo**, who works with the *Kenya Community Support Centre*, talked about her work with youth. For Harriet, youth must be involved in any process that attempts to create a culture of peace. However, she added that their work also includes the community and the security sector, thus building trust at all three levels.



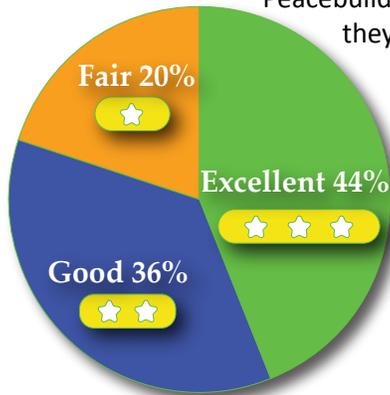
An interactive and lively open forum followed the panel discussion, which was moderated by MPI facilitator **Wendy Kroeker**. She summarized the key points of the discussion and added her own insights as she closed the forum.



MPI 2018 Participants' Thoughts

Out of the 124 respondent-participants, who completed the Institute Evaluation, 44% expressed that their overall experience at the MPI 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training was excellent and 36% said it was very good. Although most of the participants appreciated the training, MPI noted that there is room for improvement, especially with respect to meal planning, accommodations and weekend outings. The respondents enjoyed the space given to them to interact with other participants and the opportunity to enhance their own skills and capacities. They commended and appreciated the secretariat team's effort in planning and conducting the training.

Most of the respondents said they plan to echo what they have learned to their colleagues and co-workers and that they would integrate the knowledge and skills gained from the training into their respective fields of interest. What they learned during the Annual Peacebuilding Training will help them to design projects or programs with a peacebuilding lens and improve how they conduct trainings and other activities. The majority of the respondents found the MPI 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training to be an amazing journey that touched their lives, and a reflection of what they can do better personally and in their own organizations.



MPI is very grateful for the suggestions and recommendations of the alumni as this helps in improving the services, the courses, and the overall training. The warm messages and the beautiful friendships created encourage the MPI facilitators, staff and volunteers to continue bringing together peacebuilders from all walks of life for such trainings.

“ [I] had a wonderful time in this training. It has changed my view of many things in many ways. I would request you to continue this amazing journey of touching an individual's life and thus creating a generation of changes/initiatives/improvements all around the world. Let the light shine upon you in the darkest of places.

Smarika Lawrance



Conclusion

“ MPI has created a space for peacebuilders around the world to nurture their skills, technical capacities and knowledge; also [MPI] provides an environment where peacebuilders can rejuvenate their soul and strengthen their emotions, to explore and realize their potentials ... ”

The Annual Peacebuilding Training is a place where participants, facilitators, volunteers and staff gather together in a safe environment for learning and self-transformation. It is a place for reflection about and understanding of complex issues and concerns that threaten the life of the planet. It is a place for renewing one’s commitment to work for peace and to live out a culture of peace.

To the participants:

Every one of you who was part of the training brought with you all the things you learned and all the friendships you gained to your home, your work place and your community; and now you are using all of these to further strengthen your efforts in paving the way towards just and peaceful communities. As one of MPI’s facilitators said, “You are the seed of peace; you are the source of the tree of peace.” You have been nurtured with knowledge and skills that you shall not keep for yourselves, but instead share with others so the hard work for peace will be multiplied wherever you may be.

Stay strong, motivated and inspired, peacebuilders. May you all be the inspiration and change that our world so urgently needs!

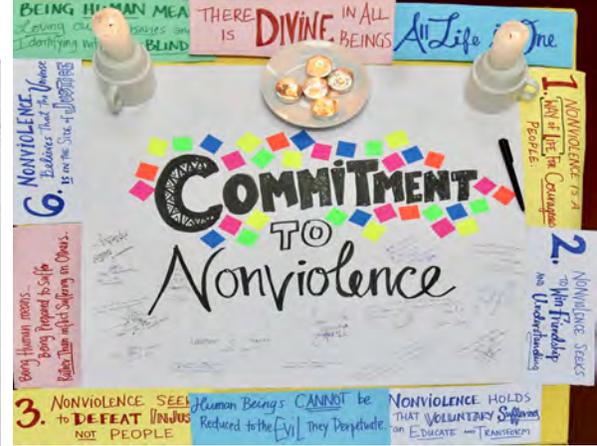


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Since 1922



**Mindanao
Peacebuilding
Institute
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PHILIPPINES**



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