

January - June 2018
Volume IV, Issue 1

Binnadang

The official publication of the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera

A photograph showing three men working on a wooden structure, possibly a fence or a small building, in a rural setting. The man on the left is wearing a red cap and a grey shirt. The man in the middle is wearing a maroon shirt and is using a long wooden pole to work on the structure. The man on the right is wearing an orange cap and a blue shirt with 'OFFICE' written on it, and is using a tool to work on the structure. The structure is made of wood and has barbed wire attached to it. There are blue pipes and wooden planks scattered around the base of the structure. The background shows trees and a dirt path.

People's Project
in Abang

Binnadang is the official publication of the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera, Inc.

Binnadang is a word used by the Bontoc Kankana-ey in the Cordillera, northern Philippines for labour cooperation. This concerted action by community members is mainly applied in agriculture and community gatherings.

BinnadangSTAFF

Rhoda Dalang
Executive Director

Ann Loreto Tamayo
Editor

April Baladad
Mathet Basia
Lydia Boclig
Marvin Canyas
Blessy Jane Eslao
Julie Mero
Charmagne Rimando
Research and Write-up

Angelica Maye Lingbawan Yap-eo
Lay out and Cover Design

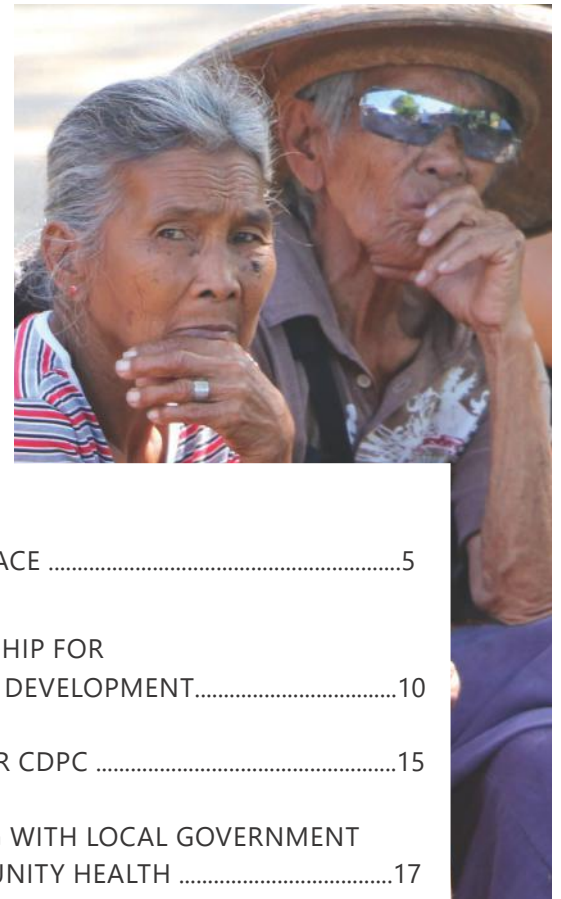
The contents of this publication may be referred to or reproduced without the permission of CDPC as long as the source is duly acknowledged, reference is accurate, reproduction is in good faith, and the work is properly cited.

This publication is supported by SOLIDAGRO and the Province of East Flanders (PEF), Belgium.

The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of SOLIDAGRO and PEF.

Contact Details

Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera, Inc. (CDPC)
#362 Cathedral of the Resurrection Church (EDNCP) compound
Lower Magsaysay Avenue, Baguio City 2600,
Cordillera Administrative Region, Northern Luzon, Philippines
cdpc.envi@gmail.com; cdp_kordilyera@yahoo.com
cdpckordi@cdpckordilyera.org
Telefax No: (+63) (74) 424-3764
cdpckordilyera.org



TALKING PEACE5

A PARTNERSHIP FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.....10

A PEARL FOR CDPC15

PARTNERING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT
FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH17

SIN'S* DEADLY SINS21

ACTIVISM IS
NOT TERRORISM23

REMEMBERING THEM
AND THEIR LEGACY26

SEEING RED even when it's yellow or blue

Red is a color. But to certain government sectors, it means politically subversive. What the military and some local governments say is red however is not always red.

Consider:

Labelled red are socio-economic projects that people's organizations develop for survival in interior Cordillera villages. These projects mean potable water, irrigation for fields, tools to farm, seeds, ducks and chickens to raise—and thus more food and better health for the local people. What these bring are essentials of everyday living that any community needs to survive.

Tagged red are the community men and women who initiate these projects on their own wits, abilities and resources. They expend time and effort to learn what it takes to organize themselves, to build an organization and to undertake an economic endeavor that addresses their foremost need and often serves the entire community. In the process they realize their potentials and capacities to solve and act collectively on common problems.

Branded red are development organizations that enable these communities with knowledge and skills to establish their own organizations capable of planning and managing projects that improve their lives. They engender collaboration and partnership for the common welfare of the community.

A result is a people enlightened and empowered. A people that know their rights. Communities that have found their voice and thus no longer silent, passive. They are a people that question government misdeed or inaction and demand accountability.

People's empowerment is not red. It is democracy at work. It is what makes it thrive.

Talking Peace

BY CHARMAGNE RIMANDO

The Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC) and its partner people's organizations (POs) are working towards the realization of prosperity, peace and security in the province of Abra. Unfortunately the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and some Local Government Units (LGUs) have labelled these initiatives as “unfriendly” and CDPC services as terrorist activities. Some PO leaders are continually maligned, politically vilified, threatened and at risk of being jailed, assassinated or forcibly disappeared. A number of LGUs have also signified refusing CDPC services to implement projects in certain communities such as in Tubo municipality.

Hence, CDPC organized a forum last February 20 in the provincial capital of Bangueo to discuss the human rights, peace and security challenges in Abra. The forum brought together various stakeholders—government agencies, communities, and NGOs and advocates—to find ways, especially those in government who can help communities in moving forward in the quest for prosperity, peace, and development in the province.

No peace

An issue that stood out was the lack of security in communities and vilification of people's organizations and their development projects.



PO members: no peace in communities



Women on left: members of Maeng Batayan Farmers Association in Beew, Tubo, a militarized area since 1990s

Jerome Agaid, a community representative from Malibcong municipality, talked about the AFP's aerial bombing on March 16, 2017 between the boundaries of Sitio Putol, Sitio Matalibeng and Bangilo that burned a

vast tract of forest land. The bombing disrupted farming activities and affected water resources as well as food and income sources resulting from the loss of forest products and wild animals. Four years earlier on May 31, 2013, the

AFP also bombed a part of Malibcong that almost injured two minors and put communities in grave danger.

Agaid, a member of the municipalwide Mabaka Banao Gubang Organization (MABAGU), asked the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) to issue a statement calling for a stop to AFP's use of aerial bombs in combat operations. "There is no certainty that the target of either an aerial bomb or an M203 grenade is the New People's Army. What is certain is that we are the victims," Agaid declared.

He also called on the Commission on Human Rights-Cordillera Administrative Region (CHR-CAR) to conduct a speedy and impartial investigation into last year's bombing incident in Malibcong with corresponding action.

Matnao Baluga, also from Malibcong, attested that AFP

vilification of development projects of CDPC's PO partners as supported by, if not, for the support of the New People's Army (NPA) has impaired his community's development partnership with CDPC. The red tagging of CDPC projects has alarmed community members, making them reluctant to use the farm tools and rice tillers provided by CDPC to help them address the glaring lack of basic social services in their village.

Sharing the same sentiments, Feriam Magallis from Lacub municipality recalled the military harassment he encountered in 2010 when community members were accused of implementing projects of the NPA. The water system, rice mills, and irrigation¹ projects, which improved their community life, were implemented with the support of CDPC.

Estela Lomioan reported similar constraints for her municipalwide PO, Salakniban Pita Takay (SAPIT),

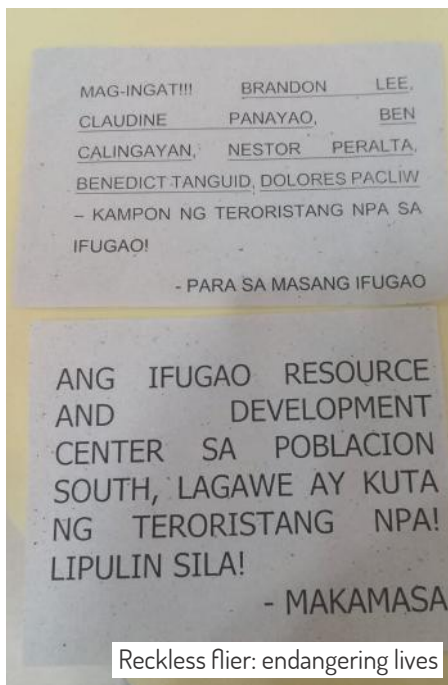
stemming from local government actions restraining PO activities in Sallapadan town. A memorandum allegedly issued by the provincial office of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) to the Sallapadan municipal local government unit (LGU) bans participation of the local people in people's organizations and NGOs.

Lomioan, who chairs SAPIT, said she heard of a similar situation occurring in Tubo municipality. She further shared that Abra Governor Maria Jocelyn Bernos warned she would not provide the International Revenue Allotment (IRA) of barangays who participate in the SAPIT assembly.

She thus called on NCIP and CHR-CAR to investigate and act on whether the DILG and LGUs have the mandate to issue memorandums banning participation in POs and NGOs and whether these acts are legal and just.



Government responds: (from left) Representatives of CAR, NCIP, CHR, NEDA, Lower house



“These POs and NGOs are providing services which the government fails to provide. Why is the government rejecting much needed support?” Lomioan said.

Response

In response CHR-CAR regional director Atty. Romel Daguiomol recommended holding a community-based dialogue with the AFP and Philippine National Police to immediately respond to the reported human rights violations. Dr. Milagros Rimando, Regional Director of National Economic Development Authority-Cordillera Administrative Region (NEDA-CAR) also proposed a dialogue with concerned government agencies such as DILG, noting that conflicts in the area put development projects at risk.

Engineer Delfin Turqueza of NCIP-Abra suggested using the Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative (IPMR) in the LGUs to bring up the issues of communities. For her part Gabriela Women’s Partylist (GWP) Representative Arlene Brosas

committed to pass a resolution in the Lower House prohibiting phosphorous and aerial bombings. But she encouraged the affected communities to gather complete details of the bombing incident to build a stronger basis for the resolution.

On the issue of LGU’s prohibiting development cooperation between communities and CDPC, Beverly Longid of the Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL) said that the community people can assert and question the basis of such decision. She said the community should not stop from demanding delivery of much needed services from the government. She recommended that NCIP respond to the situation of indigenous peoples by issuing statements on events that need a definite stance from the agency.

Tim de Roeck, Director of Solidagro, a development partner of CDPC, emphasized the need to support people’s organizations to take up

the right and ask their LGUs to multiply the projects and programs that will help in developing their community. He admired the courage portrayed by the leaders of these organizations amid the issues of militarization.

Deputy Eddy Couckuyt of the Development Cooperation, Tourism, Youth, and Welfare of the Province of East Flanders (PEF) in Belgium said that their support for CDPC projects is within the framework of human rights approach to development, thus empowering communities is essential. He said that the vilification experienced by the people, their communities and organizations is also a vilification of the support of CDPC and PEF.

Couckuyt committed to maximize the engagement of the Belgian Embassy in Manila to raise awareness on the issues confronting communities in Abra. Stressing the importance of partnership for sustainable development, Counselor and Deputy Head of Mission of the Belgium Embassy Xavier Leblanc asked PEF, Solidagro



and the POs to continue and cherish their partnership.

Peace dialogue

An offshoot of the Abra forum was a dialogue on peace and development initiated last May 2 by the Regional Development Council (RDC)-CAR as proposed by NEDA's Dr. Rimando. The dialogue aimed to broaden the discussion among national government line agencies, LGUs and civil society on development issues raised in the forum to better understand and respond to the concerns and needs of conflict-affected communities in the region.

Reiterated in the dialogue were rights violations and red-tagging and vilification of CDPC and PO leaders and members which hinder implementation of development programs that could help communities. Nestor Peralta from Tinoc, Ifugao and secretary general of the Ifugao Peasant Movement (IPM) showed fliers disparaging IPM leaders and organizers as terrorists.

Their projects were also tagged by government as supported by the NPA. Some community people as a result were terrified to participate in the projects which could actually benefit them.

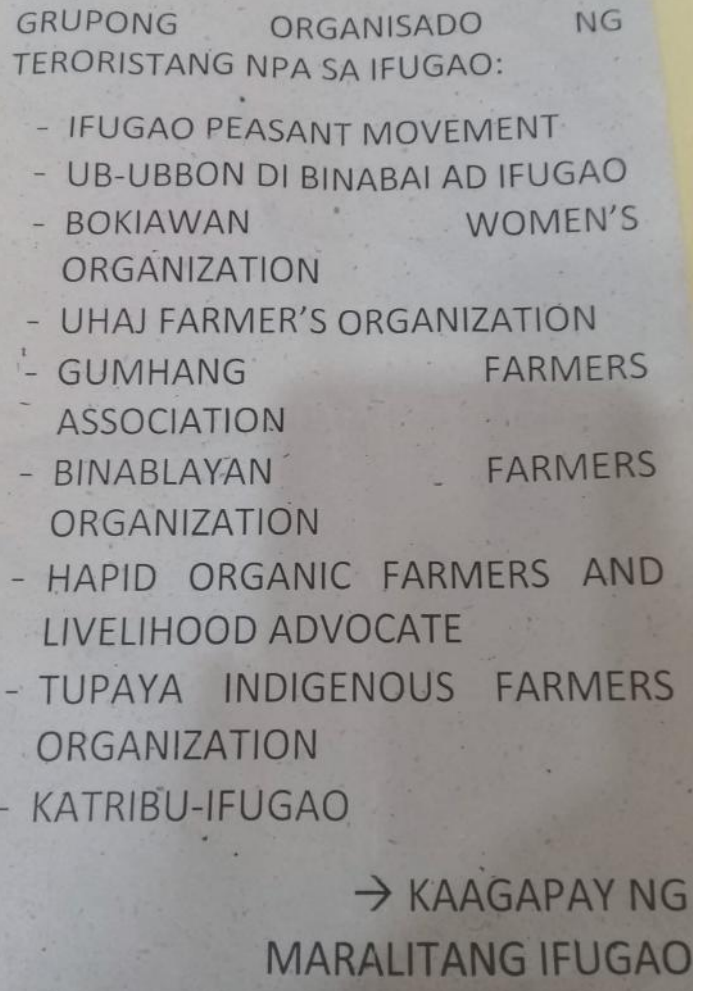
Peralta also reported the extrajudicial killing of Ricardo Mayumi, an IPM leader who led farmers organizations in protesting the Quadriver Mini-hydro dam in Tinoc. Mayumi was shot dead last March 2 in sitio Angadal in Kiangan, Ifugao by at least two men.

The 4.5 megawatt minihydro project of Ayala Corporation and Santa Clara Company is opposed by

the local people due to its negative impact on farming lands. But government officials allege such local opposition to have NPA support.

Rita Cayandag, a member of the Batayan Farmer's Association (BFA) in Tubo, Abra, exposed military intimidation and its consequences in her community. She related that on November 21, 2017, AFP elements threatened the people of Sitio Batayan, saying they would not hesitate to bomb the community if their soldiers faced any harm. They claimed having a list of individuals and organizations supporting the NPA, but the community elders asserted that the organizations were legal and help in community development.

Considering the threats, Tubo municipal officials compelled the community to stop asking assistance from NGOs like CDPC and to suspend the programs and activities of BFA. This is a similar circumstance that



Red scare unleashed

▀▀ Tubo municipal officials compelled the community to stop asking assistance from NGOs like CDPC and to suspend the programs and activities of BFA.

Estela Lomioan referred to in the Abra forum. The IPM and BFA are partner POs of CDPC.

The CDPC representative confirmed that Tubo municipal officials barred them from entering their project areas in Tubo and in Patungcaleo, Quirino and are no longer allowed to

provide development services there. The organization revealed that permission from the Governor is still needed even if CDPC already has an accreditation permit from the Abra Governor's office. Such experiences of vilification also reaffirmed the testimonies of Matnao Baluga and Ferriam Maggallis in the Abra forum.

Related human rights issues were raised by other community representatives and organizations. Gener Dao-ay from Kalinga recounted the arrest of Marcos Aggalao, an ex-NPA member on September 10, 2016, during a ceasefire between the AFP and NPA during a resumption of peace talks between the government and the National Democratic Front (NDF).

The detention of Aggalao, a retired NPA member and thus a civilian during his arrest and a senior citizen in poor health, was a violation of the International Humanitarian Laws (IHL). Abigail Anongos of the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA) further raised the Department of Justice (DOJ) terrorist list that includes seven Cordillera activists and deems political dissent as a criminal activity.

The CPA appealed to the RDC-NEDA CAR to issue a resolution supporting CPA's call for the terror list to be revoked and names of Cordillera activists delisted, similar to the resolutions and statement of support passed by the Councils of Baguio City, Sagada Municipal LGU, Mountain Province Provincial LGU and Episcopal Church of the Philippines.

Call to government

As a way forward to peace and development, the PO and NGO

representatives called on RDC and NEDA to support the initiatives of small farmers for self-determined sustainable development and to help people's organizations put a stop to the vilification against them.

These forums can serve as starting points for sustained engagement with concerned government agencies.

To foster a respectful and enabling space for NGOs to work and to protect them from political persecution, they also called for the following measures: to issue a resolution calling for scrapping the DOJ petition tagging Cordillera activists as terrorists; to call for a public consultation on the Chico River Pump Irrigation Project; and to support the resumption of peace talks with the National Democratic Front.

Another proposed measure is for DILG to issue a written document that NGOs such as CDPC can use and refer to should they again experience being banned by LGUs from entering and providing services to far-flung communities. The DILG clarified that it did not issue any memorandum prohibiting NGOs to implement projects and suggested that concerned NGOs and LGUs have an internal discussion about this issue.

The LGUs were further asked to set up human rights committees to address issues on human rights violations to be monitored by DILG. Dr Rimando

committed to present these concerns in the next RDC meeting.

A series of activities and dialogues will follow, which private sector representatives were encouraged to initiate, to address issues on peace and development in the Cordillera. The documentation of the dialogue would serve as a basis for discussion.

The Abra forum and the Cordillera dialogue were avenues for community representatives to make known their negative experiences in development, peace and security in their communities.

These experiences showed how the stark lack of social services fostered a development partnership between people's organizations and CDPC and how it has been seriously impeded by political vilification by AFP and some LGUs. As a result, the people's right to development is thwarted.

While concerned government agencies have yet to respond to the various recommendations forwarded by the communities, CDPC and CPA, these forums can serve as starting points for sustained engagement with them.

What is clear from the one-day dialogue is the reality of the absence of peace and maldevelopment when there is no respect for people's rights.

A partnership for sustainable development

BY BLESSY JANE ESLAO



Cordillera communities. Belgium's Province of East Flanders (PEF). Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC). Every 2-3 years these three groups come together when an official delegation from PEF travels to the Cordillera to visit communities they support through socioeconomic projects that CDPC helps to implement. Through these periodic visits, a development partnership that has thrived for over 30 years is appraised, renewed and set on new directions.

Last February these groups met once again to visit and assess their development program and projects,

to identify program areas to improve, to explore other collaborations and to craft a roadmap over the near term. The visit also served as a venue for partner people's organizations (PO) to share what it takes to sustain their organizations and development projects in their communities.

The PEF delegation this year was composed of Eddy Couckuyt, Deputy of Development Cooperation, Tourism, Youth, and Welfare; Marie-Paule De Wael, head of the Department of Development Cooperation; Agnes Verspreet, outgoing coordinator of North-South cooperation program; Magalie Schotte, incoming coordinator of same

program; Tim de Roeck, Director of the nongovernment organization Solidagro (New World); Pascal Van Driessche, manager of Solidagro program Philippines and coordinator of Consortium Philippines program; Hans Schaap, Solidagro Philippine country representative, and Counselor and Deputy Head of Mission of the Belgian Embassy Xavier Leblanc.

Old and new

The first leg of the 10-day (February 15-24) visit brought the PEF and CDPC team to Lamag and Namitpit barangays in Quirino, Ilocos Sur and to Abra's Palaquio and Abang barangays in Bucay and Beew barangay in Tubo.

Lamag was a project area of CDPC in 2000-2002, when the people's organization Lamag Ub-ubbo Association (LUA) implemented various socio-economic projects. The team visited these projects which continue to benefit the community: footbridge (access to farm areas), multipurpose drying pavement, micro tiller/hand tractor, *dapilan* (sugarcane presser) to boost sugarcane production, farm to market road, carabao dispersal, farm tools, irrigation repair and rice field expansion, and community based health program.

During a community sharing, LUA leaders spoke of the trainings they received from CDPC as part of the overall food security program. The projects were carried out in partnership with CDPC members Montanosa Research and Development Center (MRDC) and Montanosa Relief and Rehabilitation Foundation Services (now Cordillera Disaster Relief and Development Services) as well as Sibol ng Agham at Technolohiya (SIBAT).

Since 2002 to the present, however, Lamag has been heavily militarized and due to harassments and vilification LUA had been inactive. But in 2015, LUA's remaining leaders requested CDPC assistance for organizing, capacity building and strengthening, and advocacy of their issues—the adoption of sustainable agriculture and system of rice intensification and the campaign against mining and militarization. This year CDPC assisted the PO leaders to reactivate LUA, which because of vilification the majority of community members opted to change to Lamag Farmer's Association (LFA) with a new set of officers, constitution and bylaws.



From an old project area, the team went to Namitpit barangay, a new one with a new PO, the Save Quirino Movement Namitpit Chapter. They looked at the water system implemented in partnership with the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP). Serving at least 30 households, it is used not only for domestic purposes but also to irrigate vegetable gardens. The water system has improved sanitation and hygiene and lessened the burden of women and children in fetching water from a distant source.

In barangay Abang, a CDPC program area in Abra province in 2014 to 2016, the Abang Indigenous People's Development Organization (AIPDO) showed the team a water system they improved that now services the whole community. Upgrading a water system started by the Department of Social Work and Development, the PO increased the volume of water by enhancing the water source and tapping a new one, constructing a new reservoir, and repiping to solve seepages. The team also saw chickens and ducks AIPDO dispersed to second line

beneficiaries that helps ease household food and cash constraints.

The team saw the farm tools CDPC provided being maximized by PO members in land preparation for rice production and in vegetable gardens. A rice coop, which was set up after the devastating typhoon “Lando”, also continues to be maintained by AIPDO. Also thriving are indigenous hardwood seedlings they planted in the village watershed to propagate and protect indigenous tree species.

In Palaquio barangay, similarly a CDPC program area in 2014 to 2016, the team checked out the projects carried out by the Palaquio-Bucay Farmer’s Association and the Palaquio-Bucay Women’s Association. One was a submersible pump, the only water source of the community for domestic use. The POs’ vegetable dispersal, although mainly for household consumption, has now succeeded in increasing surplus produce that is sold inside and outside the community.

The chicken dispersal project has reached second line beneficiaries but some of the chickens were attacked by pests. The farm tools extended by CDPC are being used in agricultural as well as community activities. Like in Abang, a rice coop the POs established after typhoon Lando continues to serve the community.

The integrated projects in barangay Beew, a CDPC project area from 2005 to 2010, were another CDPC network effort, mainly through MRDC, with the Maeng Batayan Farmers Association (MBFA). Despite the community being repeatedly militarized since early 1990s to the present, the team witnessed the

projects’ benefits already manifesting for community members.

A micro hydro, built in consultation with SIBAT, has enhanced irrigation for their fields. Further serving the community are a rice mill, cooperative store for basic goods, herbal medicine production, seed dispersal and sustainable agriculture/system of rice intensification.

Two other projects areas, Amtuagan, Tubo and Iteb, Ilocos Sur, were not visited due to distance and time constraints.

Other activities

In Abra the PEF team also attended on February 20 “A call for peace, advancing the right to self-determined development of the people of Abra” organized by CDPC. A peace forum for development stakeholders—POs and communities, government agencies, local government units and NGOs, it tackled peace, security, and development issues in Abra province.

Participating PO members gave testimonies on the state of human rights and community development in their areas, while government and nongovernment representatives responded to the community issues raised. The forum is aligned with the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals that building peaceful, just and inclusive societies is relevant in realizing sustainable development.

It was also timely that the 2018 PEF visit coincided with the celebration of the 30th anniversary of CDPC on February 22. The presence of PEF and Solidagro, who have long been CDPC’s partners, made the event more meaningful.

The celebration honored CDPC pioneers and their contributions. It also shone a light on CDPC’s gains and challenges in the last three decades and its aim to further strengthen synergy with various development actors and rights defenders to advance the common good.



Common sentiment: PO appreciation for PEF support

A challenge during the visit was the unwelcome response to courtesy calls made by the team to local government officials in Abra. At the Provincial Capitol, officials did not entertain the team, which decided to go straight to the Governor's office. But even there they were not let in and made to speak only with utility personnel. Given the presence of Counselor Leblanc, CDPC staff insisted on being allowed to go into the office until one of the employees decided to talk to them.

Another failed courtesy call was in the municipality of Tubo where the vice mayor and municipal councilors were present but none of them wanted to meet the group. After some persuasion, the vice mayor finally spoke to the team, which just made brief introductions and left.

Community Response

Overall the people's organizations and community members in the visited areas were grateful and happy that foreign government and nongovernment officials were interested to learn about their situation, the issues they face and more importantly were willing to help them.

They appreciated the effort of the PEF delegation to see them even in their remote villages and despite their limited time. It was a proud achievement for them to host and interact with dignitaries and to speak with them in English, even if they were shy to do so. The visit boosted their morale and uplifted their prestige as a community.

The POs all expressed the same sentiment: that they will take care of the projects facilitated for them and

▲ PEF lauded the POs for their efforts to stand firm even if they were vilified and faced other difficulties.



Valuable: interaction with community

that PEF continues to support them. The interaction with PEF also raised their confidence as community organizations in the face of harassment and vilification of their leaders and members by the military.

But in Beew, which continues to be threatened by militarization, the PO is leaving it to the *dap-ay* (traditional institution that decides on community affairs) to make the final decision on whether to allow CDPC to continue the work they have started in the community.

PEF's views

The PEF delegation were impressed with how the POs grew from only a few members and how they dealt with problems to sustain their organizations, especially militarization,

harassment and red tagging. They lauded the POs for their efforts to stand firm even if they were vilified and encountered other difficulties.

The PEF partners noted that the communities/POs had ownership of their projects. They saw how the people took pride in them and had strong cooperation and unity -- a testament to community based development anchored on a rights-based approach.

They expressed appreciation for how the communities have kept their indigenous culture alive, and how in every village the context and dynamics are different, the community has its own strategy and principles, and their work is always in the same direction. It is a realization they want to deepen with more insights.

“We have viewed what we like to see. In a short time, the delegation was able to see projects and meet beneficiaries and people’s organizations. The overnight stay in the village was a valuable experience. In the midst of so much suffering we should never lose sight of the small victories because these are important sources of inspiration for others,” said Deputy Couckuyt who rated the whole visit a success.

The PEF partners also lauded CDPC’s efforts for ably organizing an interesting visit that involved not only community and project visits but other activities such as the Abra peace forum and CDPC’s pearl anniversary celebration. Just as significantly, the visit reflected the different dimensions of CDPC’s development work and program in the region.

The delegation especially cited CDPC for its strong team and close connection with the people’s organizations they work with. They said that the CDPC staff are well loved and their work well appreciated in the communities.

As Deputy Couckuyt remarked, “Throughout the years the staff do not change very much which is positive because it’s not easy working in these conditions, these hardships. The fact that staff members stay in the organization and the motivation remains means that there is a very strong team, there is a strong leadership because the leadership that encourages the team and the staff also encourages us to keep on the good spirit that we have till now.”

They noted a limitation, however—the lack of youth involvement. In

one of the areas visited, the partners observed that no youth were involved in the visit. They felt that this sector should be enjoined to participate in the work, particularly because of the risk of young people leaving the village with elders left behind.

Future Directions

Some issues the PEF delegation observed in their last visit in 2016 remain—the lack of respect for human rights in communities and vilification of CDPC staff that has made their work more difficult to do. In this visit they witnessed the same scenario.



People in barangay Abang continue to benefit from projects of their PO

As a response, Counselor Leblanc suggested sending letters to government officials calling attention to the brazen disregard for human rights. The PEF also encouraged CDPC to work internationally with other indigenous peoples. Confronted with similar problems of marginalization and loss of indigenous culture, they can share how to defend their communities against these threats.

In charting out new directions, this year’s visit and program assessment

raised important questions that arise from new national and local situations and contexts. What is the longterm vision for social and economic development of the region and of the country? What should we understand about the definition of self-determination in the perspective of land reform, industrialization, democracy?

How do we define our strategy in every situation? What are the criteria and strategy for selecting communities for a certain period of time. What is the longterm perspective

for remote communities and their development?

These questions need to be carefully thought out, as they may well shape the new directions and development partnership that CDPC, PEF and partner communities will take in the near future.

If we all act together - business, governments, NGOs and citizens and especially the young - just imagine the good we could create.
Paul Polman

“A Retrospect in Sinewing Actions towards a Brighter Future” was the theme of the Pearl Anniversary of the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC) last February 22. Gathering nongovernment organizations, people organizations, European partners and government supporters together, the event was a celebration of the three decades of CDPC service to marginalized Cordillera communities, of commemorating its past and current members, of thanking its PO and development partners for their continuous support and of looking forward to more years of service and partnership.

The CDPC was organized in 1987 as a consortium of 12 activist nongovernment organizations. Set up soon after the Marcos regime's ouster through People's Power in February 1986, it was conceived at the peak of the mass movement in the Cordillera for the defense of land, life, and resources and for self-determination.

Through the collaborative efforts of NGOs and dedication to the cause of

the Cordillera peoples and in partnership with POs, a unified comprehensive development plan materialized. Since then, these NGOs have complemented each other to help the Cordillera people especially the poor and marginalized to attain self-reliance and sustainable development.

As shared by Joanna Carino, Cordillera People's Alliance Advisory Council member, the militant NGOs in the CDPC network have together a track record of 25-35 years of

in sustainable agriculture and appropriate technology, community based health services, disaster response, improving food sufficiency and basic infrastructure for people's welfare.

These include provision of projects such as irrigation systems, potable water systems, production and blacksmith tools, seed and animal dispersal, consumer's cooperative, palay and rice cooperatives, vegetable and herbal gardens, post-harvest facilities like rice and corn mill, sugarcane crusher, processing machine for squash noodles, and drying pavement. Among people's welfare projects are village pharmacies, footbridges, multipurpose micro-hydro-power, disaster relief and rehabilitation services, and shelters.

For the last 30 years, the CDPC network has also actively helped Cordillera communities to exercise their rights, especially to defend what is rightly theirs. As expressed by Thomas Kilip, chair of the Montanosa Research and

Development Center board of trustees,

“Dagitoy naudi nga dangadang tayo kontra iti dam, logging, panagmina, ken panagtagikuwa iti kinabaknang tayo iti rehiyon dagiti dadakkel nga interes ket indurona datayo iti nalawlaw ken nangatngato nga klase nga panagkaykaysa. Daytoy siguro ti



A pearl for CDPC

BY GANNA L. YAP-EO

grassroots community development work. Among their achievements are breakthrough socioeconomic projects

maysa nga buya iti prinsipyo nga adda ti positibo nga ited ti negatibo nga kasa-saad. iti concepto ken panang-iyabante iti CDPC nga timpuyog dagiti NGO iti rehiyon tayo nga Kordilyera.”

(Our past struggles against large dams, logging, mining, and plunder of our resources in the region by corporate interests have pushed us to a wider and higher level of unity or oneness. This must be one principle that brought about a positive situation from a negative one. This is a concept that has also helped to advance CDPC, which was set up by NGOs in our Cordillera region.)

The anniversary celebration had two parts: a formal program in the afternoon and Solidarity Night. A highlight of the program was the posthumous award to Benedict Solang, former CDPC Executive Director, which was received by his family. BS, as he was popularly called, was a founding member of the Cordillera People's Alliance and was one of the young Igorots who joined the opposition against the Chico Dam project and Cellophil Resources Corporation logging concession during the Marcos regime.

An activist even in his youth, he was a member of the Kilusang Kabataan ng Kabundukan (KKK) in Manila, which later merged with the Baguio Highland Activists (Hi-Ac) and became the Kilusang Kabataan ng Kordilyera (KKK). (The latter KKK served as the inspiration for forming the Progressive Igorot for Social Action [PIGSA] in 1981.)

Community representatives from the different Cordillera provinces and CDPC pioneers and advocates

shared messages and experiences with CDPC. In her message, CPA vice chair Jill Carino expressed gratitude to all those who had been part of CDPC's 30 years of service.

“This afternoon has been a fellowship among people. People with a common commitment of service to the people and our country. Our people's organizations, our staff and organizers, our board, partners and friends of the CDPC network who have been together with us for the past 30 years of service. People, who through the years, have contributed in their own ways to the mission and vision of the CDPC network. We pay tribute to all these great people, including those who have gone ahead of us. Saludo po sa inyong lahat!”

past and present administrations of the Philippine government, we are empowered. Our communities have the power to act and find solutions to the semi-colonial and semi-feudal society in which we live. And from this power, we find hope for a better future for all of us. We find power to continue to work for a society where genuine self-determined development and national democracy will be realized.”

CDPC's pioneers and Belgian partners, the Province of East Flanders and Solidagro, were honored with a token of appreciation to show how important their role has been in CDPC. Capping the event was Solidarity Night, a more informal celebration where everyone had the chance to share their own mes-

For the last 30 years, the CDPC network has actively helped Cordillera communities to exercise their rights, especially to defend what is rightly theirs.

“Despite the difficulties, the challenges, the political repression, harassment and intimidation we face under

sages of thanks and appreciation, show off their gifts and talents and participate in the *patpong* and *uggayam*.



Celebrating 30 years of development partnership

Reconnecting with old villages for *community health*

BY MILA KIBITEN-AO-WAT



The Community Health Education, Services and Training in the Cordillera Region (CHESTCORE) is set to work jointly with the municipal government of Tinglayan in Kalinga province to assist three villages to set up community based health programs.

Tinglayan Mayor Sacramento Gumilab and representatives of CHESTCORE signed a Memorandum of Agreement last April 16 to establish these programs in the villages of Basao, Ngibat and Buscalan. The MOA will be implemented jointly by the Rural Health Unit and CHESTCORE.

Under the agreement, the local government unit will mobilize other concerned committees and individuals such as the municipal and

barangay health committees and barangay health workers. CHESTCORE will provide orientation, education and training.

The MOA stemmed from a request to CHESTCORE early this year by the Buscalan, Ngibat and Basao communities through their barangay captains to help them start health programs in their villages. Responding to the request, two CHESTCORE staff volunteers paid a courtesy call on Tinglayan officials who warmly received them.

The staff members explained the nature of CHESTCORE as a nongovernment organization working for community based health under the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC) network. The municipal government then suggested

for a memorandum of agreement to be drawn up and mutually approved by both parties to guide the proposed partnership.

The CHESTCORE volunteers and their local counterparts in Tinglayan are currently undertaking a diagnostic process to determine the health conditions in the three villages. CHESTCORE believes that to be relevant a community based health program should be anchored on the result of the diagnosis.

Available RHU health statistics show that the most common causes of morbidity and mortality in the municipality are communicable but highly preventable diseases, such as respiratory tract and digestive tract infections and cases of drug abuse. Sanitation also remains a problem as in the past, as revealed by an ocular survey of the villages. Pigs still roam freely, which the past LGU had urged villagers through cash incentives to pen; the incentives were also for building toilets. But these did not work and the RHU is now bent on improving health conditions in these villages.

To CHESTCORE, a community's health situation has also to be viewed not as a separate condition but as a social phenomenon that mirrors the prevailing socio-economic, cultural and political milieu. The culture that breeds the

continuing poor health conditions in Ngibat, Buscalan and Basao must be identified and broken. It is in this undertaking that the inking of the Memorandum of Agreement with CDPC-CHESTCORE was arrived at. The impact of the thriving tourism industry on the health situation has yet to be analyzed.

Historical view

The Tinglayan villages of Ngibat, Buscalan and Basao figure prominently in the history of the social mass movement in the Cordillera and of the development work of CDPC member organizations in the region.

Tinglayan is a 4th class municipality with a population of 12,868 (2015 census). It is the gateway to the province of Kalinga via Halsema Road, following the route of the Chico River system, which originates from Mt. Data in Bauko, Mt. Province, winds down through Bontoc and Sadanga to Tinglayan, and joins the Cagayan River in Santo Niño that flows to the Pacific Ocean. It can also be reached through Tabuk City through the road

that follows the route of the Chico River upstream.

The people in Ngibat and Buscalan belong to the Butbot tribe together with the iBugnay, iLoccong and iButbot proper. Those in Basao belong to the Basao tribe. The two tribes together with other villagers along the banks of Chico River after Bontoc are referred to as iLagod or *nanging-guwab* (downstream people) by those along the headwaters of the Chico River. They are among the 31 recognized subtribes of the Kalinga ethnolinguistic group.

The valor of the iButbot came to fame when the Marcos regime and the World Bank planned to construct the Chico River dams project. Conceived to generate energy for export-oriented industries, it would have submerged villages dotting the banks of the Chico River. The iButbot and iBasao banded together with all the villages that would be directly affected—those in Bontoc and Sadanga, Mt. Province and those in Lubuagan and Pasil in Kalinga—to defend their homeland.

The government used guns, goons and gold to stifle the snowballing people's opposition. The then Presidential Assistance on National Minorities (PANAMIN) offered the villagers scholarships, luxurious board and lodging and other perks. Some prominent Kalinga leaders succumbed to these, but the iButbot and other affected villages did not waver. They were ready to fight like their honorable ancestors for their land and lives.

The villages of Butbot produced some of the finest Cordillera heroes of the period: Ama Lumbaya Gayudan, the thinker; Macliing Dulag, the eloquent speaker and Pedro Dunggoc, one of the first in the area to earn a college degree. They led the ferocious resistance against the World Bank-funded project, forcing the government to shelve it in the 1980s. The brazen murder of Macliing by state forces forged and advanced the consciousness of the Cordillera indigenous people to defend their lives, land and resources.

The killing of Macliing, which was meant to silence dissent against development aggression such as large-scale dams, mining and logging instead united the Igorot people to heighten their struggle by forming the Cordillera People's Alliance in 1984 to defend their domain, to assert recognition of their time honored culture and to pursue their right to self-determination.

The Ngibat Farmers Association, Timpuyog ti Mannalon ti Basao and



Basao villagers with CHESTCORE staff

Buscalan Farmers Organization were among the founding members of CPA. With the CPA, the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera, a network of development programs, came to fore to serve various people's organizations to pursue these goals.

CDPC landmark projects in Buscalan, Ngibat

The villages of Buscalan and Ngibat were beneficiaries of CDPC services in its early years through the Appropriate Technology arm of CDPC member, the Montanosa Research and Development Center (MRDC). A water powered rice pounder with a thresher was conceptualized and set up in 1986 in Buscalan.

A landmark project in the Cordillera region, the rice pounder operated with six pestles pounding at the same time. It freed the women from the bondage of daily pounding of rice. And it merely unhusked the palay grains, thus preserving the rice bran and nutrients, unlike "clean milled" rice.

The rice pounder operated only for more than a year when the self-styled notorious Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA) destroyed it. They associated the project with the New People's Army and tagged MRDC as an NPA front. The CPLA sold out to the Cory Aquino government through a spurious "sipat" at the Mt. Data Hotel in Mt. Province in 1987.

In Ngibat, MRDC built the Ngibat micro hydro in 1994 which lighted up the houses, powered a rice mill and later the village blacksmithing industry

to make farm implements and other iron tools needed in the area.

Like the rice pounder, the micro hydro, which powered a rice mill and a foundry that also benefitted neighboring villages, was the first of its kind to be developed in the region. The Ngibat micro hydro represents the longest running project in the country that is managed by the community people.

The two projects are testaments that viable and environment friendly projects can be conceptualized and developed to serve the needs of the region where water resources

three immortalized iButbot heroes Ama Lumbaya, Macliing Dulag and Pedro Dunggoc in Bugnay village perhaps best summed up the effect today of what transpired in these villages back in the 1980s.

"With the reign of the CPLA in cahoots with the armed forces of the state, our unity as a tribe shattered and fear was instilled in our consciousness. The fear caused militancy to decline and POs in our area to lie low. The once admirable heroism in the earlier decades has been cast aside for the meantime. We still believe in the struggle for the defense of our land and life, but many problems



Basao village

abound. They have demonstrated that concerted and collective endeavor with technical assistance from development-oriented programs are key to pursuing genuine development in the Cordillera.

Tinglayan today

An old man I talked with in the shadow of the steel sculpture of the

and events have come to pass, lives have been put at stake... but then we have to rise up. Though very slowly we have to regain back our honor to pursue what is best for us," said the old man in the local dialect.

Tinglayan has been inundated with government projects, most of these funded by government



Consulting with PO in Buscalan

■ A comprehensive health program for the communities in Tinglayan can succeed with sincere determination, unity and cooperation among all stakeholders and increased villagers' awareness.

anti-insurgency funds. With the dangling of projects, the local people have become passive service recipients rather than active service seekers. The proliferation of *pakyaw* or small labor contracts has become dominant.

The villagers lamented that the sense of communal proprietorship of the resources in the villages is fast fading. Just like in other parts of the country, the success of government officials especially elected ones is measured by how many infrastructure projects have been implemented during their term.

Influenced by the socioeconomic and cultural situation, the villages are

rapidly being pushed into the cash economy. A lot of concrete structures have risen, and merchandise of all kinds dominate the local business. The municipality led by the village of Buscalan is being promoted as a tourist haven with the main come-on of witnessing the supposedly last Kalinga woman *mambabatok* (tattoo artist), Fang-od or Wang-od as popularized by media.

Some news accounts also reported that Butbot villages had fallen prey to the menace of drug abuse, with some enterprising villagers becoming marijuana suppliers. The villagers recalled that cultivation of the weed

started with militarization in the 1970s that accompanied suppression of the local opposition to the proposed Chico dams. The mountains were planted with the weed and up to this day, the resident admitted, its growth could not be totally eliminated because the seeds are blown by the wind sprouting wherever they land.

In addition, as reported in newspapers, there are outsiders whom locals generally call *iManila* or Tagalog who pose as tourists but are buyers and dealers of marijuana. It is rumored that the use of shabu (methamphetamine) has also proliferated with the influx of tourism.

According to local officials, more than 60 villagers were arrested for drug abuse or dealing and are detained at the provincial jail in Bulanao, Tabuk City. A villager reportedly had also been killed (*nasampolan*) under the government's anti-drug campaign, Tokhang.

These current social and economic conditions have to be considered in the overall undertaking to institute community health programs in the three Tinglayan villages. As the World Health Organization declares, health is "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

Physical well-being is a basic human right. It may be difficult to achieve a comprehensive health program for the communities in Tinglayan, but with sincere determination, unity and cooperation among all stakeholders and with raising of villagers' awareness, it can succeed.

SIN's* Deadly Sins

BY CORDILLERA YOUTH CENTER

If in communities the Barangay Intelligence Network (BIN), Civilian Auxiliary Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU) and other paramilitary groups serve as surveillance networks, their counterpart in schools is the Student Intelligence Network (SIN). Reportedly under the command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, SIN uses students to do intelligence work among their ranks.

A notorious underground group of students, the Student Intelligence Network has been known to harass, intimidate, and threaten progressive individuals and groups in schools and universities. They are tasked to undertake surveillance, harassment, and other intelligence operations directed against progressive and militant students. SIN is recruiting students, mostly from the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC).

Cheap tactic

In various colleges in the Cordillera region, SIN has been active in enticing members to join their ranks in the guise of high paying “job offers,” business and state sanction, among others. A notable case is at the University of the Philippines-Baguio where a SIN member had been recruiting from progressive school organizations such as Anakbayan and Alliance of Concerned Students (ACS).

Other cases of harassment and intimidation at UP Baguio were reported by other individuals from different organizations. Two previous students with the UP official student publication *Outcrop* reported that they were threatened by another former member of the publication. They were told to be cautious as they were being followed. When they asked “by whom?” the person in question only replied with a shrug. Upon hearing the report, the editorial board immediately asked him to leave the publication.

▲ The Student Intelligence Network has been known to harass, intimidate, and threaten progressive individuals and groups in schools and universities.

More interestingly, a voice recording was acquired from a student of Benguet State University being recruited to SIN. Part of the transcribed recording said: *“Kapag may mga meetings kayo sa orgs mo. i-report mo at i-document mo lang lahat ng ginagawa’t pinagususapan nila.”*

Sinfulness of SIN

ROTC, through SIN and other forms of intelligence work, is an

extension of AFP’s counterinsurgency program that aims to vilify progressive individuals and groups as subversive elements and enemies of the state. In the Cordillera, several cases have been disclosed of military instructors tagging certain individuals as members of the New People’s Army (NPA). As a result, those wrongfully tagged are beleaguered by surveillance, death threats, and other state-sanctioned acts of terror by armed authorities and ROTC cadets.

The use of different military tactics in the academe will make progressive organizations and their members vulnerable to harassment or possibly be like Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeno, UP student alumni who were abducted in 2006. This also undermines the “free and democratic space” in schools and creates an atmosphere of fear among students who participate in legitimate activities that are critical of the government.



Schools: no space for military presence

SIN is a violation of Republic Act 7610 or the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination. The Act states that public infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, and rural health units shall not be utilized for military purposes such as command post, barracks, detachment and supply depot.

Furthermore, the Philippines, as a signatory to the International Humanitarian Law and other related treaties, must conform to provisions that similarly restrict the use of schools for military purposes.

Lastly, SIN violates the Sotto-Enrile Accord, an agreement between the University of the Philippines and Department of National Defense that bars military forces from entering university premises.

But more than what the laws state, it is the inherent and inalienable right of every citizen to register grievances and for the state to address the root causes of social ills. Duterte's battle cry "change is coming" may indeed be near, not because his administration will render it but because the people, including the youth and students, will struggle for it until genuine social change is attained.

■ Republic Act 7610 states that public infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, and rural health units shall not be utilized for military purposes.

**Student Intelligence Network, see "The Putrid Core of ROTC" in Binnadang Jan-June 2017*



Activism is not terrorism

BY ABIE ANONGOS

Photo by CPA

Two years of the Duterte regime have seen worsening oppression of indigenous peoples nationwide through violation of their rights to self-determination and to ancestral land.

The counterinsurgency program Oplan Kapayapaan has resulted in grave human rights violations including 126 victims of extrajudicial killings of mostly peasants and indigenous peoples, illegal arrest and detention, nearly half a million victims of bombings and forced evacuation, threats, intimidation and harassment, including of indigenous peoples and their defenders. All over the country, indigenous human rights defenders are being persecuted and activism being criminalized by the government.

Trumped up charges

In the Cordillera, women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and activists working in organizations to

raise awareness and response to the situation of indigenous peoples in the region are facing court trial on trumped up charges. A Department of Justice (DOJ) Investigation Data Form names Sarah Abellon-Alikes, Sherry Mae Soledad, Rachel Mariano, Joanne Villanueva and Asia Isabella Gepte, along with 18 other individuals, for frustrated murder and multiple attempted murder related to a gun firing incident that occurred in Sitio Mabileg, Barangay San Ramon in Sigay, Ilocos Sur on August 4, 2017.

According to accompanying statements of the DOJ Data Form, a certain Cpl Melvin Sevilla Saura alleged that these five women are a group of New People's Army (NPA) that the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) elements engaged that day.

The prosecutor of the case later issued a resolution filing 10 counts of multiple attempted murder against them. The WHRDs are on temporary liberty after posting bail in February 2018.

Women human rights defenders working in organizations to raise awareness and response to the situation of indigenous peoples are facing court trial on trumped up charges.

Prior to this, Abellon-Alikes faced arson and robbery charges connected to the burning of two trucks of Philex Mining Corporation by alleged members of the NPA in Itogon, Benguet on February 9, 2017. She was released on bail after she was detained without charges upon her arrest by AFP personnel and turned over to the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Abellon-Alikes and Soledad are both working with Katinnulong dagiti Umili ti Amianan-Regional Development Center (RDC-KADUAMI). Mariano coordinates the Cordillera Health, Education, Services and Training in the Cordillera (CHESTCORE) program of the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC).

Villanueva works with the Cordillera Women's Education, Action, Research Center (CWEARC). And Gepte is a convenor of Binnadang, an advocacy group for Cordillera indigenous peoples' issues and campaigns, and a staff member of the joint secretariat of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP)-nominated section to the Joint Monitoring Committee on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

Gepte was expecting her first child during this ordeal, and despite these circumstances delivered a healthy baby in November 2017. The other four women also underwent a lot of stress due to this situation, which is not only an attack on their persons and security but also on their children and families.

The Women Resist Tyranny-Cordillera campaign was launched in June 2017 to gather support for women



Women Resist Tyranny-Cordillera campaign.

Photo by CHRA Karapatan



Proud to be activists

Photo by CPA

HRDs in the Cordillera experiencing various forms of human rights violations. Supported by the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) network and Cordillera Human Rights Alliance (CHRA), the campaign is coordinated by Innabuyog Gabriela.

Cordillera activists in DOJ terrorist list

The Department of Justice has filed a petition in court to declare as

terrorists the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) and over 600 individuals including Cordillera activists who are past and present officers of the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA):

- Victoria Tauli Corpuz, a Kankanaey, current United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, former CPA Chair.

- Joan Carling, a Kankanaey, former Secretary General of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), current Co-Convenor of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group on Sustainable Development, former CPA Chair and current CPA Advisory Council member.
- Jose Molintas, an Ibaloi human rights lawyer, former Asia representative to the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, former CPA Chair and current Advisory Council member.
- Beverly Longid, a Kankanaey-Bontok, current global coordinator of the International Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL), current Co-Chair of the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE), former CPA Chair and current Advisory Council member.
- Joanna Cariño, an Ibaloi, member of the CPA Advisory Council and Co-Chair of SANDUGO Movement of Moro and Indigenous Peoples for Self-Determination.
- Windel Bolinget, a Kankanaey-Bontok, current CPA Chair and National Co-convenor of KATRIBU national alliance of indigenous peoples in the Philippines.
- Jeanette Ribaya-Cawiding, Kankanaey, former chairperson of CPA-Tongtongan ti

Umili and current Regional Coordinator of Alliance of Concerned Teachers – Cordillera

Activism is not terrorism. It is simply action to effect social change. Activism embodies the very same values espoused by those who resisted

■ Dissent has been branded by the State as a criminal activity, and activists vilified as terrorists.

The list also includes environmental activist Sherwin de Vera, Regional Coordinator of Defend Ilocos from Environmental Plunder and Save the Abra River Movement (STARM). Earlier on December 11, 2017, De Vera was arrested on trumped up charges dating back to 2014 in Abra province. He was detained and posted bail last February which has allowed him to continue his work.

A campaign, initiated by CPA and its local and international networks, calls for the DOJ petition to be revoked and the terrorist list to be dropped. The campaign has received overwhelming support and solidarity through statements and letters, actions and local government resolutions such as those authored by the Baguio City Council and the Municipal Council of Sagada, Mountain Province.

As with the five WHRDs, the security of these Cordillera activists is gravely threatened. But they continue to carry on their work as human rights defenders, speaking as resource persons and coordinating campaigns.

Activism is not terrorism

Dissent has been branded by the State as a criminal activity, and activists vilified as terrorists.

the Chico dams and Cellophil logging -- the noble defense of land, life and honor and that we must rise up to defend life when threatened.

The human rights activists facing trumped up charges live up to these dictums, service to the people, defense and nurture of the ili/tribe, upholding identity and self-determination. These are the values of our people embodied in the Cordillera people's movement.

Remembering them and their legacy....



Villamor Pati: *Leader ti Masa*

Barangay Ud-udiao is one of nine barangays located in the most eastern part of Sallapadan municipality in Abra province. It is accessible in the dry season (December/January-May/June) through a rugged road from Poblacion Gangal that passes through mountain slopes along the Manikbe river.

It can also be reached from Barangay Sallapadan but requires crossing the river around five times. A portion of the road is impassable during the rainy season, which can be as early as May when it is only accessible up to Barangay Sallapadan. One then has to hike two hours to reach the first settlement, Sitio Ud-udiao, one of its three sitios, and another hour's hike including crossing a hanging bridge to the farthest, Sitio Mabongtot.

It was this isolated and inaccessible condition of his barangay that gave Villamor Pati or Tang Amoy the courage to join the people's movement to help demand and fight for the rights of marginalized peasant communities such as his. It was also his yearning to help organize and mobilize his fellow farmers to implement the programs of Kumbinyo, the people's organization in Barangay Ud-udiao.

I met Tang Amoy in 2010 as one of the leaders of Kumbinyo fighting for the land rights of his community from large mining and energy companies



that had application over areas of their Barangay.

“Let the military watch what we are doing as there is nothing wrong with producing biofertilizer and foliar fertilizer to help local farmers not to rely on chemical inputs.”

To allow these projects to push through would have meant destruction of the ancestral lands of the Tinggian, he said.

During this time, the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC) was implementing

a potable water system project in Ud-udiao upon request of the community and to help respond to the absence of basic needs such as water. I spent afternoons conversing with Tang Amoy on the situation of his community, his organization and the work of CDPC in Ud-udiao.

In 2011, he realized that it would be beneficial to conduct a training on biofertilizers since sunflowers and “martial law” grass were abundant in their area. These plants, he said, could be fed into a shredder to fertilize rice fields. However, the military was encamped in the community when we were planning the training. I asked him if he was not

afraid to conduct the training even with the presence of the military there.

He replied that we must continue with the training, “Let them watch what we are doing as there is nothing wrong with producing biofertilizer and foliar fertilizer to maximize local resources in our barangay and help local farmers to not rely on chemical inputs,” he said in Iloko. “This way, we also protect and promote the *lapat*.”

As sugarcane was abundant and locally cultivated in Ud-udiao, we conducted a training on muscovado processing in 2013.

Again, the military were encamped in the community, prompting me to get the opinion of Tang Amoy if we should continue the training. Again, he showed courage. He said we could allow the military to join the muscovado processing training as long as no one got hurt and for them to see that we had to produce our own sugar because of the remote conditions of our community.

In 2014 I helped prepare for the general assembly of Salakniban Pita Takay (SAPIT), the Sallapadan-wide multisectoral member organization of KASTAN-Cordillera People’s Alliance Abra Chapter. Tang Amoy was a diligent and constant companion as we visited the barangays of Sallapadan such as Ud-udiao, Bazar, Sallapadan Barrio and Naguilian to mobilize the members of SAPIT for the general assembly. As there were few available transportation, we walked from one far community to another. Once on a long walk, he told me that for every drop of sweat I must remember that I serve the people.

He was generous in providing direction and recommendations to the programs we implemented with the community. In Sitio Mabongtot, he saw the need for the local organization to assess and plan to sustain ongoing programs such as carabao dispersal and rehabilitation of rice fields. He also suggested for a storage room (bodega) to be constructed to ensure that farm tools managed by the people’s organization were taken care of and kept after usage.

He also shared with me the *lapat* system of Sallapadan which he asked me to document. *Lapat* literally means to prohibit or *parit* in Iloko. It enjoins all community members and neighboring communities to abide by its rules, like refraining from cutting trees in the forest, gathering of rattan, hunting of wild animals and even fishing in the river. As I was documenting, these were the concerns he brought up:

1. How barangay officials and *lapat* holders should work together to enforce the policies.
2. What sanctions should there be for the military if they violate the *lapat*, such as the harvesting of *uway* or *pait* from the mountains without the consent of the communities.
3. Sanctions for burning in the forests, pollution of rivers and letting pigs roam along the *lapat* area.

Tang Amoy was a constant companion whenever I set out to Sallapadan for monitoring of projects implemented by the Montanosa

Research and Development Center with the communities, such as the carabao dispersal in Mabongtot, the rice and corn mill in Nangas-asan, potable water system and farm tools dispersal in Ud-udiao and the rice mill project in Lam-awan.

He was a brave travel companion so that the four years I spent in Sallapadan for field work were made possible by the presence of Tang Amoy who helped implement the activities to strengthen the people’s organizations there. In all those activities, I witnessed his support to fellow members of the people’s organizations even if the barangay council did not always support the projects.

With his passing, SAPIT has lost a leader who courageously and diligently fought for the human rights of the people of Abra. I thank Tang Amoy’s family for taking me in as their own for the four years I spent in their community and for always supporting Tang Amoy in the programs he helped implement as a community leader.

Tang Amoy, as you go to your final resting place, the indigenous people’s movement in the Cordillera through the CDPC-CPA networks pay the highest tribute to you as an indigenous leader, elder; father and grandfather who will always be remembered.

By Mathet Basia
(Translated from Iloko)

Today, May 31, Petra “Ina Tannao” Macliing, a pioneering indigenous woman leader who stood against corporate greed, development aggression and martial law was laid to rest in her beloved Mainit village in Bontoc.

After sending the engineers away, the Mainit women raided their camp, took all of their supplies and brought them down to the town center and left them there to rot. “We did not eat their food. We just wanted them to leave,” Ina Chamgay said.

(We may not be armed/ but our hands are our weapons/ We use our bare hands to squeeze balls, the balls of men).”

Ina Tannao is not related to Cordillera hero Macli-ing Dulag, the

--- --- Ina Tannao, a Cordillera pangat and warrior

She is far from being “weak and meek” as President Rodrigo Duterte believes women are. She is not just an indigenous woman leader but a fierce warrior too. In the 1970s, women from Mainit village stripped down and confronted engineers of a mining company that intended to operate in their ancestral land. The leader of these warrior women was Ina Tannao who passed away at 90 last May 25.

This tale about Ina Tannao and Mainit women is retold in gatherings of women activists to illustrate the lengths Cordillera women will take to protect their homeland from aggressors. Ina Chamgay Tay-ug was with Ina Petra when the women drove away the mine engineers. Even if she could hardly remember the date, she vividly recalled, “Tannao gathered us women that day. She told us we will be the ones to stop [the mine] from destroying our mountain.”

Ina Chamgay said the women climbed the mountain where the engineers were drilling and “stripped naked like Tannao told us.” “We dared them to harm the womb from where they came,” she said.



The chant of Mainit women is still sung in many political gatherings: “*Uray maid armas mi/ armas mi nan ima mi / estawes, esta-gawis/ ikmer mi snan fitfitli, fitfitlin na raraki/ estawes, esta-gawis.*”

Butbut tribe *pangat* (leader) in Kalinga who was assassinated in 1980 for opposing the Chico River Dam project of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos despite bearing similar names. But like Dulag, Ina Tannao also actively

opposed the World Bank-funded Chico Dam project and fought the entry of mining ventures in her province.

Ina Tannao did not confine herself to her village. She attended the *bodong* (peace pact) conferences, where the pangats from Bontoc and Kalinga villages discussed the impact of the Chico river projects, said Joanna Cariño, a founder of the Cordillera People's Alliance. These conferences unified the Cordillera against the dam project, corporate logging in Abra province and Martial Law.

From 1981 to 1983, Ina Tannao helped form the Cordillera Bodong Association and became the only female pangat. She also helped form the Kalinga-Bontoc Peace Pact Holders Association in 1979, a federation of tribal leaders and peace pact holders.

Ina Tannao lost her husband early and was left to raise eight children. Her only son died at a very young age. She earned a living from the farm or by tending a sari-sari store in order to put her seven daughters through college. Lawyer Franscesca Macliing-Claver, the youngest child, said she was three months old when her father died. "She was the only parent I have known," she said.

Ina Tannao once told her children a story about a couple who offered to adopt their youngest sibling, Claver said. "I was that baby. The couple came with baby clothes and feeding bottles, ready to fetch me. But my mother refused to give me up," she said. "My sisters used to tease me that I was destined to have a different surname."

Georgia Velasco of the Cordillera Elders Alliance (CEA) said she met Mother Petra in early 1980s, when the older woman encouraged her peers to take adult literacy classes. "She valued education and learning and never stopped learning and sharing what she learned to others," even though Mother Petra never earned a college degree, Velasco said.

Ina Tannao helped organize her fellow literacy students into a farmers organization. At the age of 70, she helped form the Cordillera Elders Alliance in 2006. She traveled to the Cordillera provinces to speak to fellow elders about their continuing struggle for social justice. "If she did not suffer from dementia and was still alive today, she would have opposed the misogyny of President Duterte," Cariño said.

Macliing's contribution to social transformation is recognized by local and international bodies. On May 29, Sagada officials headed by Mayor James Pooten personally handed to the Macliing family a council resolution of tribute to Mother Petra. The resolution recognized her leadership in the Cordillera people's struggle against the Chico river dams, Cellophil logging, entry of mining in her Mainit village and against Marcos' dictatorship.

"Let her noble accomplishments serve as an inspiration to the present and coming generation," the resolution read.

In 2009, Macliing was honored as one of nine awardees for outstanding rural women of the world of the Women's World Summit Foundation's Laureate Prize for Rural Women. She was recognized for her pioneering

work and invaluable contribution to the Cordillera people's struggle for indigenous peoples' rights to their land and to self determination.

The WWSF Laureate Award honors creative and courageous women for their contribution in improving the quality of life in rural communities, for protecting the environment, transmitting knowledge and standing up for human rights and peace.

In 2012, Macliing was one of the six Filipino women awarded by the Asian Rural Women's Coalition during the 5th International Day of Rural Women for advancing and promoting indigenous peoples' rights and civil rights, for combating violence against women and for seeking better treatment of the rural poor, political prisoners, farmers and children.

Windel Bolinget, current CPA chair, said that while they mourn Ina Tannao's passing they celebrate her life, "a life well lived". He said that she has set a shining example for the younger generation to follow.

Bolinget challenged everyone to follow Ina Tannao's example in defending the Cordillera homeland from development aggression and continue her work for social justice and national freedom. "For there is no greater tribute to Ina Tannao but to continue what she has started in the defense of the Cordillera homeland, advancing the right to self-determination and genuine autonomy," he said.

By Kimberlier Ngabit-Quitason
(Reprinted from Nordis.net,
June 2018.)

The people's movement spear-headed by Cordillera People's Alliance Kalinga Chapter offered a final tribute on May 29 to Mother Catalina Bongaoen for being an exemplary mother and for her contributions for the common good. Ina Talin died at 94 of old age and complications from an illness on May 26 at her home in Bulanao Norte, Tabuk City.

Many of the tributes spoke of her staunch opposition to the planned Chico dams. Mother Catalina bravely stood up against the dam project during the Marcos regime, said Esther Bassia, Chairperson of the Tanglag Community Organization for Unity and Development (TACOUD). She was very vocal during community meetings and confrontations with the military and the National Power Corporation (NPC), speaking in English whenever she debated with soldiers in such meetings and dialogues, shared Bassia.

Former Governor Atty. Macario Duguiang, a family friend of the Bongaoen couple, said. "During the dam problem in early days, I was with Atty. Billy Claver and the legal group to support the i-Kalinga opposing the dam project so I witnessed the sacrifices of the people, and Catalina was among them," He also admired Mother Catalina for raising activist children. "It is not easy for a mother to have a child with that perspective," he added.

Ina Talin was also a teacher. Her then junior co-teacher, now retired,

Mina Linggayo of Tanglag shared her contributions as a teacher. "Auntie Talin was our mentor since she was one of the first teachers in the village then, so I used to approach her and she was unselfish in giving advice and guidance," she related. "She was not only a good teacher, she was also a devoted Catholic. Auntie Talin used to serve as a catechist in the church and also organized the black rosary in the community," Linggayo added.

English. I witnessed her writing a letter addressed to President Ferdinand Marcos," Ani said.

"What I appreciate the most is her commitment and her principles. My father was bribed by the NPC through the PANAMIN but my mother stood up in protest. 'How can you be contented/happy with the money they will give you if the compensation is seeing your village and the people submerged in return?' Those were

the words of my mother to Papa," Ani said.

In a letter, Abraham Batawang ex-

pressed his sympathy and condolence to the bereaved family. Batawang said he admired the generosity of the Bongaoen couple whom he first met in his childhood since they were neighbors in Cagaluan Gate. "What I never forget is her advice that 'nobody should surrender or become a traitor'. You are a great teacher, your children became activists and some even joined the red army. You gave them the right to choose a path in serving the people. It is but proper that you should be honored for your contributions to the people's movement," the letter ended.

Berto Bongaoen, son of Mother Catalina, thanked everybody for their kind words, prayers and tribute. Mother Catalina was laid to rest at their residence in Bulanao on May 30.

By Froilan Wanagon
(Reprinted from Nordis.net,
June 3, 2018.)

Mother Talin: Mother, Teacher, Activist



Her daughter and cultural activist Ani Bongaoen said her mother raised them with discipline. She further recalled what her mother did for the Chico dam opposition. "She used her profession as a teacher to support the opposition to the dam project. She bravely stood up in front of the military during dialogues and spoke in



comrade in the Dap-ay Discourse Uno



“Kaseseg-ang nan ipugaw ay maid ‘common sense’ na. Ulay baken tako nalaing basta wada common sense tay eyaka nan masolbal (I pity people without common sense. We don’t have to be intelligent, as long as we have common sense a lot can be solved.)”

I heard him say these words in frustration during our little conversations together over coffee, with our eyes on the day’s newspapers while we shared office related updates, personal concerns, and current societal events.

Why do I especially cling to this phrase amid many phrases that I can

quote from him? We share the same sentiment and viewpoint. When I heard him say this, I suddenly saw myself exasperatingly saying the same words to my children, relatives, and people dear to me, including CDPC staff.

Yes, I strongly believe as well that common sense can solve many trials and difficulties in this life, be it as light as cotton or as heavy as you can imagine. Optimistic and indecisive as I am, I can say that social unrest, injustices, and poverty can be solved if only the majority of people, especially the powerless, use their common

sense. Why not? Your guess is as good as mine.

His intelligence is indisputable for sure. More so with his rich common sense that made him survive a childhood of poverty to reach the status he attained in his life. He loved to talk before people of different classes until his very last breath.

He was a most humble and caring, patient and calm, and industrious person one could ever meet. That was Mr. Benedict P. Solang or Manong Ben or BS to his comrades in the progressive organizations.

In my first decade of development work for the underprivileged people starting 1989, I had already heard much about him, saw him deliver speech in rallies, congresses, and conferences but I had no work or personal contact yet with Manong BS at that time. With his speeches that moved people and in his casual *masa* outfit and a Mao cap, I admired and respected him.

One day in 1998 around daybreak, I got a telephone call so I rushed to the store where the land line was (as mobile phones were not yet common). To my surprise, that caller said “*Si Ben Solang na ilaem kano si Dra. Beth asap for the result of your test. Umey ka ay dagus tay urgent kano.*” (This is Ben Solang. Meet Dr. Beth as soon as possible regarding your laboratory test.)”

It took awhile for me to answer but I finally said, “*Aa aysia wen umeyak ngarud salamat Manong* (Ah okay yes I will go. Thank you, Manong.)” Why was his call much of a surprise to me?

First, I admired and respected him from a distance. I never expected him to give me a call. And second, I never expected that my first call from him would be very personal, that is, concerning my health. That was my first experience of him being so humble and caring towards people. I felt so honored because he was “Mr. Ben Solang” but still had time to call me for such a reason. I would not be as surprised if the call was work or business related.

Incidentally, Dr. Beth has been my OB-Gyne since the mid-1980s. Just like her husband, she is also a very



humble doctor of the masses. I say so because her doctor’s fee is socialized. Depending on the social status of her patient, she charges big, bigger, biggest and less, lesser to zero amount. And she also sees to it that she gives medicines for free. That is Dr. Beth. It only shows that humility and genuine care and love for the people (especially the poor) are innate in both of them. I am confident that this legacy will pass on to their children.

Finally, in the latter months of 2001, my working relation with Manong started. From the members of the CDPC-CPA family, he was called Manong as a show of respect. So, if one says “si Manong”, everyone knew that referred to BS or Ben. This was the time when CDPC (Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera) was undergoing a crisis, which is normal in an organization especially related to human resources.

With only myself left from the original 13 or so staff of CDPC, Ben, being the Manong of the CDPC network or in a more formal way of saying one of the consultants or advisers, was there to help and give guidance to keep CDPC’s operations and to maintain its only remaining funding partner (New World-PEF, Belgium).

Manong BS painstakingly handled CDPC’s crisis. This was the first time that I saw his incomparable patience and calmness amid “subjectivisms” and “bourgeois gestures” of some comrades in crisis. Unfortunately, in August of 2002, I decided to file a leave from office mainly to rest for health and maternity reasons. I was not in contact with Manong for some time.

In the second half of 2003, I reported back to office. Manong formally assumed office as the Executive Director

of CDPC while I resumed office work as the Project Officer. My working relationship with him in office was formalized and made stronger. I came to know him deeper as a person and as a comrade or colleague in development work from this period onward until he finally bid farewell for eternal rest in peace.

Humble as he was, he was also a “workaholic”. He tended to do all the work from the executive level to purely technical. I don’t know if he was aware of it but he took over the tasks and responsibilities of some staff like going to market and doing groceries, scouting for cheaper venues for trainings, doing leg work, etc. He was a Manong BS to CDPC.

We at CDPC are lucky and honored for working with him all these years and to be part of his well-lived life. Sincerely, Manong BS’s contributions to what I am now as a person and as a colleague in development work is invaluable. His patience, calmness, and diplomacy in dealing with office and staff-related problems, his humbleness and respectfulness in dealing with staff and people, and his thoughts and wisdom in life have moved and inspired me greatly.

Charismatic as he was, his positive influence and advocacies for people’s development and towards building a genuine democratic society is not only felt at CDPC and in the Cordillera but he is admired and also an inspiration to our national and international partners as expressed by them in their messages to condole with the family he left. He was a Manong Ben to people who knew him.

Like any other person, Manong Ben was not perfect. He also committed mistakes and hurt people’s feelings too, intentional or not. As there is always an end to everything, I witnessed him losing his composure after dealing with one crisis after another. I don’t know if it’s “fate” or coincidence that I found myself together with him in handling crises.

Seeing him angry for the first time, I found it unusual of him. I knew he was my opposite when it came to being calm when confronted with a troublesome situation. In this very rare moment of anger, I quote him saying, “Enough is enough *marami pa tayong mas dapat harapin na hindi na maharap*” (Enough is enough we have a lot of more important things to do that are left undone).

He said these words in a loud angry voice. I think that the result of this rare moment of anger made him misunderstood and maybe misjudged by some. Sincerely, I myself misunderstood him at some point. But later on, I came to understand well that Manong BS was a human being too.

My personal accounts of Manong BS will not stop here. For the past two years or so before he left this world, I was witness to his passion in writing a book, compiling his own papers, and to have them published. This was actually the subject of our last little conversations with him. He requested from me then that CDPC help in publishing his book. With this request and as I am also as passionate as he was to have his book published, I included this in CDPC’s annual activity and budget proposal to our Belgian partners. A

few months before his last farewell, the book entitled *Dap-ay Discourse Uno* was out in people’s hands.

This book will definitely let you dig deeper into who Manong BS is to people of different societal status. I regret however that there will no longer be a book with the title Dap-ay Discourse DOS. I have not finished reading all the content of the book. But for sure, by reading this book, one has the great chance in honoring him as the “Comrade in the Dap-ay Discourse Uno.”

To his family, especially Dr. Beth and children, we thank you so much for being so kind and understanding all these years and for allowing Manong BS to spend most of his time with us in the office and in the organization. You might not be aware but your contributions to the CDPC family and its partner People’s Organizations and communities are invaluable too. You could just have pressured Manong BS to choose between his work, his advocacies, and his family. But instead, you supported him all these years. For this, we salute you, all family members.

Manong BS, your family at CDPC will forever treasure the legacies that you left us. These will serve as our inspiration to pursue your visions, our visions for the common good. My highest salute to you, Manong BS! Farewell, my comrade, until we meet again!

By Jane L. Yap-eo



Benedict Pecdasen Solang

I have known Benedict Solang, or BS as we fondly call him, since that historic period we now refer to as the First Quarter Storm, when Filipino youth in their tens of thousands went out into the streets and stormed Malacañang, demanding system change. BS, along with Annie, Vicky, Victor Ananayo and the other Scott boys, etc. were the Manila activists, while we were the Baguio

activists. The organization of Igorot activists in Manila was called KKK – Kilusang Kabataan ng Kabundukan, while that in Baguio was known as the Highland Activists. Quite a number of Igorot activists in Baguio and Manila had also joined the Kabataang Makabayan.

We all came together as Igorot national democratic activists at

the historic Cordillera Congress for National Liberation held in the Mountain Province High School in Bontoc, Mountain Province in December of 1971. This was the first ever gathering of Igorot activists from all over the region, mostly students in the Baguio and Manila universities who were organized during the upsurge of student activism leading up to the First Quarter Storm. There

were also a few young professionals in attendance like BS.

William Henry Scott wrote a short treatise specifically for that Cordillera Congress, *The Creation of a Cultural Minority*, which explained the historical formation of the Igorots as national minorities due to the fact that they were not effectively colonized by Spain for more than 300 years, thus becoming minoritized in the process. This treatise served as a beacon call for many a Cordillera activist like BS as it provided the

Cordillera history and society helped us understand the historical oppression and injustice, which Igorots have been subjected to as we deepened our study on the national minority question.

Highlights of that memorable Congress was the first ever youth activist march through the streets of Bontoc, after the high school where the delegates were housed was stoned in the night. The Congress passed a resolution to unite the two activist formations as the Kilusang Kabataan

Mountain Province, then in Kalinga. When the tribes along the Chico river resisted this development aggression, they received the support of both the Anglican church and the Catholic church.

The very next day after Macliing Dulag was killed by the military on April 24, 1980, BS and Victor Ananayo of the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Philippines, with the support of the late Bishop Richard Abellon, went on a fact-finding mission to Bugnay, got the stories of

Macliing's wife and family, took pictures and broadcast the results of their fact-finding to the wider public. This predated the international fact-finding mission on Macliing's martyrdom in June 1984.

From 1981 to 1984, April 24 was commemorated as Macliing Memorial before it transformed as Cordillera Day in 1985. BS was among the active figures doing coordination for the Macliing Memorial

commemorations and bodong conferences during the Chico struggle. I remember that he would solicitously help us cross the hanging bridges or haul us up the steep slopes as we hiked to reach these distant places.

BS was involved in helping build the broad anti-dictatorship united front in the region. He helped organize the Cordillera Council for Justice and Peace



background for the minority status of the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera. discrimination and oppression suffered by the Igorots as national minorities.

As BS pointed out in several essays in his book *Dap-ay Discourse Uno*, Scotty was a source of inspiration and support for Igorot activists. His historical research and commentary on

ng Kordilyera. This merger was short-lived, however, as martial law was declared the following year and all organizations were blacklisted.

After martial law was declared, BS left Manila and came back to the region. He was working with the Anglican Church in Bontoc when the Marcos dictatorship started constructing the Chico dams, first in

(CCJP) in Bontoc. He was active in the broad anti-martial law alliances such as the National Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy, and the Cordillera Coalition of Organizations for the Restoration of Democracy. I remember that we would set up film showings of *Seasons of Thunder* in the homes of allies and invite them to join the human rights formations.

There are so many significant events in my life where BS and I were comrades in arms, among them:

- Organizing the Cordillera Consultative Committee, an organization of Igorot professionals, after a Cordillera-wide gathering of lawyers and professionals in 1982. CCC set up the NGO Cordillera Consultation and Research, which later developed into the Cordillera Resource Center for Indigenous People's Rights.
- Organizing and writing papers for the First Cordillera Land Multisectoral Land Congress in 1983, and the publication of its proceedings *Dakami Ya Nan Dagami*
- Through CCC, organizing, drafting papers and convening the Cordillera People's Congress which founded the Cordillera People's Alliance in 1984. BS coordinated the People's Welfare Commission of CPA in 1985.
- Confronting the terrorism of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army in the 1987-1990 period

- Being illegally detained as part of the Cordillera 14 in 1992. As they did not have sufficient grounds to charge us, we were released after two days.

BS was our Cordillera expert on setting up people-oriented activist non-government institutions for self-determined sustainable development. He was instrumental in helping establish the Sagada Development Center, which later transformed into the Montañosa Research and Development Center (MRDC), the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC), and the Cordillera Disaster Response and Development Services (CORDIS-RDS).

BS was a stalwart of the national democratic movement in the Cordillera, giving the best years of his life to serving the people. He has seen the growth of the mass movement, from his active participation in the Chico and anti-dictatorship struggles, to the formation of the Cordillera People's Alliance in 1984, through the State-sponsored terrorism of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army against the mass movement during the Corazon Aquino regime, and to his continuing involvement in activist non-government organizations such as the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera and the Cordillera Disaster Response and Development Services doing alternative development work up to the present.

And to cap his lifelong career as a professional activist, BS has collected his writings and come out with a book – *Dap-ay Discourse Uno*. We launched his book at the 11th Congress of the CPA only last December. BS was

obviously, and justifiably, quite proud of his book. This past month, he went actively around distributing his book to allies and friends.

The first part tells of his journey of political awakening in the early 1970s before the declaration of martial law, that historical period now referred to as the First Quarter Storm.

The second part is on the current Cordillera situation and aspiration as advanced by the people's movement. In the fourteen articles in this section, BS synthesized the mass movement's position on various issues such as alternative development – ie. self-determined sustainable development, the indigenous socio-political system and culture, climate change and the environment, genuine regional autonomy, the Cordillera People's Liberation Army, peace talks and the role of indigenous elders.

The third part is the author's Discourse on Indigenous People's Right to Self Determination and people's development with international indigenous peoples' movement to advance international solidarity for democracy, social justice, equality and for a world without imperialist domination and discrimination. There are eight articles in this section, papers which he presented at international gatherings mostly of indigenous peoples and indigenous youth.

The fourth part is a collection of messages to the Igorot diaspora as they gather in the regular Igorot international consultations, and a message to the St. Mary's School in Sagada, his alma mater. And the fifth part includes his tributes to mentors

and models of human rights and people's development, usually delivered as eulogies in the activist tradition of *pulong parangal*, or commemoration of a life well-lived.

From his early beginnings as a youth activist during the First Quarter Storm almost 50 years ago, BS became a bona fide Cordillera elder. In fact, both of us had the distinct honor of being elders with the Advisory Council of the Cordillera People's Alliance, being called upon to give advice, counsel and to help with other needs of the mass movement.

As a bona fide Cordillera elder, BS became a favorite resource person not only for both the elders and the youth, but also for various other gatherings related to indigenous peoples. He spoke/wrote on the themes of national minorities and indigenous peoples, traditional knowledge, regional autonomy and self-determination, activist NGOs and alternative development, the environment and climate change, and various other current issues.

In his introduction, the author stated that his generation was among the last that was grounded in the traditional (Sagada) Malingeb *dap-ay* values and discipline. It is this grounding in the indigenous value system from a communal past, and the Marxist's sense of history and hope for the future that provides an uncommon depth to his writing.

My personal favorites among his writings are those where he particularized/concretized the dialectical persistence and disintegration of indigenous socio-political systems and values amidst the historical process

of social change. There is much of indigenous society that has already disintegrated by being subsumed within the semi-colonial and semi-feudal (dis)order and the onslaughts of the dominant bourgeois and feudal culture. That being said, he observed the enduring persistence of communal values that promote discipline for service and the common good, caring, sharing, nurture and stewardship of the environment for present and future generations, and collective action to defend land, life and honor.

He gave recognition to the national democratic movement in the region, with its advocacy for indigenous peoples' rights, that has upheld these positive values. He drew the parallelisms between the communal indigenous values and activist values, such as the communal spirit of serving the people, community before self, simple living and frugality, the nurture of land and resources, democracy and egalitarianism, and the collective defense of land and territory. All of these positive values persist because they are timeless, they are useful and relevant for all times, and are building blocks for the socialist perspective of the national democratic revolution.

A common theme in many of his writings is to stress the point that the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera are national minorities because they were not effectively colonized throughout 300 years of Spanish colonial rule, as opposed to the majority who were Christianized and "Filipinized." From that different colonial experience, the Igorots were minoritized, as Scotty explained in his seminal article for Igorot activists.

Having been minoritized, the Igorots continue to bear the brunt of national oppression, with the following forms: land grabbing of ancestral land, political misrepresentation and the non-recognition of socio-political structures, historical government neglect, commercialization and vulgarization of indigenous culture, Christian chauvinism and discrimination. In addition, the continuing militarization of our communities to make way for destructive mining and energy projects continuously threatens ethnocide.

While the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera are national minorities confronting the particular problems of national oppression, there is already a high degree of integration into the Filipino nation. Thus, Igorots are also stratified according to the class structure of Philippine society, with the majority of them belonging to the democratic classes and sectors. They therefore also suffer class exploitation and oppression like the majority of the Filipino people.

In closing, let us honor this humble, unassuming, uncompromising, and steadfast activist for genuine people's development, indigenous people's rights, for national democracy and socialism, and for a world without discrimination.

Mapulang taos-pusong pagpugay, kasamang Benedict Pecdasen Solang.

Your memory will remain in our hearts.

By Joanna K. Cariño

CDPC NETWORK

Community Health Education, Services and Training
in the Cordillera Region ([CHESTCORE](#))

Cordillera Alternative Law Center ([DINTEG](#))

Cordillera Disaster Response and Development Services, Inc.
([CorDis-RDS](#))

Cordillera Labor Center ([CLC](#))

Cordillera People's Alliance ([CPA](#))

Cordillera Women's Education Action Research Center, Inc.
([CWEARCI](#))

Cordillera Youth Center ([CYC](#))

Dap-ayan ti Kultura iti Kordilyera ([DKK](#))

Development Agency of Tribes in the Cordillera ([DATC](#))

Montañosa Research & Development Center, Inc ([MRDC](#))

Northern Media and Information Network, Inc. ([NMIN](#))

Regional Development Center – Katinnulong Dagiti Umili iti
Amianan ([RDC-KADUAMI](#))

Regional Ecumenical Council in the Cordillera ([RECCORD](#))



CDPC
Center for Development
Programs in the Cordillera



Provincie
Oost-Vlaanderen
Voor ieder van ons



SOLIDAGRO
Oogst samen met boeren in het Zuiden