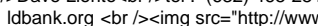




Philippines: Bangsamoro Development Plan Formulation Kicks Off Today

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The quest for peace and development in Mindanao gets a major boost today with the kick-off of the formulation of the Bangsamoro Development Plan (BDP) that will provide a short and medium-term development strategy for the Bangsamoro areas. Specifically, the BDP will identify investments and programs to promote inclusive growth, stability, and help create jobs in the Bangsamoro from 2014 until 2020. "Bangsamoro refers to the new political entity that will replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), as defined by the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB) signed by the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in 2012. The planning process is spearheaded by the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA), MILF's development arm created under the Humanitarian, Rehabilitation and Development Aspects of the Government of the Philippines-MILF Tripoli Agreement of June 22, 2001. Dr. Saffrullah M. Dipatuan, Chairman of the BDA Board of Directors, said that the Bangsamoro plan will play a crucial role in the establishment and success of the Bangsamoro. He said that planning for rehabilitation, recovery and development is being conducted with peace-building as among the key objectives. "Through extensive consultations, the BDP will set the strategic direction for the new Bangsamoro government by identifying potential areas for investment, private sector promotion, and cooperation with other regions in the country, Dr. Dipatuan said. "We therefore acknowledge with a sense of gratitude the timely assistance extended under the Mindanao Trust Fund and by other development partners, without which our aspiration to formulate the plan for the Bangsamoro will remain a dream. The planning process for the formulation of the BDP is supported by the ARMM Regional Planning and Development Office (ARMM RPDO) and the Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society, a conference of non-governmental and peoples organizations working in the Bangsamoro areas. "The BDP, which will reflect the goals of the Bangsamoro people, the indigenous peoples, and other sectors in Mindanao, will help strengthen the Bangsamoro region to become the anchor and sanctuary of our aspirations of shared prosperity and shared security - not only in the Philippines, but in Asia and across the globe. Its inclusive character affirms this governments commitment that no one - Muslim, Christian or Lumad - will be left behind, said Secretary Teresita Quintos Deles, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process. The planning process for the BDP is funded by a US\$540,000 grant from the Mindanao Trust Fund (MTF) administered by the World Bank. Started in 2006, the MTF is a \$28 million multi-donor facility that supports economic and social recovery and promotes inclusive and effective governance in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao. Support for the Bangsamoro Development Plan draws on recent new contributions to the Mindanao Trust Fund of 8 million Euros from the European Union and A\$1.3 million from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Reflecting on the launch of the BDP planning process, World Bank Country Director Motoo Konishi said that the crafting of the Bangsamoro Development Plan will help strengthen confidence in the on-going peace process. "This planning process demonstrates how the government and the MILF with the support of development partners, civil society groups, private sector and other stakeholders are working together to deliver a tangible dividend to communities from the peace process. The plan will outline strategies to build legitimate institutions to help foster a sense of security among communities, get more children back to school, provide justice and create jobs. This is in line with global lessons on how to successfully address the roots of violent conflict, said Mr. Konishi. Co-chaired by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) and the BDA, the MTF program serves as a mechanism for international development partners to pool resources and coordinate support for peace and development in Mindanao. In addition to the European Union and Australia, other development partners supporting the MTF are the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada; the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the United States Agency for International Development. The Bangsamoro Development Plan is supported by a broad range of development partners, including the Japan International Cooperation Agency, Asia Foundation, International Organization for Migration, and members of the United Nations country team including the United Nations Childrens Fund, United Nations Development Programme, World Food Programme, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the International Labor Organization. Government agencies supporting the BDA in the formulation of the Bangsamoro Development Plan are the Office of Presidential Assistant for the Peace Process, National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Education, Department of Public Works and Highways, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao, and the Mindanao Development Authority. The BDA has been operating for more than 10 years. Since its creation on June 2, 2002, it has mobilized Bangsamoro professionals and volunteers to assist in development and humanitarian work in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao. In Manila
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