





# CASE STUDY

## Conflict Monitoring Project

### PHILIPPINES

## 1. PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Key Cross-Country Benefit	Key National Benefit
 <p><i>Prevention of conflict escalation by stabilising the region and promoting social and economic development across countries.</i></p>	 <p><i>Support of peacebuilding activities reducing cost of conflict and underpinning development and poverty alleviation.</i></p>

## 2. QUICK FACTS

Categories	Project Details
<b>Project Name</b>	Philippines Conflict Monitoring Project
<b>Project Description</b>	The project concerns the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) that is particularly affected by violent conflict and poverty. The aim is to provide useful, timely, and reliable conflict data and analysis to enable key stakeholders to make informed decision-making.
<b>Global Public Good (GPG) Theme</b>	Peace & security
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	Prevention and limitation of violent conflict
<b>Sector</b>	Public administration – Social protection

**Disclaimer:** We based the case study on the information cited and publicly available as of May 2023. The findings – especially concerning the GPG perspective – have been concluded to our best knowledge. The views expressed are the authors’ assessments and do not necessarily reflect the project stakeholders’ views. Any errors that remain are our responsibility.

<b>Country of Implementation</b>	Philippines
<b>Region</b>	East Asia & Pacific
<b>Income Category</b>	Lower-middle income
<b>Implementation Period</b>	2021-2022
<b>Project Volume</b>	US\$ 0.74 million
<b>Financial Source</b>	Trust Fund: State and Peace Building Fund
<b>Instruments</b>	Investment Project Financing
<b>MDB Involved</b>	World Bank
<b>Implementing Partner</b>	International Alert
<b>Link to Detailed Project Information<sup>1</sup></b>	<a href="https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/734231631612645727/pdf/Project-Information-Document-PID-Philippines-Conflict-Monitoring-Project-P177191.pdf">https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/734231631612645727/pdf/Project-Information-Document-PID-Philippines-Conflict-Monitoring-Project-P177191.pdf</a> <a href="https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099153003032342714/pdf/P177191067e9ba050a87a0f64fe8aab4e1.pdf">https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099153003032342714/pdf/P177191067e9ba050a87a0f64fe8aab4e1.pdf</a>

### 3. WHY THIS IS A GOOD PRACTICE

This project is a good practice example for implementing the following features that promote GPG provision:

- **Ambition:** The project is ambitious due to its high potential to improve conflict prevention and mitigation. A sound database is decisive for efficient interventions. By preventing and mitigating violent conflict in the region negative externalities to other countries are less likely as well.
- **Sustainability:** The project requires continuous update. Its sustainability depends therefore on the availability of finance in the future.
- **Transformability:** The project has a transformative potential as it may influence decision making of stakeholders at all levels through increased transparency. Disseminating the data available and providing useful insights could, for instance, shape future legislation, budget allocation, and media coverage.

### 4. PROJECT INFORMATION

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, the information used in this case study can be found in this source.

#### 4.1 CHALLENGES OF GPG PROVISION IN THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

In the Philippines, the largest share of the poor live in Mindanao, constituting one of the main areas besides Luzon and the Visayas. Almost 40% of the poor and 25% of the Philippine's total population live here. **The conflict-affected Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) is particularly economically deprived**—more than 50% of its population fall below the national poverty line. In the past, major conflicts between the government of the Philippines (GHP) and two Muslim separatist groups have occurred in the BARMM region. Although both groups signed a peace agreement in 1996 as well as in 2014, conflict is still prevalent. The conflict drivers are diverse, including social injustice, alienation, and exclusion of Muslim and indigenous people, competition for scarce natural and mineral resources, and widespread poverty, for example.

To ensure sustained peace, the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro was signed in 2014. It included, for example, decommissioning of combats and news measures of trust building. However, as of today, there is a lag in the implementation of these components, **undermining trust in the peace building process.** Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified the tensions as the state failed to respond in a timely and effective way in the BARMM region—leading to loss of income, food security, access to medical services, and an increase in gender inequality and domestic violence.

**FIGURE 1: PROJECT AREA**



Source: [World Bank \(2023\)](#)

## 4.2 INTERVENTION

### 4.2.1 Project Design and Agents of Change

The Project Development Objective is to **provide useful, timely, and reliable conflict data and analysis, briefing key stakeholders to inform their programming and actions.** To reach that objective the project consists of three components.

The first component—Conflict Alert—concerns the subnational conflict monitoring system tracking the incidence, causes, and human costs of violent conflict in the region. Ultimately, the goal is to inform policy-making, development strategies, and peacebuilding approaches. The ongoing financing of the Conflict Alert by the World Bank since 2013 is continued with slight adjustments to the system. This includes the integration and application of Covid-19 specific strategies, supporting dialogues and workshops to share information on and tackle GBV related issues and recommendations, and bankroll activities to enhance the systems to effectively use a gender lens. As part of the project, the encoding, review, and ground validation of conflict incidents for 2020 and 2021 was completed and corresponding material published.

Next, the second component concerns the dissemination of conflict alert data. Moreover, the ultimate goal is to meet current needs for data and analysis and generate demand among key stakeholders. Thus, on the practical level, component 2 provides information and conflict advice to stakeholders, strengthens research for programming and policy drafting, and builds capacity of partners from academia to support data utilisation and analyses. Further activities under component 2 include the drafting and publication of the Conflict Alert 2021 report, informative videos, infographics, and other multimedia materials to address the wider audience.

The last component—number 3—supports project management and monitoring of project activities to ensure an effective implementation.

The recipient and implementation agency is International Alert—a global peacebuilding charity. The project was financed through a trust fund: the Peace and State Building Fund.

### 4.2.2 Results

Overall the outcome was rated **highly satisfactory**. Detailed information on the outcome indicators, the baseline, the target, and the actually achieved outcome are displayed in Table 1. All of the targets have been achieved or even exceeded. Considering, for instance, the number of relevant actions and programmes of government, donors, development partners, and civil society groups that are informed by the Conflict Alert 2011-2020 data analysis and knowledge products, the goal was to reach five and 23 have actually been achieved. Another example is the number of comprehensive maps, charts, and thematic briefs produced on 2011-2020 Conflict Alert data that has risen from 0 to 125 while only 25 were targeted.

FIGURE 2: PROJECT COMPONENTS



Source: Oxford Economics based on [World Bank \(2021\)](#)

**TABLE 1: OUTCOME INDICATORS AND RESULTS ARCHIEVED<sup>2</sup>**

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Actually achieved
Project development objectives			
<i>To provide useful, timely, and reliable conflict data analysis that enables key stakeholders to develop relevant policy responses, strategies, advocacies, and actions.</i>			
Ten-year panel data on conflict generated and analysed (in years)	9	11	11
Relevant actions and programmes of government, donors, development partners, and civil society groups are informed by the CA 2011-2020 data analysis and knowledge products (number)	0	5	23
CA data informs the development of research and media articles (number)	86	100	132
Intermediate Results Indicators			
Conflict incidents have been gathered, encoded, and analysed during the project implementation period (in months)	0	8	8
Produced methodology paper on monitoring and analysing GBV in BARMM (number)	0	1	3
Development of academic curriculum on research methodologies and conflict analysis (number)	0	3	4
Published the CA Book with a 10-year compilation of data and analysis on conflict patterns in the Bangsamoro, including short-view analysis of 2020 data and long view analysis of 2011-2020 data (number)	0	1	1
Comprehensive maps, charts, and thematic briefs produced on 2011-2020 CA data (number)	0	25	125
Briefings with different key BARMM and peace process stakeholders conducted utilising CA data and analysis (number)	30	36	42

Source: Oxford Economics based on [World Bank \(2021\)](#)

## 5. PROJECT IMPACT

### 5.1 NATIONAL BENEFITS

The project was aligned with the World Bank's Philippines Country Partnership Framework.<sup>3</sup> Here, it mainly promoted increased availability of services in conflict-affected areas including access to information to inform local decision-making, development, and peace-building (pillar 8). In the wider context, core vulnerabilities were addressed by **building peace and resilience** (focus area 3). Thus, the project benefits the country by building peace and resilience. This is especially beneficial considering the cost of the conflict: **besides the**

<sup>2</sup> For projects in the GPG theme Peace & Security, it is not possible to ex ante differentiate between those indicators that directly contribute to the GPG provision and those that do not. Depending on the context, it varies greatly which indicators actually prevent conflict. Hence, unlike for other projects, we do not highlight specific indicators that are particularly relevant for GPG provision in comparison to others.

<sup>3</sup> World Bank (2019): <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/891661574699296055/pdf/Philippines-Country-Partnership-Framework-for-the-Period-July-2019-December-2023.pdf>

**human costs, displacement, social tensions, and other non-calculable costs, the financial cost of the conflict has been estimated to have totalled US\$850 million between 2010 and 2016.**

Additionally, the project **promotes economic and social development** as persisting conflict hazards have been identified as hindering development and poverty reduction in the concerned area, according to the Country Partnership Framework. Moreover, although the conflict is concentrated in Western Mindanao, spillovers also negatively affect Mindanao and the region more widely. Building peace and resilience therefore benefits the country also from an economic and social point of view.

Furthermore, the project also supports the **Country Gender Action Plan** focus 3 to reduce gender-based vulnerabilities associated with conflict and disasters, for example by supporting the development of a methodology paper on the gender-conflict nexus and gender-based violence in the BARMM.

## 5.2 CROSS-COUNTRY BENEFITS

The key cross-country benefit of the project arises from peacebuilding **by limiting and avoiding potential negative externalities from a violent conflict**. This is supported through the data collection and provision enabling stakeholders to make informed decisions. Thus, a contagion of other neighbouring regions is less likely, refugee flows will decrease, and trade relationships are likely to improve or at least be less disrupted, for example. Moreover, other countries and regions are likely to benefit from the promotion of economic and social development, for instance by building infrastructure enabling international trade, consuming, and producing products and services, which in turn lift living standards of the concerned actors across countries, and increase human capital through improved education systems. Unlike for other GPGs, these externalities cannot be quantified rigorously. This is because every violent conflict differs and depends on various contextual factors. So do the externalities to other countries. It could be that the magnitude of these externalities would be tremendous. Accordingly, although the benefits of the programme occur to be rather local, the fact that they can prevent a conflict of unknown magnitude with direct or indirect consequences that go far beyond the region itself make them globally important.

The project also relates to other GPGs besides the prevention and limitation of violent conflict. Especially in the area of climate and environment, several benefits can be expected. As a conflict often increases GHG emissions and destroys land and natural habitats, for example through violent disputes in those areas or the destruction of resources, its prevention helps to mitigate climate change and preserve biodiversity. Additionally, social and economic development arising from increased peace and stability also benefit international trade systems as lined out above. Lastly pandemic preparedness may be promoted as well if increased development is accompanied by improved social services and health care systems.

# 6. LESSONS FOR FUTURE GPG PROVISION

## 6.1 SUCCESS FACTORS

Several success factors have been identified as crucial to project performance. First, **continuity and long-term partnerships** have significantly contributed to the successful outcomes. This concerns in particular the cooperation between International Alert Philippines (IAP) and Conflict Alert (CA) with the Western Mindanao State

University (WMSU), Notre Dame University (NDU), and the Dansalan College Foundation, Inc. (DCFI). Moreover, IAP has established trust and goodwill among various stakeholders on the local, provincial, and regional level as well as national media outlets. These long-term relationships and trust enabled the IAP to achieve significant accomplishments within the short project period, despite ongoing COVID-19 challenges.

Second, the IAP also benefited from the **academic partners**, such as NDU and WMSU, as their commitment, specialised skills, and social capital helped “sell” the CA database. These institutions **hold the trust of local actors** promoting engagement with ministries, opening doors, and sustaining interest despite political sensitivities.

Lastly, the IAP’s network in the development policy sector and academia supported the aim of **assembling a group of consultants and long-standing collaborators**. The familiarity of these actors with CA and the IAP helped to produce significant outcomes despite the short turnaround time.

## 6.2 HOW TO REPLICATE THE GOOD PRACTICE

The project could be replicated in other contexts as well. This applies to the approach and project components as well as the success factors and lessons learned. Establishing a conflict monitoring system as well as disseminating the increased usage of available data could be just as useful in other contexts. Similarly, building long-term partnerships and trust, especially with academic institutions holding the confidence of local stakeholders, may also be replicated and highly beneficial, for instance. The lessons learned include:

- **Continuing localisation**, by encouraging a more granular analysis at the provincial and municipal cluster levels. This helps to produce knowledge products highly context-specific and therefore relevant for government use.
- **Long-term planning** is crucial in both project design and implementation. Shifting from short-term grants to multi-year funding arrangements is beneficial. It ensures maintaining the gains of long-term investments and building stable partnerships. Moreover, longer horizons also reduce the share of resources allocated to preparing administrative documents and assessments. Promoting pooled funding is one suggested option to establish and maintain long-term support. Yet, it is also crucial to remain flexible to ensure the system remains relevant, for example by including new indicators and proxies.
- **Stakeholders’ buy-in** is crucial. New political administrations require a renewal of relationships moving forward.
- Several further aspects have been identified as being of high importance, namely (a) subnational datasets; (b) locally driven and (c) locally owned and implemented work; (d) independence in funding and operations of the implementing organisation; (e) flexibility; (f) multiple sources for data collection and analysis; (g) the use of findings in planning and programming; (h) the need to address security risks for staff, along with sensitivities and fears amongst stakeholders to express honest views; (i) sustainability; and (j) awareness of a trade-off between cost versus quality.
- **International finance** guarantees independence from political influence and neutrality which creates credibility among conflicting parties.