



# peace and reconciliation journal

A MONTHLY PRAYER LETTER PUBLISHED BY DANN & JOJI PANTOJA  
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Working with PeaceBuilders Community, Inc., Republic of the Philippines



Mennonite Church Canada  
WITNESS

SEPTEMBER 2011 EDITION

## PBCI SUPPORTS GPH-MILF PEACE TALKS



Kriz Cruzado, Director of Field Operations, was the Master of Ceremonies during the Conference. Dann Pantoja served as the facilitator for the GPH and MILF Dialogue

On September 8, 2011, almost two hundred people gathered on the fifth floor of the *Bishops Ulama Conference* building in Davao for a purpose: solidarity. With the peace talks between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Government of the Philippines (GPH) on seemingly thin ice, members from NGOs, local businesses, government agencies, the armed forces, and the media, among others, joined together at the Second National Solidarity Conference on Mindanao to listen and discuss ways of finding "common ground" between the two negotiating parties. The event was a testament to the real desire for people all over the Philippines for the GPH and MILF to reach a successful solution to the peace process this go-round.

The co-convenors for this conference were the Mindanao People's Caucus, the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, the Bishop-Ulama Conference, International Alert, Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Societies, and the Mindanao Solidarity Network. *[continued on page]*

## PAR REGION 10 COMPLETES PAR 2 TRAINING

02 SEPTEMBER 2011. Region 10 PAR finished the Peace and Reconciliation: Peacebuilding Skills Training.

Twenty-five pastors and church leaders participated on the second among a series of Peace and Reconciliation (PAR) trainings in Region 10. The training was held at Celebration International Church in Cagayan de Oro City.

From PBCI Team, Kriz Cruzado, Mei Solocasa, and Dann Pantoja facilitated the training. They were assisted by Keith and Jenna Grubaugh, and Reg Mondez. The whole day was filled with fun and new learnings while the participants actively discussed the topics and contributed lots of ideas.

Bishop Genesis Udang warmly welcomed the team to his home and was the one who coordinated the event. 🌱



Region 10 pastors participating during one of the group dynamics

## PBCI AND UNIFRUTTI AGREES TO ADVANCE PAR TOGETHER

In joyful response to God's initiative and provision, PeaceBuilders Community Inc. (PBCI) and Coffee For Peace (CFP) have agreed to work together in a joint ministry with the Unifrutti Group of Companies (UGC), along with their foundations — Unifrutti Foundation Inc. and Hineleban Foundation Inc. (HFI)— to advance Peace and Reconciliation (PAR) initiatives in the Province of Bukidnon. This was documented through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the leaders of both groups last 20 September 2011 at the PeaceBuilders Community office in Davao City, Philippines.

Unifrutti is one of the Philippine's biggest producers and exporters of Cavendish bananas and pineapples and operates in Bukidnon, Lanao del Sur and Davao del Sur. Unifrutti is the mother company of Mount Kitanglad Agricultural Development Corp., Mt. Kitanglad Agri-Venture Corp., Wao Development Corp. and Prinetimes Meadows Development Inc.

The dreams of PBCI-CFP resonates with the vision and mission of UGC and HFI. Both PBCI-CFP and UGC-HFI believe that God is the One opening this door for our groups to do PAR ministry together. John Perrine, Chairman and CEO of Unifrutti Group of Companies, expressed this in his own words: "I believe that the goals of our respective groups are very much aligned and that our strengths are truly complementary."

PBCI-CFP and UGC-HFI will work together in sending a total of 12 teams of PAR community organizers to three verified armed-conflict zones between October 2011 and October 2012. Each team will be made up of three full-time personnel — the lead PAR community organizer,



an administrative assistant, and a local guide. This partnership is planning to send three teams per quarter between October 2011 and October 2012. Dann and John Perrine, along with their respective staff, will coordinate in this aspect of the partnership.

PBCI-CFP and UGC-HFI will also work together in developing Coffee Farming Technology in these zones in accordance with Fair Trade Principles. Joji and Renee Araneta-Perrine will coordinate in this aspect of the partnership, with the assistance of their respective staff. Renee is the Marketing Director of Hineleban Foundation. She is John's wife.

This joint ministry of peace and reconciliation (PAR) is based on a faith-perspective that God is already at work among the people of our land even before we plan and act.

We understand *peace* as enjoying harmony in our basic human relationships through the transforming power of God: harmony with the Creator—spiritual transformation; harmony with our being—psycho-social transformation; harmony with others—socio-political transformation; and, harmony with the creation—economic-ecological transformation. We understand *reconciliation* as building relationships between antagonists. The primary goal is to seek innovative ways to create a time and a place to address, to integrate, and to embrace the painful past and the necessary shared future as a means of dealing with the present. 

**We welcome your contributions for our support and invite you to send these to:**

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Please designate to:  
Dann & Joji Pantoja,  
PeaceBuilders Community, Inc., Philippines

## PBCI SUPPORTS GPH-MILF...

From page 1

The Mindanao Peoples Caucus and Peacebuilders Community, Inc., served together as secretariat for the event.

Rev. Dann Pantoja introduced the sessions by explaining the background of the conference and the reasons for its importance. The objectives of the conference were threefold: to inform and update the people on the current peace talks; to listen to various voices for ideas on how to find common ground; and to develop an action plan for the future. The mood was then set for the conference to be a platform for compassion, understanding, and intelligent discussion.

On the first day, both the GPH and MILF panels presented their proposals. The participants were also given a chance to ask questions and clarify concerns after each panels presented.

On the second day, there were plenary sessions on the "common ground" theme, action planning, and the reading and approval of a joint Second National Solidarity Conference on Mindanao Statement.

As the conference came to a close, with a concluding prayer by Datu Vic Saway, Ustadz Abdul Kadir Abubakar, and Rev. Dann Pantoja, it seemed as though a sense of hope and perseverance was present. Participants were grateful to have their voices heard and a concrete plan of action had been put into motion. By joining under one common cause, NGOs, government leaders, armed forces officials, and civil society organizations had participated directly in bringing about the peace that is so desperately yearned for in this country. It is the hope of so many in Mindanao and across the Philippines that events such as the Second National Solidarity Conference serve to propel leaders and decision-makers to work for the greater good of all who have a stake in this beautiful land. Through creative listening, discussing, negotiating, and problem solving, we may come to achieve the unity we dream of. 🌱

Reported by Jenna Grubaugh

## PBCI CELEBRATES PEACE MONTH

On September 5-7, 2011, Peacebuilders Community, Inc. (PBCI) and Coffee for Peace (CFP) Staff celebrated their annual psycho-spiritual retreat. The retreat was held at Villa Amparo Resort, Island City of Samal.

For three days, the staff had time for sharing, psychological activities, meditation, swimming, and bonding. It was the time of the year that they celebrated being together as a family working towards one vision.

On September 21, the staff celebrated the United Nations Celebration of the International Day of Peace. They enjoyed laughing, eating, and chatting together during this special event celebrated by the world. 🌱

PBCI staff celebrated the UN International Day of Peace with a pizza



The staff retreat was filled with fun and exciting staff that each one enjoyed



One of the most exciting activities was when each one shared how they feel at the moment.



## TAMLANG HEALTH VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

It was 9:30 in the evening one night in Sitio Tamlang, Baranggay Poblacion, Dalican, Maguindanao. A female in her 30s lost her consciousness in her home. The husband bought an "Aspilet" (pain medication with Aspirin) in a village pharmacy of one of the volunteers of the Peace and Reconciliation HealthCare Program of Peacebuilders Community Inc. in partnership with Care Channels Inc. When the volunteer learned about the incident, she decided to contact 3 of her co-volunteers living in the same village and together they responded to the patient.

When the volunteers arrived in the patient's home, the family was getting ready to bring the patient to the hospital and the volunteers presented to help before bringing the patient to the hospital. With the first 2 sessions of 12 done in the healthcare program, the volunteers remembered the use of the basic assessment of the pulse rate, temperature, respiratory rate, and blood pressure (sadly they don't have BP set yet) warm and cold compress, the massage, and they prayed with the patient (Islamic prayer). Allhamdulillah (Praise God) the patient gained consciousness again and got sleep after the warm compress and massage done. The volunteers advised the family to just observe for a night and if condition worsens then bring the patient to the hospital.

Amazingly, the condition of the patient got better and the family thanked the volunteers for such a response in the time when they most needed it. The village people heard about this story and thanked God for sending their women to the healthcare program.

This is the very reason why PeaceBuilding HealthCare Program was born. To educate and train the community-based volunteers to do the primary healthcare in their respective communities. With equipped communities, there are lesser incidences of diseases, lesser doctor visits, and lesser hospital admissions. And in a community where people experience the economic effects of armed-conflict, this means lesser expenses for illness and added resources for optimizing health. Allhamdulillah! 

*Reported by Mei Solocasa*

## PRAY FOR THE PBCI STAFF



**Dann Pantoja.** Pray for the energy of the Spirit as we engage new strategic areas to advance Peace and Reconciliation through our seminars and organizing efforts. New PAR areas to be opened in the next 6 months: Regions 10 & 13. New PAR areas to be opened in 2012: Region 5.



**Joji Pantoja.** Please pray for PBCI and CFP staff who were affected by the flash flood in Davao City. Please pray that we may raise Php 40, 000.00 to help some of the staff rebuild their homes which were washed away by the flood.



**Bennette Tenecio.** Please pray for her as she spearheads the fundraising for the PAR 80 by 2015 vision of PBCI (see <http://peacebuilderscommunity.org/invitations/give/>).



**Kriz Cruzado.** Pray for more wisdom as she directs our Field Operations, patience as she deals with untoward events, good health so she could always function well, economic stability for her family so she does not have to worry for her finances, creativity and resourcefulness so she can continue innovating new approaches and strategies in achieving Field Ops goals.



**Mei Solocasa.** Please pray for God's sustenance for the PeaceBuilding HealthCare Program in Ranaw, Maguindanao, and Metro Davao. God's leading and guidance as we are about to start in Bukidnon.



**Regina Mondez.** Please pray for guidance as she moves from Nueva Ecija in Central Luzon, to Bukidnon in Mindanao. Pray for strength and courage as she deals with emotional adjustments, as well as wisdom in dealing with her new tasks.



**Keith Grubaugh.** Keith is our new intern specializing in Technical Support—Accounting. Please pray for wisdom and strength.



**Jenna Grubaugh.** For a clear mind and open heart to pursue fair trade and promote Anabaptist values in the workplace. For energy, clarity, and a positive spirit.



**Arjay Freg Balabag.** Please pray for him and his family, as they rebuild their home which was washed away by the recent typhoon.



**Joy Betios.** Please pray for renewed strength for her work from day to day, as their home and everything they possess were washed away by the recent flash flood in Davao City.



**Freddie Abelitado.** Please pray for energy and strength as he continues to be a good member of PBCI family. Also pray for his health and his family's needs.