

Program Review of Supporting Peace in Mindanao (SPIM) Facility

Report for AusAID Philippines

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Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction.....	5
Approach.....	5
Findings and Recommendations	7
1. Strategic value of SPIM	7
2. More coherent project selection and sectoral focus	9
3. Expand the spectrum of partners	11
4. More robust results monitoring	13
5. Expand AusAID staff capacity for engagement and oversight	14
6. Improve knowledge retention and aggregation.....	15
7. Expand the level of resources	16
Conclusion	19
Annex 1: Independent Progress Report on SPIM Facility	20
Annex 2: Notional Funding Levels for SPIM Outcome Areas	23
Annex 3: Interview Questionnaire.....	26
Annex 4: Selection of Projects for Review	27
Annex 5: SPIM Projects 2005-2011	29

Executive Summary

The Supporting Peace in Mindanao (SPIM) grants mechanism is one of AusAID's most flexible instruments for addressing the challenges to peace and security in conflict-affected regions of Mindanao. SPIM is designed to support catalytic activities of community level peace building, strengthen key institutions in the conflict area, and support strategic policy contributions to reduce conflict and promote peace in Mindanao.

This report is the product of an independent review of the SPIM facility conducted in September-October 2011. The objective of the review was to provide recommendations to AusAID on the future of the SPIM facility, informed by a review of current and past projects supported by SPIM. The review also serves to complete the requirements of an Independent Progress Report of SPIM. The review process included in-depth interviews with 12 organizations that are current or former grantees with the intention of identifying key lessons, critical needs, feedback on existing/past projects and partners and risks that AusAID should consider.

The review team concluded that the SPIM facility has significant strategic value for AusAID's programs in Mindanao. The team recommends that the scale of resources under SPIM should be increased, and the scope of potential partnerships under SPIM should be expanded to include government actors, and multi-lateral organizations. However, along with this proposed expansion, there is a need to improve a few elements of SPIM, including the selection of new projects, results monitoring, and knowledge retention and aggregation.

The report provides seven major findings and recommendations:

1. **Strategic value of SPIM** - SPIM has allowed AusAID to work in a fluid environment by providing small grants to key local actors, often in response to important changes in the environment. SPIM also allows AusAID to support important work on sensitive issues in a low-profile, flexible manner, and has provided a mechanism to allow for experimentation and incubation of innovative new ideas to address peace and security challenges. While the SPIM facility has significant potential, AusAID has not fully capitalized on the strategic value-add from this program mechanism.
2. **More coherent project selection and sectoral focus** - Despite succeeding as a flexible grant mechanism, AusAID needs to find a balance between flexibility and structure required for results monitoring. SPIM does not have defined objectives or parameters for program selection, which has resulted in a lack of clear program focus. AusAID's Mindanao Delivery Strategy (MDS), however, provides a useful framework for SPIM. The review team recommends using the overall structure of the MDS to shape and focus SPIM program selection.
3. **Expand the spectrum of partners** - While the review team recommends a narrowing of the program outcomes funded by SPIM, there is a strong case to expand the spectrum of possible partners to achieve these outcomes. SPIM requires multi-stakeholder approaches, including working through government, civil society, conflict-affected community leaders and institutions, and security forces. By expanding the spectrum of partners, AusAID will strengthen the prospects for impact, and avoid accusations of favoring certain groups or partners.

4. **More robust results monitoring** - Current results monitoring for SPIM projects only includes output-level tracking, provided by project implementing partners. As a result, AusAID is not in a position to make claims on the outcome level impact of individual SPIM projects, or aggregate results of SPIM investments over the past six years. Since SPIM program partners are generally not in a position to conduct rigorous outcome level monitoring, AusAID should consider outcome-level monitoring for all of SPIM through an independent consortium of researchers. The ideal consortium would include research institution(s) from Mindanao and international organization with experience on best-practice monitoring in fragile states and conflict-affected regions.
5. **Expand AusAID staff resources for engagement and oversight** - The value from SPIM comes from expanded networks and access to knowledge from SPIM partners in the conflict-affected regions, and among influential actors. Partners interviewed indicated that they had very limited interaction with AusAID staff inferring that AusAID has not capitalized on these benefits – in part due to staff turn-over, and limited staff time. Increasing the amount of staff time allocated towards SPIM and hiring Mindanao-based staff members will allow AusAID to better manage its relationships with SPIM partners and improve program learning.
6. **Knowledge retention and aggregation** - One of the strategic benefits of a flexible facility like SPIM is that it allows AusAID to be innovative and experimental with modest resources in order to test program hypotheses, and monitor the results of new approaches. However, for this value to be realized there needs to be a system for capturing the lessons from individual projects, and aggregating information into a format that can be readily utilized in program decisions and policy debates. The review team recommends that AusAID put greater emphasis into ongoing knowledge aggregation and retention from SPIM programs. Specific strategies for greater knowledge aggregation and retention may include an annual report on SPIM activities, a new knowledge management position on the SPIM team, and organizing roundtables of SPIM partners.
7. **Expand level of resources** - AusAID should consider expanding the current funding level for the SPIM facility. SPIM has important strategic value for AusAID's assistance to Mindanao, and has the potential to be a valuable mechanism for program experimentation and learning on aid in conflict-affected areas. SPIM is likely to be the primary mechanism for more than half (6 of 11) of the strategic outcome areas in the Mindanao Delivery Strategy (2011). If AusAID decides to expand the type of partners to include government and multi-laterals, then SPIM needs to be significantly scaled up. While AusAID should continue to support small grants to NGOs, this type of funding should be complemented by larger agreements with governments, and possibly multi-laterals agencies, which will necessarily require larger funding levels per agreement.

Introduction

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) has been supportive of the Philippine government's goal of achieving peace and stability in Mindanao. AusAID's programs in Mindanao focus on improving basic education, strengthening governance, and reducing vulnerabilities to conflict. More than 50 percent of AusAID's investments in the Philippines are devoted to promoting peace and development in Mindanao.

AusAID is in the midst of developing a new country program strategy, as well as a specific delivery strategy for conflict affected areas of Mindanao. To inform the Mindanao delivery strategy, AusAID agreed to conduct a review of the 'Supporting Peace in Mindanao' (SPIM) to provide some lessons and suggested future directions for the pending strategy.

The 'Supporting Peace in Mindanao' (SPIM) initiative is a grants mechanism operating since 2006 for catalytic activities to reduce conflict and support the general environment promoting peace. These activities have supported community level peace building, institutional strengthening projects, policy contributions to key conflict issues, as well as innovative projects with other actors such as providing training to security sector actors to support their ability to promote peace.

The review of SPIM was conducted from September 26 to October 31, 2011. Interviews were conducted with SPIM grantees, AusAID staff, and external experts in Manila and Mindanao (primarily Davao). The objective of this review is to provide recommendations to AusAID on the future of the SPIM facility, including strategic directions for AusAID support. These recommendations are informed by a review of current and past projects supported by SPIM, in order to identify key lessons for future programs. The review also includes engagement with influential leaders from conflict-affected communities, and prospective partner organizations, to integrate their views on how AusAID can best use the SPIM facility to contribute to peace and stability in Mindanao.

The review team included:

- Thomas Parks – The Asia Foundation, Regional Director for Conflict and Governance
- Jose Deles – Independent consultant
- Gobie Rajalingam – The Asia Foundation, Program Officer

This report contains an overview of the approach, key findings, and recommendations for AusAID. The report also contains several annexes including the guiding questions for interviews; and overview of the rationale for the selection of projects to include in the review; and the list of SPIM projects since inception.

Approach

Since the purpose of the review is primarily to inform future program directions, the data collection was relatively modest, focusing only on experiences and issues that will be relevant for the facility design, and future selection of projects and partners. The review was not intended to be a formal evaluation, though the review team considered the findings of recently conducted formal evaluations of SPIM-supported projects.

The review included the following methods of inquiry:

1. **Interviews with current and past grantees** – The review team met with 12 organizations that are current or former grantees. The purpose of these meetings was to identify key lessons, and assess the contributions of each project towards the objectives of supporting peace and stability in the region. Organizations were asked for their suggestions on the future strategic direction for SPIM, and the facility mechanisms for project selection, proposal submission, reporting, and engagement with AusAID.
2. **Interviews with influential leaders from conflict-affected regions** – The purpose of these meetings was to consult with influential leaders and receive their input on the future strategic direction of the SPIM facility. Due to time constraints, the project team identified a few key individuals or organizations to include in the review. In particular, interviewees were asked to provide suggestions on critical needs, possible new partners, feedback on existing/past projects and partners, and challenges or risks that AusAID should consider.
3. **Review of project reports and evaluations** – The project team reviewed project reports to identify key trends relevant for the overall SPIM review. In particular, this desk review focused on evidence of impact from previous and current projects, the quality of program design, coherence of the overall project portfolio, and common challenges faced during project implementation.
4. **Interviews with AusAID officials**– The review team met with AusAID officials who have played a role in the SPIM facility. These discussions focused on the perceived successes and failures, vision for the future of SPIM, and areas for improving SPIM facility processes and mechanisms.

The key questions for this study included:

- What should be the key criteria for selection of partners and program ideas for AusAID to make the most strategic use of SPIM?
- How should AusAID expand its circle of prospective partners beyond to include non-traditional partners? How should AusAID balance state and non-state partners?
- Should SPIM narrow its focus to a few sectors or issues in order to increase impact?
- What are the sectors or issues that AusAID can have the greatest impact on through SPIM?
- How should AusAID best engage with partners, key stakeholders, and government to improve program design, and increase its influence?
- How can SPIM help to maximize the flexibility and responsiveness of AusAID programs in volatile conflict affected environments?
- Is there a need for AusAID to improve its monitoring of local conditions, for future project designs and the monitoring and evaluation of current programs?
- How can AusAID monitor SPIM programs in a more rigorous and independent way, while maintaining cost effectiveness and not undermining partner efforts?
- How can improved monitoring of SPIM programs help to test new program ideas, or provide a proof-of-concept for programs that AusAID may want to expand program funding?

Findings and Recommendations

1. Strategic value of SPIM

The SPIM facility, in its current form, has enormous strategic value for AusAID. SPIM has allowed AusAID to support innovative programs, working on critical issues for peace and security in Mindanao, in a flexible and responsive manner. As AusAID has expanded its networks and program support in conflict and security issues in Mindanao, SPIM has provided a valuable mechanism to complement AusAID staff engagement with key actors. Through this combination of SPIM and active engagement, AusAID today has significantly expanded access and influence with government and influential actors on conflict-related issues, and established an effective program mechanism for responding to emerging challenges to the peace and security in Mindanao.

Even compared to other conflict-affected regions, Mindanao is a particularly volatile and complex operating environment for official development assistance (ODA). As detailed in Figure 1, during the course of SPIM's existence, there have been several major events that have shifted the local context in the conflict-affected regions of Mindanao. As argued in AusAID's Strategic Framework for Engagement (2009), effective international support for peacebuilding and development in Mindanao must be highly responsive to changing conditions, and calibrated to local conditions. For this reason, AusAID's traditional program design and management practices must be modified to be more responsive and flexible. The traditional project design process is based on the presumption that enough information can be gathered ahead of time to guide a project for 3-5 years. Recent history has shown that in Mindanao, local peace and security conditions are likely to change frequently and dramatically within a standard project cycle. Without adequate flexibility, program designs based on an analysis at the beginning of a project are likely to be out-dated or ineffective well before the end of the project.

SPIM has allowed AusAID to work in this fluid environment by providing small grants to key local actors, often in response to important changes in the environment. For example, in 2008-2009, several senior officers in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) began to publically support peacebuilding methods in severe conflict-affected regions. This opening created a new opportunity for the AFP to improve relations

Figure 1:

Mindanao: A Turbulent Operating Environment

During the period of SPIM (2005-present), the following events have led to major shifts in the operating environment:

- ***Collapse of peace talks with MILF*** – In August 2008, the peace talks between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) collapsed, leading to a dramatic escalation of violence in central and north-central Mindanao. Within weeks, the renewed violence displaced more than 500,000 residents.
- ***Renewal of peace talks*** – By April 2009, the peace talks had resumed, and most of the violence had ended.
- ***Maguindanao Massacre*** – In November 2009, a political rivalry between two powerful Moro clans in central Mindanao led to the killing of 58 people in a tragic event that made international headlines. This event led the Arroyo government to declare martial law, and subsequently drop their support for the powerful Ampatuan clan that had held the ARMM Governor and Maguindanao Governor positions.
- ***President Aquino takes office*** – The new administration quickly declared their support for the peace talks, culminating in a surprise meeting between the President and the Chairman of the MILF in August 2011. By November 2011, however, the talks were proceeding slowly with core disagreements over the need for constitutional change.
- ***Formation of BIFF*** – In July 2011, one of the largest units of the MILF forces breaks away from the insurgent command, though promises to respect the peace negotiations.
- ***Uncertainty around ARMM elections and administration*** – In 2010-11, the government moved to align the ARMM and national elections for 2013, and appointed an interim administration for the ARMM Regional Government. These steps led to a dispute with the Supreme Court, and some loss of momentum on ARMM governance reform.
- ***New violence in Basilan and Zamboanga*** – In October 2011, a series of violent exchanges in Basilan and Zamboanga lead to near collapse of the peace process.

with conflict-affected communities and expand constructive engagement with Mindanao civil society and Bangsamoro leaders. AusAID quickly responded to this opportunity by providing a grant to the Balay Mindanaw Foundation (agreement #53213) to help the AFP introduce new training programs for the military on peacebuilding and local conflict dynamics. SPIM should maintain the current level of flexibility to ensure that programs are informed by local knowledge, and to allow AusAID to respond to changing circumstances in a time-sensitive manner with modest cutting-edge initiatives.

SPIM also allows AusAID to support important work on sensitive issues in a low-profile, flexible manner. Many of the critical obstacles to peace and security in Mindanao are deeply political, and often require direct or indirect engagement with armed insurgent groups. SPIM allows AusAID to support local efforts to address these issues, while keeping an arms-length distance from the program activities and thus reducing risk to the Australian Government. For example, when the peace talks with the MILF were gaining traction after the new Aquino Administration announced its strong support, there were several new efforts to address critical obstacles to a final peace agreement. One of the primary obstacles to a new agreement was the separation between the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the MILF. While this issue has been widely recognized as a roadblock to a final peace agreement for many years, there has since been no significant program to help address the problem. Through SPIM, AusAID supported the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and its local partner Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society (CBCS) to address the problem in partnership with influential local actors close to both insurgent groups (Mindanao Solidarity Project, Agreement # 59428). This type of project would have been very unlikely under a more traditional AusAID funding mechanism, due to the sensitive nature of the project.

SPIM has also provided a mechanism to allow for experimentation and incubation of innovative new ideas to address peace and security challenges. For example, one of the major challenges to peace and security in Mindanao has been the alienation and misunderstanding between the Bangsamoro population, and the majority Christian population. The problem is exacerbated by the limited interactions between these two populations, and the often inflammatory media coverage of the conflict. AusAID used SPIM to address this set of issues in several different ways, allowing for a comparison of the effectiveness of different approaches. For example, AusAID supported inter-communal video-conferencing between youth and community members, through a grant to Peace Tech (agreement # 59428). In another grant to the Lopez Group Foundation (agreement # 55480), AusAID supported the development of a series of documentaries to be aired nationally on peace and conflict issues, targeting secondary school students. AusAID also supported several programs that encouraged a balanced media coverage of the conflict-affected regions, including grants to Public Trust Media Group (agreement # 44561), and Mindanao News and Information Cooperative Center (agreement #55455). This multi-faceted approach will allow AusAID to determine which type of strategy is most effective, most needed and best value-for-money in the Mindanao context, in order to guide future programming decisions.

The SPIM facility is an important complement to other the other aid modalities used by AusAID in Mindanao, including sectoral programs, community-based assistance, and funding through multi-lateral agencies. Sectoral programs, such as BEAM and PRMF, allow AusAID to focus large investments on major structural challenges and strengthen partner government systems, but are generally less flexible and unsuitable for addressing sensitive issues at the heart of the conflict. While the next phase of BEAM includes partnerships with civil society, sectoral programs are usually not the best mechanism for supporting civil society efforts. Through its flexible grant mechanism, SPIM has the ability to play this role and support sector-specific programs such as BEAM. Community-based programs, such as ACT for Peace and the ARMM Social Fund, are usually an effective method for delivering conflict-sensitive development assistance to the community level

in high conflict areas. However, there is very little evidence that these types of programs help to address the key drivers of conflict, which often are exogenous to the community level. SPIM can be an important mechanism to address the broader regional challenges that community-based programs cannot address. SPIM is also complementary to multilateral agency programs in the conflict-affected regions. AusAID's increasing investments in multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank, are important mechanisms for empirical research and monitoring of the conflict area, and for supporting government capacity in critical sectors and policy functions. SPIM, however, is in a much better position to support non-state groups working on sensitive issues, and focus on programs for marginalized communities and regions affected by active conflict.

While the SPIM facility has significant potential, AusAID has not fully capitalized on the strategic value-add from this program mechanism. While SPIM-supported projects have created a wealth of knowledge and lessons, AusAID has not systematically captured this information at the aggregate level. While staff turn-over has been modest (compared to most development programs), there has been a significant loss of institutional knowledge after the departure of key individuals who played a role in SPIM's early projects. Furthermore, limitations on staff time have meant that several project partners have had very little engagement with AusAID staff, and no opportunities to share the insights and experiences from SPIM-supported projects.

Furthermore, AusAID needs to find a balance between flexibility and structure required for results monitoring. The current approach favors flexibility over structure – SPIM has never had a design, nor an established set of objectives or a results framework. For AusAID to evaluate the aggregate impact of SPIM, and compare the impact of various approaches supported by SPIM, it will be necessary to create a results framework that will set outcome level objectives, and allow AusAID to monitor against these objectives. This will reduce the flexibility of SPIM, to some extent, by excluding potential programs that would fall outside of the results framework. However, the framework should be designed to assist AusAID's diverse, broad-based set of efforts to address specific critical issues, while enabling rigorous monitoring of impact.

2. More coherent project selection and sectoral focus

Without clear objectives or parameters for program selection, the projects supported through SPIM have lacked a clear focus. While there has been some benefit in the diversity of projects to date (see previous section), the selection of projects and partners has been relatively ad hoc. As a result, the overall SPIM portfolio has lacked coherence, making it nearly impossible to evaluate the overall value or impact of the facility. In the absence of structure, SPIM projects have different underlying assumptions about peace in Mindanao. A strategy framework will be useful to give impact focus.

SPIM has supported 36 projects to date, covering nine major sectors (or categories). Table 1 illustrates the diversity of programs supported by SPIM. The largest category of programs was peacebuilding, which accounted for 14 (39%) of projects, and 47.2% of funds allocated. Gender and peacebuilding programs accounted for only 8% of projects, but 22.2% of funds allocated, as a result of a large grant to the Mindanao Commission on Women. The remaining program categories address Mindanao's peace and security issues, in particular youth, media, and inter-faith dialogues. However, several projects supported under SPIM seem to be outliers from the implicit focus on peace and security. For example, the projects under emergency preparedness, economic development, and select few youth projects (e.g., Marawi Special Book Corner) seem to be providing benefits to conflict-affected communities, though with an implicit indirect connection to peace and conflict issues.

Table 1: SPIM Projects by Category

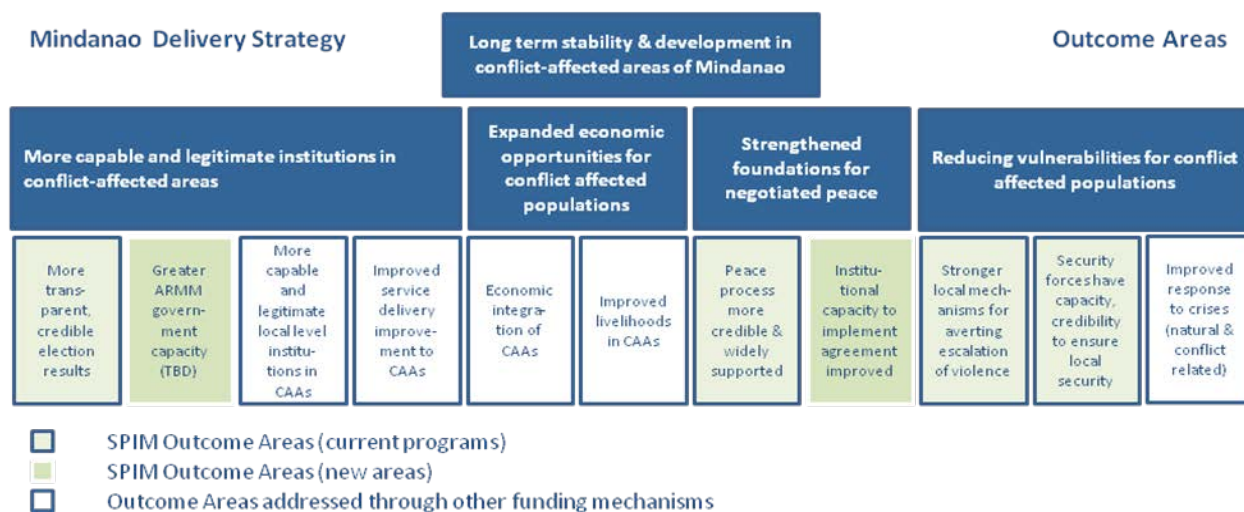
Project Category	Number of Agreements	% of Agreements	Value of agreements	% of Funding
Peacebuilding	14	39%	4,460,947	47.20%
Youth	5	14%	326,467	3.50%
Media	4	11%	1,353,500	14.30%
Democracy	3	8%	399,228	4.20%
Economic Development	3	8%	459,677	4.90%
Gender & Peacebuilding	3	8%	2,095,000	22.20%
Inter-faith dialogues	2	6%	236,120	2.50%
ADR	1	3%	107,490	1.10%
Emergency	1	3%	10,147	0.10%
	36		9,448,576	

The Mindanao Conflict Affected Areas Delivery Strategy (MDS) currently being developed by AusAID provides a useful framework for SPIM. The MDS framework is intended to provide coherence and focus for all of AusAID’s investments in Mindanao over the next 5 years, including SPIM. The MDS framework includes 11 major outcome areas, organized under four end-of-strategy objectives (see Diagram 1). The MDS theory of change framework should provide the parameters for the SPIM program framework, to ensure that SPIM is contributing to AusAID’s overall program objectives in Mindanao. Six of the outcome areas in the MDS framework are well suited for SPIM, including two areas where SPIM has not supported programs to date:

- More transparent, credible election results
- Greater ARMM government capacity (*new program area for SPIM*)
- Peace process more credible & widely supported
- Institutional capacity to implement agreement improved (*new program area for SPIM*)
- Stronger local mechanisms for averting escalation of violence
- Security forces have capacity, credibility to ensure local security

SPIM is ideally suited to help AusAID address these outcome areas for two reasons. First, some of these areas are best addressed through relatively modest, but flexible program interventions involving multiple local partners. For example, the outcome area “peace process more credible and widely supported” would be best implemented through grants to civil society groups advocating for the peace process, government agencies with a critical role in the peace process (e.g., OPAPP), media organizations that improve coverage and public awareness, and analytical work on the challenges preventing a successful peace agreement. Most of these activities would only require small funding levels, but would need maximum flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. AusAID also needs the ability to support multiple groups within the same sector – including those with divergent views – in order to avoid the risk of accusations of favoritism. Other outcome areas in this category would include “stronger local mechanisms for averting escalation of violence”, and “security forces have capacity, credibility to ensure local security”.

Diagram 1: Mindanao Delivery Strategy Framework



Second, SPIM is ideally suited for exploratory programs to address large and complex problems. SPIM allows AusAID to support experimentation and create incentives for local organizations to innovate. The experience with SPIM to date has shown that AusAID has used SPIM to test interesting new ideas with modest exploratory grants. When these ideas show promise in the initial pilot phase, AusAID can scale up funding levels that allow for a focus on program elements that have shown clear impacts in the first phase. For example, the support to Balay Mindanaw Foundation began with a small grant to support military training on peacebuilding and community engagement, which was later expanded in a second grant to encompass a more ambitious security sector reform agenda. Outcome areas in this category would include “more transparent, credible election results”, “greater ARMM government capacity”, and “institutional capacity to implement agreement improved”. Exploratory SPIM grants could be used to support a few different approaches to address a large and complex problem. After evaluating the relative value of each approach, AusAID can scale up the approaches that are most effective.

This program framework, however, would require that all new programs funded by SPIM must make a clear and measureable contribution towards one (or more) of the six outcome areas. Several of the programs funded by SPIM in the past would fall outside of the new parameters for SPIM projects, including the programs categorized as alternative dispute resolution, emergency, and some of the youth programs.

3. Expand the spectrum of partners

AusAID should consider expanding the array of partners, and types of partners funded through SPIM, as a way to maximize the strategic value and flexibility of the mechanism. While the review team recommends a narrowing of the program outcomes funded by SPIM, there is a strong case to expand the possible partners to achieve these outcomes. Most of the six outcome areas will require multi-stakeholder approaches, including working through government, civil society, conflict-affected community leaders and institutions, security forces, and insurgency-affiliated

organizations (as appropriate). By expanding the spectrum of partners, AusAID will strengthen the prospects for impact, and avoid accusations of favoring certain groups or partners.

Table 2: SPIM Projects by Partner Type

Partner Type	Number of Agreements	% of Agreements	Value of agreements	% of Funding
Australian Government Implemented	2	6%	136,120	1.4%
Foreign Consultants	2	6%	85,000	0.9%
Foreign University	1	3%	84,500	0.9%
International NGO	10	28%	2,666,118	28.2%
Local Consultant	1	3%	10,147	0.1%
Philippines-based (non-Mindanao) NGO	9	28%	2,219,957	23.5%
Mindanao-based NGO	7	19%	4,074,558	43.1%
Mindanao-based NGO (conflict areas)	2	6%	87,645	0.9%
Philippines Government	1	3%	64,530	0.7%
Philippines University	1	3%	20,000	0.2%

Despite the success of SPIM, AusAID has limited SPIM support to primarily civil society organizations. In order to improve the strategic value of SPIM, AusAID should consider using SPIM to support policies and programs implemented by the Government of the Philippines (GPH). For example, AusAID should consider greater collaborate with OPAPP through SPIM, with the intention of improving the government led efforts to strengthen the peace negotiations, and future peace agreements.

To date, SPIM has funded the vast majority of programs through non-governmental organizations (28 projects which constitute 78% of projects and 83% of allocated funds). AusAID has managed to achieve a relative balance between Mindanao-based NGOs (8 projects, 43.7% of allocated funds) and organizations based in other parts of the Philippines (10 projects, 24.4% of funds), primarily in Manila and Cebu.

One major finding is that AusAID has generally not been able to provide direct grants to organizations based in the conflict-affected areas. AusAID has only provided two direct grants to organizations based inside conflict-affected regions, the Institute for Autonomy and Governance (agreement # 59123), and the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies (agreement # 55441), with a small scale project that only constitutes 0.9% of AusAID’s SPIM funding. In sub-national conflict areas, it is critical for international donors to balance aid between the conflict-affected population and the “outsiders” (including government). SPIM should be a valuable mechanism for establishing direct relationships with organizations closely affiliated with the conflict-affected population.

AusAID has primarily relied on intermediary organizations to channel funding to partners based in the conflict-affected regions. Many of the larger grants to International NGOs, and the grant to the Mindanao Commission on Women involved multiple small activities and small sub-grants to organizations based in the conflict areas.

The reliance on intermediary organizations has had mixed results for AusAID. Intermediary organizations generally play a useful role in allowing AusAID funds to reach organizations that

would otherwise be excluded from AusAID programs. While there is a strategic value in having the capacity to support the work of small organizations in a conflict area, there are many hidden costs and risks for both the donor and grantee. Many of these organizations do not have the capacity to meet the reporting and financial monitoring requirements. Funding relationships with small-scale partners require relatively large investments in staff time to provide capacity building and oversight. Organizations based in conflict areas may also prefer to work with intermediaries, as this arrangement reduces their requirements for reporting, and reduces their level of risk in a potentially sensitive environment. However, there are cases where the intermediary organization is unnecessary, especially when the sub-grantee has the capacity and interest to establish a direct relationship with AusAID. In one case, a sub-grantee in one of SPIM's projects expressed frustration that an intermediary organization offered to be a funder, but instead took the sub-grantee's proposal to AusAID with the intention of becoming a fund manager without knowledge or consent from the sub-grantee.¹

Intermediary funding can be an important mechanism for AusAID to work in conflict areas of Mindanao, but it is important to conduct due diligence on the intermediary-subgrantee relationship when appropriate. Intermediaries should be evaluated based on three factors:

- Capacity to channel funds to organizations that AusAID cannot reach directly, due to capacity or risk,
- Aggregation of information from sub-grantees, and
- Expressed interest of sub-grantees to work through intermediaries, rather than through a direct relationship with AusAID.

For the future of SPIM, AusAID should consider expanding funding to government organizations, either through technical assistance provision or direct grants as appropriate. To date, only one grant has been provided to a government organization (MEDCo, agreement #52222). Most of the outcomes for which SPIM will be responsible, should include some form of government engagement and/or support. For example, "more transparent, credible election results" will require support for electoral systems (traditionally provided through COMELEC) as a complement to civil society election monitoring, civic education, and advocacy activities. In some cases, such as "greater ARMM government capacity", the government will be the critical stakeholder.

Expanding assistance to government organizations will add a new strategic dimension to SPIM that will allow AusAID to strengthen the role of reformers in government and the security forces through direct support for their work.

4. More robust results monitoring

Currently, results monitoring for SPIM projects generally includes output-level tracking, provided by the project implementing partners. AusAID has conducted independent evaluations of two programs – Peace Tech and the Mindanao Commission on Women. While these evaluations are useful on many levels, they do not make evidence-based claims on impact against key outcomes. Often, as is the case with Peace Tech, impact monitoring is limited to the recording of attendance by participants. Given the lack of outcome and impact-level monitoring and project evaluation, AusAID is not in a position to make claims on the outcome level impact of individual SPIM projects, or

¹ The claim cannot be verified within the scope of this review, and the name of the organizations have not been disclosed as a result. However, there is evidence that this type of practice is not uncommon in conflict-affected environments where donors have limited access to conflict zones.

aggregate results of SPIM investments over the past 6 years. If AusAID intends to continue supporting the SPIM facility, it will be essential to establish a process for outcome level monitoring.

One of the key findings from the review is that SPIM program partners are generally not in a position to conduct rigorous outcome level monitoring. In most cases, SPIM projects are designed to contribute to outcomes that are very difficult to measure through traditional monitoring and evaluation methods. For example, peace education programs such as Lopez Group (agreement #55480) carry the mandate of instilling the idea of “peace” within student participants. While participant surveys conducted before and after the program may determine its success in the short-term, this method is not adequate for assessing contributions to the region’s long term peace and security. The difficulty of measuring educational impact suggests that SPIM programs such as Lopez Group and PeaceTech (agreement #55447) could be better evaluated for their contributions toward AusAID’s overall objective in Mindanao if governed and monitored by education sector specific programs, such as BEAM, which have evidence of education value-add and a history of working successfully in the region.

Furthermore, the scale of individual projects is generally not large enough to register a measurable impact on the very large and long-term problems that they are seeking to address. For example, programs that are designed to increase public awareness and support for the peace process (e.g., Peace Tech and Lopez Group) would generally have great difficulty in generating evidence that their programs led to a measureable shift in perceptions in target communities. Measuring a shift in perceptions (beyond the anecdotal level), would require a two stage series² of perception surveys, or extensive focus group discussions with a large enough sample to make generalizable claims for a wider population. Project partners generally do not have the in-house capacity to conduct rigorous social science research that would be required to conduct this type of monitoring.

AusAID should consider outcome-level monitoring for all of SPIM through an independent consortium of researchers. The set of skills required to conduct this type of monitoring would include deep local context and access, combined with world-class rigor and technical expertise on social science, mixed methods research. The ideal consortium would most likely include a research institution(s) from Mindanao that can provide a local-context framework, combined with international experience on best-practice monitoring in fragile states and conflict-affected regions.³ This would complement AusAID’s interest in building the capacity of national institutions for research and evaluation.

If AusAID decides to focus the program objectives of SPIM (as discussed in recommendation 2), then it will be more feasible to create a results framework that would allow AusAID to monitor the outcome level, aggregate impact of SPIM programs over several years.

5. Expand AusAID staff capacity for engagement and oversight

AusAID should consider expanding the staff resources available to administer SPIM projects, and cultivate new relationships. Much of the value from SPIM comes from expanded networks and access to knowledge from SPIM partners in the conflict-affected regions, and among influential actors. Several of the partners interviewed indicated that they had very limited interaction with

² The two stages would include baseline study and a follow-up study to measure changes in perceptions.

³ The review team attempted unsuccessfully to identify a relevant model for this type of monitoring in other conflict-affected countries where aid is provided through a flexible small grants facility. This recommendation will require considerable additional effort to design the consortium structure and monitoring approach, and identify qualified research organizations in the Philippines and abroad.

AusAID staff. As a result, it seems that AusAID has not managed to capitalize on the benefits from SPIM, in part due to staff turn-over, and limited staff time. Given restrictions placed on travel to conflict areas, AusAID should draw on current and prospective partners active in conflict-affected Mindanao, while hiring Mindanao-based staff members that are less prone to the personal security threats. The optimum staffing arrangement for AusAID would include a combination of international and local staff from the conflict-affected area who are dedicated to managing the SPIM facility.

In expanding staff resources available to administer SPIM projects it is imperative that AusAID first increase the amount of staff time allocated towards SPIM. If AusAID wants to expand direct grants to organizations based in conflict-affected regions, it will be necessary to dedicate more staff time to cultivating these relationships and providing additional stewardship for these organizations, including guidance in the proposal generation process, and assistance in meeting the reporting and financial management requirements. While much of the capacity building can be provided through intermediaries or consultants, it will be important for AusAID to be directly involved in the cultivation and ongoing management of these relationships. Further to this, if AusAID intends to draw aggregate lessons, and improve knowledge retention and program learning (see recommendation 6 below), then additional staff resources will be essential. AusAID can rely on researchers and consultants to perform in depth analysis, but staff must play a substantive leadership role if AusAID is to internalize these lessons, and turn them into improved programs. Third, if AusAID decides to expand grants to government organizations under SPIM, this will require a significant expansion of staff resources for regular engagement with government partners. Finally, increased funding to conflict-affected regions will likely raise the level of risk for the Australian Government. Small grants to local organizations require nearly as much oversight and risk management as much larger program funding mechanisms.

6. Improve knowledge retention and aggregation

One of the strategic benefits of a flexible facility like SPIM is that it allows AusAID to be innovative and experimental with modest resources in order to test program hypotheses, and monitor the results of new approaches. The lessons from SPIM could be extremely valuable to guide larger program decisions, and increase AusAID's influence with government and other development agencies. However, for this value to be realized there needs to be a system for capturing the lessons from individual projects, and aggregating information into a format that can be readily utilized in program decisions and policy debates.

At present, AusAID does not have a robust system for aggregating this knowledge, and is instead dependent on the initiative of individual staff members. Individual staff members have quickly become experts on the substance of SPIM programs and peace and security conditions in Mindanao, in part due to their exposure to SPIM partners and programs. AusAID has benefited from a relatively light turn-over of staff in this role over the course of the SPIM facility, with only one period of transition. These individuals have made significant efforts to reflect on SPIM lessons, and integrate this information into AusAID's planning for programs in Mindanao. AusAID has supported a few programs to aggregate knowledge from programs in Mindanao, including this review, and the Strategic Framework for Engagement. However, these two efforts were not designed to systematically engage with SPIM partners, and aggregate lessons and ideas over time. Instead, they have been focused on macro level challenges (i.e., to inform AusAID's strategy in Mindanao), and have not attempted to capture and articulate the granular details and lessons from individual SPIM projects.

The review team recommends that AusAID put greater emphasis into ongoing knowledge aggregation and retention from SPIM programs. This effort would be heavily dependent on increased staffing levels (see recommendation #5) and more robust monitoring (see recommendation #4). Specific strategies for greater knowledge aggregation and retention may include:

- *Annual reports on SPIM activities* – On an annual basis, AusAID would lead a process that would systematically capture the outcomes and lessons of SPIM projects. The report would include in depth case studies of a select group of individual projects and match successful program outcomes with AusAID’s Mindanao Delivery Strategy. The process would ideally involve a team of AusAID staff involved in SPIM, and a small team of researchers and writers to help formulate and document the outcomes. The report would be shared throughout AusAID, and selectively with external stakeholders, including the Philippines Government and other development organizations.
- *AusAID SPIM knowledge management role* – It is clear that current AusAID staffing levels cannot accommodate systematic knowledge management and retention needs, which are often time consuming. AusAID would likely need to create a new specialist role to support this function, which would ideally be a Philippines national full time staff person. This person would need to be part of the core SPIM team, and join most of the SPIM related meetings. This person would have a dual role of regular engagement with SPIM partners, while documenting key lessons and general trends from programs and partner engagement.
- *Organize roundtables of SPIM partners* – AusAID should consider organizing roundtables of SPIM partner organizations to promote knowledge sharing. The roundtables would ideally be organized around specific, forward-looking topics of strong interest to AusAID and all partners involved (e.g., how can the international community support implementation of a GPH-MILF peace agreement).⁴

It is important to note that there is likely to be significant and widespread interest in the aggregated lessons of SPIM within the wider international development community. While aid budgets continue to expand in fragile states and conflict-affected regions, there is a growing concern over the lack of evidence of impact. This effort to aggregate the lessons of SPIM - in addition to more robust outcome level monitoring - will help fill the knowledge vacuum in this area, and will be well received by researchers, donor agencies, governments, and other international actors actively providing assistance to conflict-affected regions.

7. Expand the level of resources

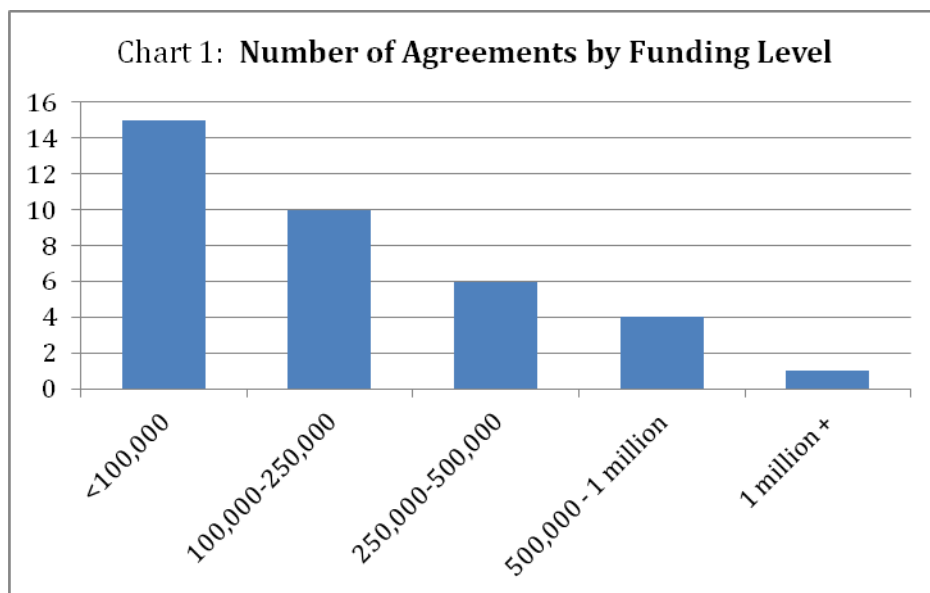
AusAID should consider expanding the current funding level for the SPIM facility. SPIM has important strategic value for AusAID’s assistance to Mindanao, and has the potential to be a valuable mechanism for program experimentation and a learning tool on providing aid in conflict-affected areas. The recommendations in this review to expand staff resources, implement a more

⁴ AusAID should keep in mind, however, that many SPIM partners are in direct competition with each other for program funding, including SPIM funds. A roundtable of SPIM partners may not necessarily be a conducive environment for full disclosure and sharing of key lessons, especially if these lessons imply failure or short-comings of current or past programs. A productive roundtable would need to be carefully planned to minimize the competitiveness among participants, and create an environment for open and reflective dialogue.

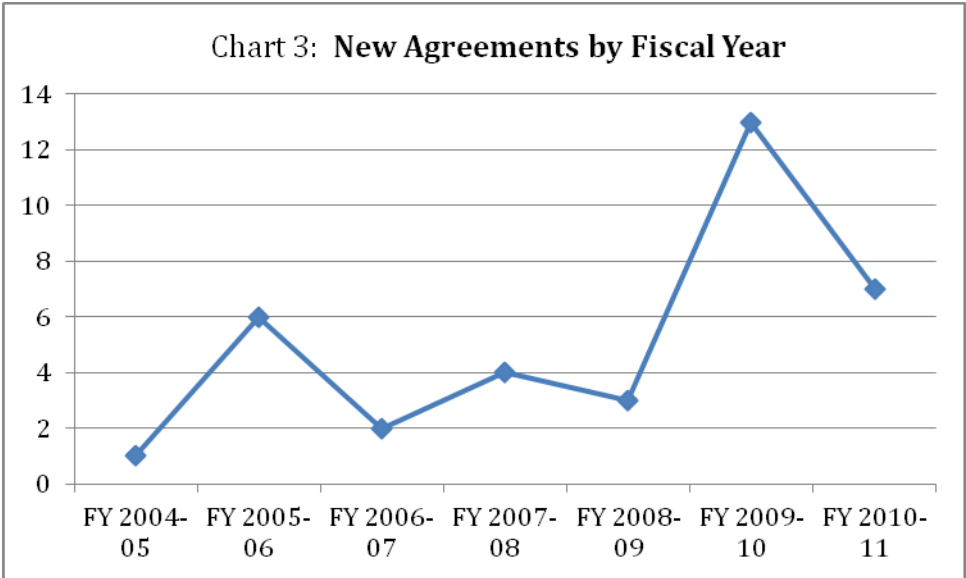
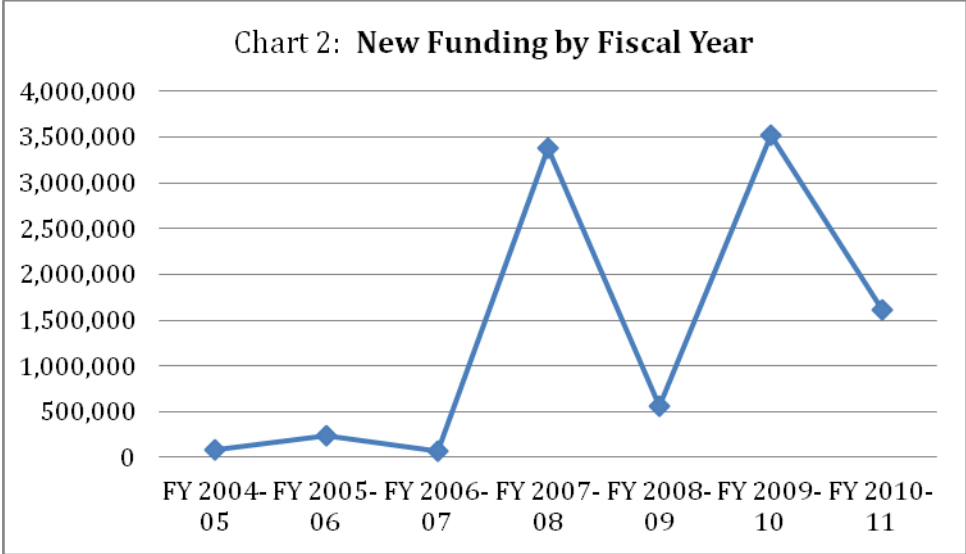
robust results monitoring and establish a system for more rigorous retention and aggregation of key lessons, will increase the strategic value of SPIM, but will also require increased resources.

If AusAID plans to expand funding in conflict-affected regions of Mindanao, it will be important to scale up the resources available to the SPIM facility. SPIM is likely to be the primary mechanism for more than half (6 of 11) of the strategic outcome areas in the 2011 Mindanao Delivery Strategy. Many of the new areas included in the Mindanao Delivery Strategy will require significantly more funding than current levels of SPIM resources.

Furthermore, if AusAID decides to expand the type of partners to include government and multi-laterals, then SPIM needs to be significantly scaled up. Funding to government partners would be a natural progression for SPIM, and would add important strategic balance for the SPIM portfolio. SPIM is currently resourced to provide small grants to non-governmental organizations. To date, the average size of grants under SPIM has been AU\$262,000 (mean), with median value of AU\$112,000. If you remove the largest grant to MCW, the mean is AU\$213,000 (mean), with median value of AU\$107,000. Chart 1 below shows the allocation of grant agreements in terms of size of the agreement. While AusAID should continue to support small grants to NGOs, this type of funding should be complemented by larger agreements with governments, and possibly multi-laterals agencies, which will necessarily require larger funding levels per agreement.



To date, the program expenditures of the SPIM facility (in terms of new funding agreements) has averaged AU\$ 1.35 million per year since FY 2004-5, with an average of 5 new awards per fiscal year. Chart 2 below illustrates the level of funding in each fiscal year since the beginning of the SPIM facility. The highest level of funding was AU\$ 3,516,472 in FY2009-10, with 13 new funding agreements. In the most recent fiscal year (2010-11), the funding dropped to AU\$ 1,614,888, with 7 new funding agreements.



Annex 2 provides a notional list of activities under each of the six outcome areas supported by SPIM under the Mindanao Delivery Strategy. If AusAID decides to pursue all of these programs, the estimated funding range would be approximately AU\$7 million to \$17 million annually. On this basis, AusAID should consider an increases scale of program funding within this range.

Conclusion

The review team recommends that AusAID expand funding levels and improve the SPIM facility through more coherent selection of new projects, more robust results monitoring, and improved knowledge retention and aggregation. Increased AusAID staffing levels will be essential to introduce the changes proposed in this report. Through these changes, the review team contends that the strategic value of the SPIM facility will also increase, and ultimately be well worth the added investment.

Should AusAID decide to pursue this expansion approach, it will be important to maintain the key characteristics of SPIM in its current state. The most important feature is the flexibility of the grants mechanism, and the limited administrative requirements, that allow AusAID to move quickly to respond and adapt to changing circumstances in a dynamic environment. The strategic value of the SPIM facility is a direct result of this flexibility, so it should not be sacrificed in the process of scaling up or introducing additional rigor.

The team recommends a subsequent review of the SPIM facility within three years of these changes with a focus on program results and value for money. Due to limitations in the results monitoring to date, it was difficult for the review team to draw conclusions on the impact of SPIM supported programs to date. The team believes that SPIM holds important strategic potential, but recommends further analysis to test this assumption within a few years.

Annex 1: Independent Progress Report on SPIM Facility

The following matrix is based on AusAID standard evaluation format. While the SPIM Review was not intended to be a formal evaluation, the team has provided feedback in response to the AusAID Standard Evaluation Questions.

Evaluation Criteria	Rating (1-6)	Explanation
Relevance	5	The programs supported through SPIM are highly relevant to both Australian Government and partner government priorities. Peace and security challenges in Mindanao are widespread and enduring issues that have affected the lives of millions of Filipinos. The SPIM facility complements other AusAID investments in this area by investing in a complementary set of activities by citizen groups and non-governmental organizations to improve the prospects for peace in the region, and reduce the impact of ongoing conflict. As stated in the report, this type of flexible mechanism is an ideal vehicle for supporting programs that respond to dynamic local conditions. For these reasons, we recommend the highest score (6) for relevance of the SPIM facility.
Effectiveness	NA	This area is difficult to rate due to the lack of specific objectives in the SPIM facility design. The individual programs supported by SPIM should be evaluated based on their own objectives. However, this review did not have the scope or mandate to perform a review of individual programs. For this reason, the team is unable to provide a score for this criterion.
Efficiency	4	The SPIM facility has been implemented with a remarkably lean staffing contingent. At most points over the last 6 years, SPIM has been managed by one person, on a part time basis. Despite the low staffing levels, SPIM sub-grantees were complimentary when asked about the efficiency of procurement and administration. As a result, AusAID has achieved significant efficiencies in the SPIM facility, in large part by reducing the requirements for competitive bidding, and minimizing the reporting and oversight requirements. However, as stated in the report, the review team suggests an increase in AusAID staff dedicated to the SPIM facility, to (i) improve the value to AusAID in terms of knowledge, (ii) to allow for more regular oversight and engagement with partners, and (iii) to allow for a significant expansion of the SPIM facility. AusAID staff have also been highly responsive to local concerns and conditions during the course of the SPIM facility. For these reasons, we recommend no changes to the core SPIM facility, with the exception of increased staffing levels.

Evaluation Criteria	Rating (1-6)	Explanation
Sustainability	4	<p>SPIM is designed to maximize partner country ownership and sustainability. In almost all cases, SPIM supported programs were based on the ideas of partners from the beginning. AusAID Manila maintains an open door policy for prospective partner organizations to share their ideas for possible funding. As a result, many of the leading civil society groups in Mindanao and Manila would regularly share their best ideas with AusAID, occasionally leading to funding support. AusAID was very effective at ensuring local ownership throughout the process, which will ensure that the individual activities have greater levels of sustainability. Based on a cursory review of the individual programs supported by SPIM, most of the activities are likely to continue beyond SPIM funding. However, a few activities are expensive to operate and highly dependent on SPIM funding, such as the PeaceTech media programs, and are not likely to continue beyond SPIM funding. In terms of the facility as a whole, the team recommends a high score (4) on sustainability.</p>
Gender Equality	5	<p>AusAID (through SPIM) has been an important supporter of women’s roles in peacebuilding in Mindanao, particularly through support of the Mindanao Commission on Women (MCW). 22.2% of the overall SPIM program budget was spent on three programs that specifically addressed gender and peacebuilding issues. AusAID staff consistently showed a high level of personal commitment to this issue, through regular engagement and support for MCW at all levels. The recent review of the MCW program “Another Mindanao is Possible” argued that the program made important contributions in this area, and helped to draw a wide network of women leaders across all major stakeholder groups into peacebuilding efforts in Mindanao. The only area of improvement would be to pursue more efforts to mainstream gender into other programs, as appropriate. On the whole, we recommend a high score (5) in this area, based on a major investments and commitment to gender equality through SPIM.</p>
Monitoring & Evaluation	2	<p>As noted in the report, SPIM could use some improvement in the area of monitoring and evaluation. AusAID relied primarily on SPIM grantee organizations to monitor their programs. One of the key findings from this review process is that most partners monitored only at the output level, and did not have the capacity or incentive to monitor at the outcome or impact level. Very few SPIM grantee organizations conducted baseline studies, and most monitoring activities did not use particularly rigorous methods.⁵ As a result, it is very difficult to evaluate the cumulative impact of SPIM programs, or even to compare the relative effectiveness of SPIM programs with each other. The review team has provided some recommendations in the report to improve the monitoring and evaluation of SPIM programs in the future.</p>

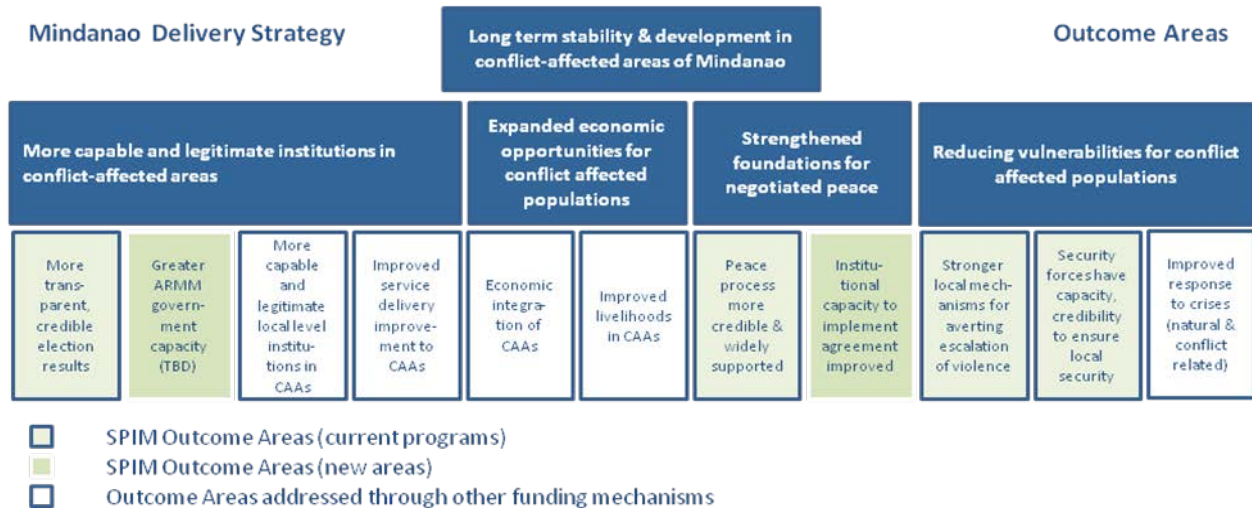
⁵ It is important to note that the problem of poor monitoring and evaluation is widespread in the field of peacebuilding and conflict mitigation.

Evaluation Criteria	Rating (1-6)	Explanation
Analysis & Learning	3	<p>The SPIM facility has been used to generate analysis and learning that has influenced AusAID's overall approach in Mindanao, and the thinking of government and other donors on aid to Mindanao. SPIM also supported a few targeted programs that used analysis and learning to influence key stakeholders in Mindanao, including the Armed Forces, and MINDA. However, the review team recommends that more effort should be put into consolidating the lessons and insights from SPIM programs for broader analysis and influence. SPIM-supported programs could provide a wealth of knowledge and lessons from the field, however, AusAID has not been able to synthesize or document these lessons due to understaffing. The team recommends a moderate score (3) regarding the analysis and learning from SPIM activities to date.</p>

Rating scale: 6 = very high quality; 1 = very low quality. Below 4 is less than satisfactory.

Annex 2: Notional Funding Levels for SPIM Outcome Areas

The review team is recommending an increase in funding levels for the SPIM facility. The main rationale for scaling up SPIM funding levels is because this facility will be the primary mechanism for address six of AusAID's 11 outcome areas in the Mindanao Delivery Strategy (see chart below). The review team also recommends broadening the SPIM partnership model to include government and multilateral agencies, which will require higher levels of funding than the current model support.



The following tables provide notional activities and funding levels for each of the six outcome areas supported by SPIM. These activities and funding amounts are estimates for planning purposes only.

Outcome	Activities	Activity Type	Partner Types	Funding Range	
				Low	High
More Transparent, credible election results	Technical assistance for election procedure reform	Influencing	COMELEC; Civil society organizations; INGO	400,000	1,000,000
	Election monitoring in conflict-affected areas	Influencing	COMELEC; Civil society organizations; INGO	500,000	2,000,000
	Support collaboration between security forces, CAA communities and civil society to reduce election-related violence	Influencing	COMELEC; Civil society organizations; INGO	250,000	750,000
	Support citizen coalitions for electoral reforms, and monitoring	Influencing	COMELEC; Civil society organizations; INGO	300,000	500,000
			Outcome Total	1,450,000	4,250,000

Greater ARMM government capacity	Empirical research on ARMM government capacity needs and perceptions by ARMM population	Foundational	Multilateral; INGO	500,000	1,500,000
	Support citizen coalitions for ARMM reforms	Influencing	COMELEC; Civil society organizations; INGO	200,000	400,000
	Technical assistance for ARMM government		Multilateral; Government; INGO	1,000,000	2,500,000
			Outcome Total	1,700,000	4,400,000
Peace process more credible & widely supported	Review of peacebuilding programs to inform strategy to support peace process	Foundational	INGO; local research organization	75,000	150,000
	Analysis of key political dynamics, and issues in the peace negotiations	Foundational	INGO; local research organization	15,000	250,000
	Linkages with key conveners for various significant stakeholders	Foundational	Civil society organizations (Manila and Mindanao)	50,000	75,000
	Support activities that promote dialogue between peace advocates, and encourages collective action	Influencing	Civil society organizations (Manila and Mindanao)	150,000	250,000
	Appropriate forms of dialogues and consultations between key stakeholders in the peace process	Influencing	Civil society organizations (Manila and Mindanao)	300,000	500,000
	Support negotiating parties to articulate positions	Influencing	Civil society organizations (Manila and Mindanao); Government (OPAPP)	100,000	200,000
	Perception surveys and analysis of key issues in negotiations	Influencing	Government (OPAPP); INGO; local research organization	250,000	500,000
	Dialogues between marginalized groups and negotiating parties	Influencing	INGO; Civil society organizations (Manila and Mindanao); Government (OPAPP)	75,000	150,000
	Mediated consultations among Moro factions	Influencing	INGO; Civil society organizations (Manila and Mindanao)	25,000	100,000
			Outcome Total	1,040,000	2,175,000
Institutional capacity to implement agreement improved	Analysis of preparations for implementation of peace agreement	Foundational	INGO; local research organization	200,000	400,000
	Strengthen technical capacity of key institutions (BDA, OPAPP, ARG)	Influencing	Government; multilateral; INGO	750,000	2,000,000
			Outcome Total	950,000	2,400,000
Stronger local mechanisms for averting escalation of	Support monitoring of conflicts at the local level	Foundational	Government (OPAPP); multilateral organizations; INGO; Civil society	300,000	600,000

violence			organization		
	Support dialogues and consultations between key stakeholders at the local level	Influencing	Civil society organizations (Manila and Mindanao); Government (OPAPP); and security forces	300,000	500,000
	Support for Local Monitoring Teams	Influencing	Civil society organizations (Manila and Mindanao)	250,000	750,000
	Support rapid response mechanisms to intervene in crises and conflicts	Influencing	Civil society organizations (Manila and Mindanao)	150,000	500,000
			Outcome Total	1,000,000	2,350,000
Security forces have capacity, credibility to ensure local security	Conduct study of military training and incentives	Foundational	Civil society organization; research organization; INGO	100,000	250,000
	Support relevant training for security forces on local conditions, peacebuilding, and community engagement	Influencing	Civil society organization; INGO	150,000	300,000
	Support dialogues and confidence building activities between conflict-affected communities and security forces	Influencing	Civil society organization; INGO	300,000	750,000
			Outcome Total	550,000	1,300,000
			SPIM Total	6,690,000	16,875,000

Annex 3: Interview Questionnaire

The project team developed a set of guiding questions, to initiate conversations with key informants. Conversations were informal, but organized around a set of key themes. Each theme is described below, with a set of guiding questions for the interviews:

Theme	Guiding Questions
Program Strategy	<p>Project/partner selection: What types of partners and projects should AusAID support to increase the strategic value of SPIM?</p> <p>Niche areas: Are there any critical needs or issues that AusAID can address through SPIM that government or other donors are not addressing (or cannot address)?</p> <p>Understanding local context: How can AusAID staff improve their understanding of local political and conflict dynamics to inform their decisions on the SPIM program strategy?</p>
Project impact/outcomes	<p>Impact of SPIM projects:What impact did SPIM-support projects have? What evidence is there to support this?</p> <p>Secondary effects:Were there any positive or negative secondary effects from the project?</p> <p>Monitoring: How can AusAID improve monitoring of the SPIM-supported projects?</p>
Key challenges and lessons from projects	<p>Lessons from implementation:What went well/didn't go well during the implementation on SPIM-supported projects?</p> <p>Obstacles and challenges:Were there any unexpected obstacles or challenges in the implementation? How did the partner adapt to respond to these challenges?</p>
Partner Engagement with AusAID	<p>Nature of engagement:What was the nature of engagement between AusAID and the partner during the concept discussion stage, design stage, and implementation stage?</p> <p>Level of engagement:From the perspective of the partner, was the level of engagement about right, or too little/too much?</p>
Flexibility and time sensitivity	<p>Grant processing time:How quickly did the project go from concept to grant? How long did the proposal approval process take?</p> <p>Flexibility:How much flexibility did the funding agreement allow? Was there too much flexibility?</p>
General Recommendations on future of SPIM	How can the SPIM facility better support local organizations working to support peace and stability in Mindanao?

Annex 4: Selection of Projects for Review

The review included 15 projects, implemented by 12 organizations. The selection criteria used to determine the projects for inclusion in the SPIM review included:

1. **Focus on major development and peace-building categories:** Economic Development, Peace building, Gender & Conflict, Media and Youth. By selecting approximately 2 from each component, we have included diverse projects that address the key issues of development and peace-building in Mindanao.
2. **Variety in “Type of Program” and “Type of Partner”** – Highlighting the importance of variation in the types of programs and the types of partners, the review can compare the pros and cons of working through different types of partners, and using different approaches. The selected projects include at least one example from INGOs, Manila-based NGOs, Mindanao-based NGOs, foreign-based organizations, and the government of Philippines.
3. **Scale** – Almost all selected projects were over \$250,000. Since these made up the largest invested proportion of AusAID’s programs, their inclusion is important for review.
4. **Innovation** – Smaller projects were also included, given they that were noteworthy for their innovation in addressing the issues of development and peace-building.
5. **Exclude projects that ended more than 3 years ago** – Given the difficulty of recalling details of old projects and noting that the environment may have changed considerably over the past few years, older projects were not included.

Using the criteria detailed above, the following AusAID funded projects in Mindanao have been selected for inclusion in the SPIM Review:

- Balay Mindanao Foundation Inc.
- Brains Trust
- Catholic Relief Services
- Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- Institute for Bangsamoro Studies
- Lopez Group Foundation Inc.
- Mindanao Commission of Women
- Mindanao Economic Development Council
- Mindanao News and Information Cooperative Centre
- PeaceTech Inc.
- Public Trust Media Group Inc.
- The Asia Foundation

Annex 5: SPIM Projects 2005-2011

Agreement No.	Project Title	Proponent	Brief Description	Category	Type of Program	Type of Partner	Project Duration		Approved Funding (AUD)	Reason for Selection
59427*	Engaging Key Stakeholders and Advancing Capacities and Gains in Conflict Management and Peacebuilding Towards a Meaningful Security Sector Reform	BalayMindanao Foundation Inc. (BMFI)	The project aims to transform the security sectors into sustainable peace champions, inclusive of the military, police, local government units and members of civil society. More peace champions will be developed through continuous peace education and research. Key agencies will also be engaged for policy advocacy.	Peace building	Capacity Building	Mindanao-based NGO	6/06/2011	30/08/2013	567,930	Continuation of past projects with Balay Mindanao on the security sector. It will be important to see how their activities have evolved, and built on past programs.
53213*	Review of Training Programs within the Security Sector in the Philippines	BalayMindanao Foundation Inc. (BMFI)	The project examined the extent of peace building, human rights and international humanitarian law training in the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police including formal core curricula and courses and project-based training programs.	Peace building	Capacity Building	Mindanao-based NGO	16/11/2009	31/01/2010	931,000	Multi-faceted peacebuilding approach, that focuses on providing training to members of the Philippine security force. Highest funded educational project
52277*	Facilitating the process of Formulating Mindanao 2020 Peace and Development Plan	Brains Trust	The project supported a participatory and multi-disciplinary process that would formulate the Mindanao 2020 Peace and Development Plan.	Economic Development	Policy	Manila-based NGO	8/09/2009	31/08/2010	277,000	It will be important to include one example of a foreign-based partner under the facility. This case is also a useful second example of Economic Development programs.

59662*	Peace and Governance in Mindanao - Year 2	Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	The project will build and strengthen horizontal and vertical peace building processes through a comprehensive set of targeted interventions. The second year of implementation will expand to 19 new barangays for a total of 37 barangays. Peace education will roll out curriculum to 28 schools and 10 madaris. Catholic peace building will deepen its training support in 1`2 dioceses with key religious and lay leaders.	Peace building	Capacity Building	INGO	8/06/2011	30/10/2012	498,000	Innovative approach to peacebuilding and governance by working with the church to shift public opinion in a positive direction, towards sustainable peace in conflict regions of Mindanao. (Suggest reviewing phases 1 and 2)
55446*	Peace Governance in Mindanao	Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	The Project will generate active peoples' participation to demand their entitlements and catalyse local leadership for good governance. It will maximise the role of social structures like the church, mass media and schools in creating public opinion to positively influence changes in public attitudes towards lasting peace. The Project will expand the gains of CRS' peace-building interventions in the most conflict affected provinces in Mindanao particularly North Cotabato, Maguindanao and Sultan Kudarat.	Peace building	Community Support	INGO	8/06/2010	7/06/2011	500,000	Innovative approach to peacebuilding and governance by working with the church to shift public opinion in a positive direction, towards sustainable peace in conflict regions of Mindanao. (Suggest reviewing phases 1 and 2)
55442*	Preventing election Violence in Sulu, Philippines	Centrefor Humanitarian Dialogue	The project seeks to build local capacity to monitor, map and prevent election related violence in Sulu. It will prepare Sulu for the 2011 elections in the ARMM. The project is expected to contribute significantly to the understanding of election related violence in Sulu. Primary target audiences are security forces, clan leaders, civil society and international organisations. Opportunities will be created to discuss armed violence to encourage new voices	Democracy	Capacity Building	INGO	1/06/2010	31/05/2011	235,740	

		(C H D)	and perspectives.							
59428*	The Mindanao Solidarity Project	Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (CHD) - implemented together with CBCS	The project will focus on bringing the Bangsamor stakeholders: the MILF and MNLF commanders and political officers, and local political and religious Moro leaders together to finalise a unity plan. The Bangsamoro leaders will be called upon to support each other's approach to peace and eventually share in the dividends and responsibilities.	Peace building	Community Support & Policy	INGO	3/06/2011	30/05/2012	155,302	This project is an important example of AusAID support for the formal peace talks. It will be important to look at this example, in order to determine whether AusAID should support future programs linked to the peace process.
55441*	Mindanao Monograph Series with the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies	Institute of Bangsamoro Studies (IBS)	The monograph series would address points of convergence and divergence in the peace process negotiations between the Government and the MILF. These will be launched by a round table dialogue (RTD) in Manila and Cotabato City and co-published by ASoG and the IBS. Some issues the quarterly monographs may tackle involve defining the problem from both sides; reconciling ancestral domain and patrimonial claims to natural resources; defining the highest form of autonomy within the Philippines Constitution; security issues; governance; land; transitional/restorative justice; and reconciliation.	Peace building	Policy and Reconciliation	Mindanao-based NGO	1/06/2010	31/05/2011	21,935	This project is an important example of AusAID support for the formal peace talks. It will be important to look at this example, in order to determine whether AusAID should support future programs linked to the peace process.

55480*	Peace Education for Third Year High School Math, Science and Social Studies	Lopez Group Foundation Inc. (LGFI)	The project will produce 12 20-minute video programs on Math, Science and Social Studies integrating Peace Education into all programs. The video programs will air on educational TV for viewing by third year high school students in KCH-connected schools throughout the country. Equivalent e-modules will be produced and made available to students through the internet. The programs are intended to supplement DepEd's curriculum in Math, Science and Social Studies instruction and provide a more engaging audio-visual and interactive digital media for learning by high school juniors.	Youth	Educational Support	Manila-based NGO	1/06/2010	31/05/2011	200,000	Largest and most recent program focused on youth.
43636*	Another Mindanao is Possible	Mindanao Commission of Women, Inc (MCW)	The project supported gender and women empowerment in peace building and conflict prevention work through the promotion of the role of Christian, Muslim and indigenous women to peace and development in Mindanao.	Gender & Peace building	Community Support	Mindanao-based NGO	15/01/2008	30/06/2011	2,000,000	Drawing on inter-faith dialogue as the basis for community and gender support programs, this is also the single highest funded project in the region
52222*	Supporting the Development of the MWG Peace Outcomes M&E System	Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo) (now MINDA)	The project is linked to the formulation of Mindanao 2020 Peace and Development Plan and will continue the support to the development of the Mindanao Working Group peace outcomes monitoring and evaluation system until its completion and piloting.	Peace building	Monitoring and Evaluation	Philippines Government	28/08/2009	31/08/2010	64,530	This project was the only direct grant to a Philippines government agency. It will be important to review this project to determine whether this facility should be used for government partners in the future.
55455*	Communicating Mindanao (Setting the News Agenda for Mindanao and	Mindanao News and Information Cooperative Center	The project will better inform Mindanao and other parts of the Philippines on the inspiring face of Mindanao. The project will support the full operations of	Media	Advocacy	Mindanao-based NGO	8/06/2010	7/06/2011	240,000	Important and relatively large project in the media category. This is a useful example of

	Production of IEC Materials)	(MNICC)	MindaNews, the MNICC web-based news service. The publication of four books and monthly newsletters will help people understand Mindanao better.							support for a Mindanao-based NGO for media programs.
55447*	Build Understanding through Technology	PeaceTech Inc. (PTI)	The Project uses a 3-step process that reinforces peace-building between Muslim and non-Muslim communities through Education, Communication and Peace Sub-projects. Education involves mass and classroom videoconferences, workshops and high school classes in partnership with the DepEd and private schools. In Communication, beneficiaries will discuss and share among themselves their learnings. Through peace sub-projects, support will be given to what project beneficiaries need in sustaining program lessons in schools and communities.	Peace building	Community Support	Manila-based NGO	9/06/2010	8/06/2011	400,000	Innovative project that uses technology as a medium for inter-faith dialogue amongst school students.
44561*	The Internship Program and Mindanao Special Issue	Public Trust Media Group Inc (Newsbreak)	The project aimed to strengthen independent and professional media by providing a training program and establishing for a and support groups where media practitioners can exchange ideas and discuss issues.	Media	Capacity Building	Manila-based NGO	15/01/2008	31/12/2008	999,000	This project recognises the media in conflict management and prevention. Furthermore, it is the highest funded capacity building project in the region
46273*	Developing Strategic Framework for Engagement in Mindanao	The Asia Foundation (TAF)	The project developed an overarching framework for Mindanao engagement that provided clear guidance to AusAID, government and donors for current and future peace and development programming in conflict affected areas especially in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao based on a	Peace building	Policy and Reconciliation	INGO	1/06/2008	30/09/2008	350,000	This project seeks to develop a strategy for peace in Mindanao by taking into account the various stakeholders outside of the warring parties.

common approach to conflict analyses for the Mindanao Working Group and understanding of the root causes of the conflicts.										
54478	Mindanao Humanitarian Preparedness and Response Assessment	Ann Kristin Brunborg	The project was an analysis of the status of humanitarian preparedness and response capacities and plans within individual agencies and the international response community within various scenarios in Mindanao from March 2010 to March 2011.	Emergency	Monitoring and Evaluation	Local Consultant	30/03/2010	15/05/2010	10,147	Not selected for review
38167	Kapit-Lapit: Videoconference Series for Filipino Youth	Assisi Development Foundation	The project supported the conduct of videoconference series between youth in Manila and Cotabato City on peace building and conflict. The dialogue gave the youth a unique opportunity to express, listen and unite over concerns about their country's future.	Youth	Capacity Building and Advocacy	Manila-based NGO	23/05/2006	31/12/2006	70,000	Not selected for review
34441	Participation of Mindanao Journalists in a Conflict-Resolving Media Course in Sydney	AusAID	The project sponsored 16 Mindanao-based broadcast and print media practitioners to attend the conflict-resolving media course in University of Sydney.	Media	Capacity Building	Australian Government	5/01/2006	22/01/2006	30,000	Not selected for review

50853	Capacity Building Program on Conflict Management and Peacebuilding for Eastern Mindanao Command of Armed Forces of Mindanao	BalayMindanao Foundation Inc. (BMFI)	The project aimed at broadening the mindsets of junior and senior officers of the Philippines Marine Corps in the field and at headquarters that will enhance understanding of the complexities of the Mindanao conflict and upgrade skills on conflict management and peace building, enabling a more holistic view necessary to bring about sustainable peace and development in Mindanao.	Peace building	Capacity Building	Mindanao-based NGO	8/06/2009	30/06/2010	252,028	Not selected for review
50854	Grassroots Peace Learning Center	Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	The project aimed to enhance the capacity of grassroots peacebuilders in Mindanao and to build and strengthen the peace constituency in Mindanao to include civil society and communities.	Peace building	Capacity Building	INGO	10/06/2009	30/06/2010	246,620	Not selected for review
39070	Peacebuilding Workshop for Asia Pacific Youth Leaders	Center for Peace Education of Miriam College	The workshop brought together youth leaders from the Philippines and the Asia-Pacific region to deepen the understanding of culture of peace and the significance of building such culture; provide participants with the opportunity to have common experiences and learn about positive approaches towards peace-building and violence prevention; and generate doable action plans that participants could implement in their schools and communities.	Youth	Capacity Building	Philippines University	4/08/2006	31/08/2007	20,000	Not selected for review

46022	MWG M&E Framework Development	Coffey International	The project supported the mechanism for better donor coordination and rationalisation in Mindanao through the development and implementation of a common monitoring and evaluation framework that measures peace outcomes.	Peace building	Monitoring and Evaluation	International Technical Assistance Provider	19/05/2008	22/12/2008	30,000	Not selected for review
55656	Funding Support for the Strengthening Grassroots Interfaith Dialogue and Understanding (SGIDU) Program	DFAT	SGIDU supports inter-faith or intra-faith projects that directly contribute to strengthening understanding and acceptance between communities of different faiths at the grassroots level; and promote peace building and anti-violence messages.	Inter-faith	Community Support & Capacity Building	Australian Government	1/06/2010	31/12/2011	106,119	Not selected for review
11421/07	Design Consultant for the Mindanao Commission on Women's 5-Year Program	Hassalls and Associates	The project provided technical assistance to Mindanao Commission on Women in designing their five-year program. The project also included capacity building activities of MCW staff in relation to program design and proposal development.	Gender & Peace building	Capacity Building	Foreign-based organization	9/08/2005	30/09/2005	55,000	Not selected for review
59123	Sustainable Integrated Area Development Plan for the Five Municipalities of the Iranun Development Council	Institute for Autonomy and Governance	The project is a resource assessment and profiling exercise that will involve collection, consolidation and integration of available data and information related to economic and infrastructure of the municipalities of Barira, Buldon, Matanog, DatuBalhSinsuat and Parang in the province of Maguindanao to formulate a sustainable integrated area development plan.	Economic Development	Monitoring and Evaluation	Manila-based NGO	18/05/2011	30/01/2012	65,709	Not selected for review

59429	Breaking the Links Between Local Economies and Conflict in Mindanao: The Economics of Conflict in the Philippines	International Alert	The project will produce a comprehensive research study on the informal economy of Mindanao that is aimed at uncovering how the real economy of the region shapes and is shaped by conflict. The research will mainly employ qualitative and multidisciplinary methods to examine small samples and backed up with descriptive statistics.	Economic Development	Policy	INGO	1/06/2011	30/09/2012	116,967	Not selected for review
59661	State of Local Democracy Assessment in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance	The project will provide a systematic assessment of the state of democracy in ARMM using an assessment framework developed by International IDEA. The assessment will promote debate and dialogue within and outside ARMM and provide an opportunity for citizens of ARMM to define priorities for democratic reform at the local government level. Collaborative project with PCID and UP NCPAG.	Democracy	Policy and Advocacy	Foreign-based organization	9/06/2011	31/05/2013	103,488	Not selected for review
38167	Developing Young Peace Advocates in Mindanao: Youth Advocates for Peace Camp	Kids for Peace Foundation	The project supported a youth camp that was designed to be a visioning exercise towards defining a Mindanao peace and development agenda from the perspective of the youth. The young delegates brought to the camp the peace aspirations of their communities and brought back to their communities the peace and development visions collectively defined in the camp.	Youth	Capacity Building and Advocacy		23/05/2006	31/12/2006	25,000	Not selected for review
55481	Engaging Communities towards a Sustainable and Peaceful Environment in	Lutheran World Relief (LWR)	The Project is a community-based reconciliation, culture of peace and development effort among Muslim and Christian communities in the ARMM. Project approaches include enhancing	Peace building	Community Support	Foreign-based organization	4/06/2010	3/06/2011	400,000	Not selected for review

the Philippines		existing local peace-building Not selected for review initiatives and strengthening the capacity of local peoples' organisations for implementing community-based reconciliation.								
39729	Bridging Program	Mindanao Commission of Women, Inc (MCW)	The project involved scenario planning with key Mindanao government and non-government stakeholders, influencing GRP-MILF panel on gender mainstreaming in the final peace agreement, and strengthening Mothers for Peace Movement.	Gender & Peace building	Community Support	Mindanao-based NGO	1/09/2005	1/06/2006	40,000	Not selected for review
40785	First Mindanao Studies Conference on Mindanao Peace and Development initiatives	Mindanao Studies Consortium Foundation, Inc.	The project convened peace advocates, educators, policymakers and development workers to exchange views and perspectives on peace and development initiatives in Mindanao for the formulation of appropriate policies.	Peace building	Policy	Mindanao-based NGO	8/02/2007	30/06/2007	43,600	Not selected for review
55747	Promoting Inter-faith Understanding of Disability and Inclusive Development	People with Disabilities Advocating Rights and Empowerment (PARE)	The project goal is the inclusion of disability in existing services and programs and those services adapting to the special needs of people with disabilities (PWDs). The project will be implemented across all provinces of the ARMM. Khutbahs (sermons) on disability will be developed, tested and launched in Muslim communities in non-ARMM areas. These areas are Davao and Zamboanga Cities, and Quiapo, Manila.	Inter-faith	Community Support & Capacity Building	Manila-based NGO	9/06/2010	8/06/2011	130,000	Not selected for review

37390	Marawi Special Book Corner Project	Soil and Water Conservation Foundation, Inc.	The project established a book corner in Marawi City that was used as a center for research and reading activities for children and youth and preparatory center for out-of-school children.	Youth	Community Support	Other Philippines-based NGO	1/05/2006	30/04/2007	11,467	Not selected for review
48530	Conducting a Post-Election Survey in the ARMM	The Asia Foundation (TAF)	The project involved the conduct of post-election survey in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) on the experience of citizens in the 11 August 2008 ARMM regional election, particularly on the use of new technology to cast and count votes.	Democracy	Monitoring and Evaluation	INGO	1/11/2008	30/04/2009	60,000	Not selected for review
59472	Design of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Framework at the Department of Justice	The Conflict Resolution Group Foundation (CORE)	The project will conduct a capability-building program in Davao for private sector alternative dispute resolution (ADR) practitioners and prosecution personnel, formulate an ADR framework, and develop a set of implementing rules and regulations to institutionalise ADR mechanism at the Department of Justice.	ADR	Capacity Building	Manila-based NGO	6/06/2011	27/02/2012	107,490	Not selected for review
14069	Support for a Training on Peace Conflict and Development, and Packaging of Materials	University of New England (Armidale)	The project sponsored 25 participants to attend a course that introduced peace reporting to Mindanao journalists.	Media	Capacity Building	Foreign-based organization	6/06/2005	30/06/2006	84,500	Not selected for review

* Agreement numbers marked with an asterisk were included in the review process. The rationale for inclusion is indicated in the far right column.