



## **Workshop on *Faith and Development in Focus: Philippines***

On January 16, 2019, the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) convened a workshop in Washington, D.C. to discuss preparation of a report on the intersection of development and religion in the Philippines. The meeting was part of WFDD's ongoing GIZ and PaRD-supported research program that focuses on four countries, including the Philippines. A group of 11 scholars and development experts (listed in Annex 1) contributed their diverse experiences and perspectives. On the evening of January 15, 2019, WFDD hosted a dinner at Executive Director Katherine Marshall's home where an informal discussion on similar topics took place. Ambassador Anne Derse and Dr. Scott Guggenheim joined the group for dinner, but not the consultation. The discussions helped sharpen and bring new ideas to WFDD's ongoing analysis on the complex religious dimensions of development issues. The hope is that consultation participants, along with several other individuals who have expressed interested but could not attend, will continue their engagement in this project as an informal advisory group to help guide and offer feedback to WFDD's work on the Philippines.

This note briefly summarizes the content of dialogue that took place at the consultation. To assure a free and open conversation, Chatham House Rule was observed. Therefore, this report does not attribute specific comments or institutional affiliation to any participant in connection to items discussed.

A preparatory concept note, see Annex 2, served as an effective point of reference for the group throughout the day. Feedback on the framing of priority issues was positive and constructive, mostly revolving around how to expand on certain topics to reflect more holistically certain sub-fields of development in the Philippines. How to expand current research on and highlight the faith dimensions within the spheres of governance, gender, environment, and conflict was discussed at length.

WFDD will complete the report *Faith and Development in Focus: Philippines* over the coming months. The approach, which WFDD terms "mapping", involves substantial desk-based research and documentation, the consultation to be summarized in this paper, and in-depth qualitative interviews with experts based in the Philippines and abroad.

The first and primary audiences are partnering agencies GIZ and PaRD. We are confident that the final publication will be a significant contribution to the wider literature on faith and development, serving as an introduction to understanding these dynamics in the case of the Philippines.

## **OVERVIEW OF DISCUSSION**

### ***Religious Communities and Institutions***

The Philippines' religious landscape is remarkably complex and dynamic. Religious communities and institutions are foundational to the social fabric of Filipino society. Religious affiliation was described as

consequential for the Filipino experience, similar to factors such as ethnicity, clan/family affiliation, socioeconomic class, political views, and gender identity.

There was considerable agreement among consultation participants that public expression of religious identity has a direct effect on observable political and development trends, but with some reservations: over-reliance on macro-level statistics may oversimplify the internal diversity within religious communities. For example, while some 80 percent of Filipinos may self-identify as Catholic, the Catholic community should not be understood as a monolith. Iconographic and Philippines-specific religious movements within Catholicism are involved and affect society in a manner distinct from mainstream Catholicism. Understanding faith communities in the Philippines requires a deeper analysis of sub-identities. This point was reemphasized in consideration of the Moro identity and the group's struggle for autonomy across colonial and modern administrations. Participants endorsed the decision to understand the Moro identity at a deeper level through the lens of ethnicity. In the case of the Moro people, it is clear that Islam and a shared history of oppression bind the community together, largely unifying the community on issues such as the political will for increased autonomy. Similar issues that unify religious communities or identities and intersect strongly with religious identity in terms of social action are key, but singular in nature. One participant suggested that perhaps the community of adherents of Iglesia Ni Cristo may function in a perceptibly monolithic way across a wide variety of social issues, highlighting the fact that the group typically votes as a block.

Religious institutions were discussed, including the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), Catholic Dioceses, Catholic Orders (Jesuits, Franciscans, etc.), Opus Dei, protestant cooperative ministries (National Council of Churches in the Philippines; Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches), and sharia courts in Muslim Mindanao (SDCs and SCCs). Participants agreed as a starting point that institutional leadership does not fully represent religious communities, which are characterized by high internal diversity in the Philippines. This complexity should not be seen to discredit or diminish institutional involvement nor mask their substantial influence in the social affairs of religious bodies.

The discussion underscored the powerful role of the Catholic Church in politics in the Philippines, though views differed on the processes and channels through which this influence is manifested. The Vatican rarely, if ever, involves itself in Philippines-specific affairs. The CBCP, the highest-level Catholic institution in the Philippines, issues formal statements on social development priorities and is highly involved in policy advocacy—particularly on issues of human rights. The extrajudicial killings associated with the Duterte administration's war on drugs/crime have raised tensions with CBCP. Although religious-political tensions have recently increased, some participants noted their perception that there has not been any rupturing between the Church and Filipino society. Some Filipinos might advocate or wish for the CBCP to take a stronger stand on the extrajudicial killings, but this has not led to significant diminution of CBCP authority or the robust nature of the Filipino Catholic community. One participant observed that the CBCP may not in fact have as much policy sway as many Catholic Filipinos perceive. This came within a debate regarding the influence of religious institutions.

It was suggested that WFDD take a closer look at the role of particular and differentiated roles of individual Catholic dioceses, orders, and other entities, which are more directly involved in social action at local level. Several participants highlighted Social Actions Centers, due to their role in influencing

diocesan-level social involvement. The importance of Catholic Orders in social affairs was emphasized. Specifically, orders such as the Jesuits and Franciscans are highly but not exclusively involved in education. They are also involved in employment access and advocate on issues such as reproductive health and environmental protection. Opus Dei was cited as an organization highly involved in similar issues. Their involvement and significance was not disputed, but there was some debate about how to understand them as an institution within the wider religious landscape. The Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP) coordinates all male and female religious orders at the national level.

Protestant cooperative ministries were acknowledged, but participants suggested again that, perhaps like the CBCP, individual churches act autonomously with regard to community outreach and that higher-level social development-oriented statements serve more as guidelines or recommendations. Sharia courts presiding over civil cases in Muslim Mindanao were discussed briefly. A participant suggested that there appears to be a lack of consistency between rulings made in sharia court, who vary in terms of effectiveness and respect by local officials and citizens. As with civil courts, there can be much corruption in decision-making, and lack of enforceable rule of law is pervasive throughout the Philippines. Everyone agreed that more research on the role of Islamic institutions would be beneficial.

### *History and Modernity*

Participants emphasized the relevance for contemporary affairs of the historical context and colonial experience of the Philippines, as it factors in the construction of the religious landscape observable today. There were quite different perspectives and observations. The focus on these issues led to a discussion about the wider purpose and approach of the report. Specifically, a question was raised about whether the report should highlight the immediate, contemporary challenges or take a longer-term focus.

Various issues were advanced as crucial moments shaping the history of faith and development in the Philippines. Most participants highlighted the religious intersections of issues occurring during the Duterte administration, including the implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act (passed in 2012 during Aquino III administration but facing difficulty in implementation), the extrajudicial killings/drug war, the erosion of democratic institutions, and the Bangsamoro autonomous region plebiscite (2019). One participant noted the lingering influence of colonial Spain on the strength of Catholic institutions as political forces.. The current administration is seen as a time of considerable shift in religious/sociopolitical dynamics. One participant contended that rhetoric is currently high, but it is yet to be seen how significant these shifts will be in the wider historical context. Developments towards the 2022 presidential election may provide insight into how roles of religion have changed or stayed the same in Filipino society.

### *Governance*

One concern was that governance as a development issue and its intersection with faith communities and institutions might be understated in the concept note. It was stressed that it is fundamentally impossible to divide politics, development, and religion in the Philippines. For example, multilateral secular development institutions must stay informed about religious dynamics because their local and implementing partners are often formally or informally faith-inspired organizations. Religious leaders, Catholic priests, and Muslim imams specifically, often lead/participate in political campaigns and may

even be expected to be politically involved. In discussions on governance, participants suggested that WFDD focus on faith as it specifically intersects with advocacy, policy implementation, and accountability.

Two participants noted that the Catholic Church as an institution may at times be on steadier political ground than the national government and has, throughout Filipino history, played a major role as a “guarantor of democracy.” This role within the sphere of governance is largely accepted by the Filipino people. A participant gave a striking example that while President Duterte has been vocally anti-Catholic Church in his rhetoric, particularly against the political influence of the CBCP, he supported the continuation of smaller institutional Catholic voting monitors to assure free and fair elections.

### ***Gender and Development***

Gender and development is a broad-reaching field, with the concept note focusing on family law/institutions and reproductive health. The participants explored the question: how can WFDD improve and expand this section of its research to more holistically represent gender and development in the Philippines?

Participants first acknowledged that the topics of family institutions and reproductive health were indeed central to any discussion of faith, gender, and development. This was not solely because faith institutions exert direct impact on policy through advocacy campaigns, but also because policies, such as ones that prevent divorce and access to family planning, disparately affect women in the Philippines. The Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act (2012), or RH Bill/Law, was repeatedly cited as fundamental for understanding the reality of faith-based advocacy in the Philippines. The path the bill took to law and its recent shortcomings in implementation were seen by the group as a way faith-based policy advocacy and checks on implementation could be well understood. The case was seen as a crucial insight into a deeper system of negotiation underlying governance in the Philippines as faith leaders undertook publicly oriented political campaigns with little subtlety.

The conversation shifted to women’s political participation and economic empowerment. Women’s political participation and leadership in business is relatively high in the Philippines. However, one participant countered that structures of family/clan driven elite capture, particularly in politics, may distort the reality of women’s institutional participation. Another participant added that while this may be true, it did not discount the fact that major institutions in the Philippines are indeed actively trying to increase female representation. Several participants noted that peace negotiators in the Philippines are often women, which is extremely uncommon globally. Female leadership in religious institutions is considerably less common than in secular institutions. It was raised that this has an impact on policy advocacy at the national level, but not at the local level, where there may be more female representation in leadership. On this point, the roles of women’s only Catholic orders were mentioned.

Participants recommended WFDD to explore gender dynamics in education, migration (specifically, the experience of domestic helpers), and domestic violence. The consultation group unanimously agreed that the gender and development section of the report is key because faith actors are highly involved in advocacy that specifically and directly impacts women.

### ***Environment, Extractive Industries, and Social Justice***

Participants suggested an additional section on environment, extractive industries, and social justice. The logging and mining industries are major drivers of capital in the Philippines and religious actors have significant views. Faith actors often become involved once negative social justice impacts are determinable. Local faith leaders, Catholic bishops were specifically mentioned, often advocate for community access to legal institutions in order to defend land rights or demand compensation. Negative health impacts in communities near mining ventures have been so extreme that local bishops pressured the CBCP to take a formal stand on the issue. Local faith leaders played an advocacy role where the logging industry infringes on the rights of peoples living near or in protected forests (the Palawan case was discussed). Further research is necessary to determine the nature and impact of religious advocacy on logging, specifically at the national level? Advocating for social justice related to extractive industries, the violation of individual and community rights is framed as a moral, and thereby, religious issue. It was noted that Catholic religious advocates and leaders of other Christian denominations have worked together on the issue of irresponsible mining. The involvement of Muslim leaders on similar issues was discussed. Further research is required on this point; one participant observed that Catholic linkages to mainstream authorities and press agencies at the national level may have an impact on their advocacy efforts rising to greater public knowledge.

### ***Conflict & Peacebuilding: The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao***

Discussion of conflict and peacebuilding in Muslim Mindanao centered on the 2019 plebiscite on the creation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)—including both part-one (January 21 plebiscite on ratification of Bangsamoro Organic Law, BOL) and part-two (February 6 plebiscite on potential expansion of the BARMM). Because the consultation took place on January 16, just prior to the part-one referendum, most of the analysis was speculative in nature. Participants agreed that the plebiscite was a landmark event in the history of Moro conflict in the Philippines, as well as the Muslim community's relationship with the state in general. One reflected on the significance of the plebiscite even if the ARMM and BARMM borders remained identical post-plebiscite. This situation would present itself if BOL was ratified on January 21<sup>st</sup> in the ARMM and the no new areas joined BARMM with the February 6<sup>th</sup> expansion plebiscite. They drew attention to the remarkable new structures of governance with underlying systems of political Islam and the greater independence of affairs to be afforded to BARMM relative to the ARMM.

All participants expected the BOL to be ratified with a “Yes” vote on January 21. BOL was ratified with the majority (88.57 percent) “Yes” vote across the entirety of the ARMM. Interestingly, all provinces of the ARMM voted “Yes” with between 93 and 98 percent except Sulu, which voted “No” 54.3/45.7. BOL will still be ratified for Sulu because it is already part of the ARMM and beholden to its majority rule. Isabela City (component city, Basilan) and Cotobato City (independent component city) have already voted on whether or not to join BARMM. Cotobato City voted “Yes” and Isabela City voted “No.” As a result, Isabela City, despite being located on the island of Basilan (where all other areas are set to join the BARMM), will remain incorporated into the administrative region of the Zamboanga Peninsula. Cotobato City will lose its independent component city status to be incorporated into the BARMM. During the consultation, a participant raised a concern about the relatively high number of internally displaced people (IDPs) living in Cotobato due to recent natural disasters and the crisis in

Marawi. Governance over the affairs of IDPs could become more complicated as both the areas from which they departed and to which they arrived will be governed under new administrative jurisdictions.

Participants also considered how the formation of the BARMM may affect educational institutions. Opinion was divided. One participant (with the underlying idea that the ARMM/BARMM borders would remain similar) argued that the educational system pre and post-ARMM would continue to rely on the same people and mechanisms, resulting in reasonably similar educational outcomes. Another participant countered by drawing concern that school districts in the newly established BARMM may not have access to the same national support and funding mechanisms (the Department of Education) as the rest of the country. They added that the structural shift would likely not become statistically significant in educational outcomes for years or decades. In concluding this discussion of education, the whole group of participants agreed that research on the formation of the BARMM specifically and the Moro conflict in general was crucial to WFDD's report because of the faith-driven institutional impacts on development.

### **Other**

Other topics that came up throughout the day included: Duterte's war on drugs/crime and natural disaster response vs. building resilience.

On Duterte's war on drugs/crime, the extrajudicial killings were highlighted as a major issue where the Catholic Church had taken a stand for the protection of human rights. As the conversation continued, divisions of perception emerged as to whether the Filipino public sees the CBCP as relatively active or inactive on the subject. Most agreed that many Filipinos, perhaps a majority of the country, looked to the Catholic Church to take a public moral stance on the issue.

Participants agreed that there is a divide between faith-inspired organizations working in disaster response vs. resilience. Investigating over what time-scales faith-inspired organizations are involved in disaster relief was seen as a potentially major contribution to the literature.

## **NEXT STEPS AND RESEARCH PLAN**

WFDD plans to deepen its research on faith and development in the Philippines. We are grateful the inputs we have received from project partners and consultation participants, which have proved essential in identifying key research areas and guiding expansion of the project scope in an effective way.

The most immediate next step for *Faith and Development in Focus: Philippines* is the field work stage, which will take place between the February 12 and March 13, 2019 in Manila, Davao, and Cebu. Field work will consist primarily of qualitative interviews of scholars and professionals with expertise working at the intersection of faith and development. Research Consultant Cameron Pulley will represent WFDD in the Philippines during this time. He welcomes suggestions of relevant persons to meet with in association to this research and can be contacted via email at [cameronpulley@berkeley.edu](mailto:cameronpulley@berkeley.edu). Following the field work, WFDD will continue its research on the Philippines through secondary source material and further interviews from its office in Washington, D.C.

Outputs will include the final country report, *Faith and Development in Focus: Philippines*, and selected interviews transcripts published on the WFDD website with the expressed consent of participants.

This document was reviewed by consultation participants and reflects their observations. WFDD invites comments on the draft country report and on its dissemination. Other further reflections or suggestions are also welcome as we proceed.

## ANNEX 1: CONSULTATION PARTICIPANTS

### **Fr. Michael Agliardo**, Santa Clara University

Fr. Michael Agliardo is a Jesuit Priest, Executive Director of the US-China Catholic Association, and a Visiting Scholar in the Department of Sociology at Santa Clara University. His research focuses on environmental sociology, the sociology of religion, and comparative sociology. His work on the Philippines has focused on the intersection of religion and environment from a cultural perspective—how social actors construct environmental issues given their involvement in the faith community.

### **Anna Bantug-Herrera**, Asia Foundation

Anna Bantug-Herrera is the Associate Director of the Asia Foundation's office in Washington, D.C. Prior to her work at the Asia Foundation, she was the Director of the Asia Region at Chemonics International, where she provided management and technical direction on major initiatives in the Philippines including the Microenterprise Access to Banking Services (MABS) and the Accelerated Microenterprise Advancement Project (AMAP) projects. She has written extensively on economic development in the Philippines.

### **Nell Bolton**, Catholic Relief Services

Nell Bolton is a Senior Technical Advisor for Justice and Peacebuilding at Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Her work has focused on promoting social cohesion and equitable democratic governance in Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, and sub-Saharan Africa, in addition to post-Katrina Louisiana. She has written extensively on group conflict and interreligious action for peace, including Christian-Muslim conflict in Mindanao.

### **Malika Bouziane**, GIZ

Dr. Malika Bouziane's research interests include state-society relations and informal institutions, local politics, nonconventional forms of participation, violence and extremism. She is a co-editor of the edited volume *Local Politics and Contemporary Transformation in the Arab World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). In 2017, she joined GIZ and is currently Advisor for the GIZ Sector Program Values, Religion and Development. Dr. Bouziane holds a PhD in political science

### **David Buckley**, University of Louisville

David Buckley is an Associate Professor of Political Science and the Chair in Politics, Science & Religion at the University of Louisville, where his research focuses on relationships between religion and democratic institutions. He has written extensively on the power dynamics between the Catholic Church and the State in the Philippines and the manifestations of their political competition in Filipino society.

### **Hank Hendrickson**, US-Philippines Society

Hank Hendrickson is the Executive Director of the U.S. Philippines Society (US-PHS), a private sector initiative organized to broaden and expand interaction and understanding between the United States and the Philippines. He has led a wide variety of US-PHS programmatic initiatives, which are designed to promote business and investment opportunities, showcase culture, arts, and design, and provide perspectives on current political, social, economic, and strategic issues.

**Jerome Herradura** , Asian Development Bank

Jerome Herradura is an international development practitioner specializing on private sector development, risk management, and resource mobilization. He has worked on ADB operations in the Philippines since 2005. His current assignment includes finance and administration at the North American Representative Office of the ADB in Washington D.C. Mr. Herradura was born and raised in the Philippines and actively involved in various Catholic organizations while in the Philippines.

**Steve Heyneman**, Vanderbilt University

Steve Heyneman is a recently retired Professor Emeritus of International Education Policy at Vanderbilt University, where his research focused on education as it connects to topics including social cohesion, corruption, economic choices, and development. Prior to joining the faculty at Vanderbilt, he worked at the World Bank for 22 years on education policy and effectiveness in a wide variety of countries, including the Philippines.

**Christina Lee**, Princeton University

Christina Lee is an Associate Professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Princeton University, where her research focuses on Imperial Spain in East Asia. She is currently on sabbatical from Princeton working on the book *Saints of Resistance: Transpacific Devotions in the Spanish Philippines*, which will shed light on the origin and development of Filipinized Christian devotions and their importance for understanding the post-colonial experience of the Philippines.

**Albert Santoli**, Asia America Initiative

Albert Santoli is the President and Founder of the Asia America Initiative (AAI), a non-profit focused on cross-cultural, interfaith cooperation, and peacebuilding through educational opportunity and economic development. Its outreach efforts have been extensive in conflict zones of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. For his humanitarian work, particularly towards the establishment of “peace zones” in the Southern Philippines, he was awarded the Order of the Golden Heart from President Benigno Aquino III in 2013.

**Erwin Tiongson**, Georgetown University

Erwin Tiongson is a Professor in the Practice of International Affairs at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service (SFS) and Chair of the International Development Concentration. His research has focused on economic development, migration, and the modern Philippines. Prior to joining Georgetown’s SFS, he was a Senior Economist at the World Bank writing extensively poverty and inequality in a wide variety of country contexts.

## **ANNEX 2: CONCEPT NOTE**

### ***Faith and Development in Focus: Philippines – Concept Note***

This note provides background on planned research on the Philippines by the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) that will result in publication of *Faith and Development in Focus: Philippines*, the fourth of five reports in a GIZ supported series. Its goal is to investigate the religious dimensions of development specific to current development challenges in the Philippines. The note has been prepared in anticipation of the January 16<sup>th</sup> consultation meeting in Washington D.C., reflecting a post-desk review summary of preliminary ideas. Feedback would be appreciated.

#### **Introduction: Research Context**

Building upon its partnerships and the *Faith and Development in Focus* series, which includes completed reports on Bangladesh, Cambodia, Guatemala, Kenya, Nigeria, and Senegal as well as ongoing reports on Myanmar and Tanzania, WFDD is reviewing the roles that religious ideas, institutions, and leaders play in the wide-ranging fields of development and social welfare in the context of the Philippines. Religion and faith-inspired community outreach have always occupied pivotal place in the uniquely Filipino experience of social, economic, and political development. Today, faith (beliefs, practices, and their underlying institutional manifestations) continues to exert considerable influence across many dimensions of life in the Philippines, through its significant capacity to initiate, realize, and infix values, norms, and attitudes into the fabric and function of Filipino society. Recent developments in Filipino history and modernity further galvanize and add urgency to WFDD's work. The broad aim is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the trends and challenges of faith and development in the Philippines; more specifically it will highlight potential areas for action and ideas for future research. Through *Faith and Development in Focus: Philippines*, WFDD's goal is to inform the development community about the complex religious context and dynamics that shape development trends and challenges in the Philippines.

The Philippines was selected at this point in the *Faith and Development in Focus* series in cooperation with our partnering organizations, in part to assure clear representation of the global diversity of means by which faith enters the national development narrative, illuminating its role in progress as well as conflict. Research associate Cameron Pulley is the lead author and investigator. WFDD Executive Director Katherine Marshall has provided leadership and the supporting WFDD staff and consultant team includes Wilma Mui, Lauren Herzog, and Martine Miller. The concept note is a work in progress, representing our professional perceptions based on research to date.

Several major questions have emerged from the ongoing research study on faith and development in the Philippines. Through the consultation, we aim to gather insight from participants in order to pursue directions of research that address the guiding questions that will be presented in context at the end of sections throughout the concept note. Questions are marked by arrow symbols.

#### **Preliminary mapping: the religious landscape**

The preliminary mapping phase of *Faith and Development: Philippines* has taken place over the course of several months of thorough desk research and will be supplemented after the consultation by field work in the Philippines. This field work will primarily consist of qualitative interviews with a range of key informants drawn from both faith and development communities. Development sectors where faith actors hold particularly strong influence in the Philippines will receive increased attention. These

broadly include, but are not limited to, the following topics: political participation, peacebuilding, aid distribution (including government and partner relationships with faith-linked entities), disaster relief, education, health, and gender. Consulting faith, government, NGO, and private sector voices, WFDD conducts this research with great care to reflect as far as possible the wide diversity of communities and activities at the intersection of faith and development.

WFDD's substantial desk research provides the foundation for this overview. The context is one where some aspects of the faith landscape are extensively documented, including pertinent policy implications, contrasted with significant gaps in both knowledge and understanding. In this review, we have been careful to balance research on faith communities occupying variable presences at different levels of social interaction in the Philippines. Like many nations mapped previously by WFDD, although the religious majority plays a fundamental role in the Filipino experience, it does not define it. The exploratory phase of mapping faith and development in the Philippines gives us the confidence to move forward with the review, targeting perspectives and directing discussions with precision.

### **Faith Overview**

Faith<sup>1</sup> is reflected in a complex and dynamic landscape in the Philippines; it cannot be divorced from the fabric of society that it underlies. Religious affiliation is indeed so crucial for personal and community navigation of national social dynamics that the pluralism of wider Filipino society manifests itself as a web of local loyalties. These loyalties are to institutions and charismatic leaders, which are characterized as much by their assertion into material affairs as their declared purpose of guiding adherents along a spiritual path.

This concept note focuses on the following six religious categorizations that comprise at least 99.59 percent of the population: Roman Catholicism, Filipinized Christianity, Transnational Christian Churches, Islam, Folk Religions, and Buddhism. The remaining 0.41 percent of the population's religious identities are categorized as "none" or "unaffiliated". Broad questions turn around how this striking data matters for development:

- How do religious affiliations enter or pre-establish community relationships with the national identity of the Philippines? Is the national identity inclusive of all religions? Do you perceive the Filipino national identity to be more, less, or equally inclusive of all religions today as compared with previous eras? How do complex identity intersections manifest themselves in discussions of development visions and practice? Are there significant differences among religious traditions as to how affiliation and institutional structures matter in operational terms?

#### *Roman Catholicism (<80.58%)*

The exact percent share of Roman Catholics in the Philippines is difficult to calculate due most significantly to response bias in surveying. Although it is not unreasonable to assert that nearly 80 percent of Filipinos self-identify as Catholic, a discrepancy exists between individuals who knowingly identify with the Orthodox Roman Catholic Church and those who in practice identify with smaller offshoots of Catholicism. These "offshoots" of Catholicism are theologically distinct from Roman

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<sup>1</sup> The term faith is used here to encompass a broad range of religious and spiritual traditions and institutions.

Catholicism and tremendously diverse in orientation, often incorporating elements of Filipinized Christian, charismatic, non-Trinitarian, and unrecognized saint veneration movements. Still, while identification with the Orthodox Roman Catholic Church may more reasonably characterize about 76 percent of the population, the institution itself remains undoubtedly the dominant religious force in the country. Arguably, the Catholic Church is also the most powerful national-level institution in consistent political competition with the government.

The Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines draws its credibility and influence among the population from its allegiance and strong ties to the Vatican and its orthodox teachings, but the expression and exercise of its political power is a uniquely domestic affair in the Philippines. The politics of the Catholic Church in the Philippines are complex; the roles it has played at specific points in history may appear somewhat self-contradicting in the wider colonial and post-colonial context of the Philippines.

Since 1945, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) has been the centralizing entity by which Catholic Church involves itself in political and social development affairs, explicitly through the commission/committee/office mission statements under the CBCP Departments for “Lay Formation”, “Social Services and Communications”, and “External Affairs”. The CBCP establishes the thin degree of separation between the Catholic Church’s theological doctrine and the Catholic Church in the Philippines’ secular doctrine as represented by the direct political advocacy and social outreach of Church leaders.

The preeminence of the Catholic Church in lay affairs has earned it political allies and enemies. The Catholic Church in the Philippines, as represented by the CBCP, was the driving force behind dismantling the authoritarian Marcos government (1965-1986) and instituting the post-Marcos democratic order. Today, the post-Marcos democratic order in the Philippines has shifted considerably—diminishing the Catholic Church’s direct influence over lay affairs. Current President Rodrigo Duterte’s record and rhetoric show clear and consistent opposition to institutional Catholicism in the Philippines. They suggest that he views the Catholic Church itself as a chief political competitor to the state that must be actively disempowered to ensure the mandate of the electorate.

- The voices of the politically empowered in the Philippines have often risen and fallen in reference to the policies politically championed by the Catholic Church. How is the political involvement of the Catholic Church perceived by the public in the Philippines today? Have perceptions changed or are they changing? Is Duterte’s political motivation well-placed in a wider underlying growth of public disillusionment in the political-wing of the Catholic Church in Philippines? Can a distinctive Catholic approach to development visions and specific programs in the Philippines be discerned? What is its significance in practice?

#### *Filipinized Christianity (>5.27%)*

Since the near monopolization of faith under the Catholic Church during Spanish Colonial Era, Christianity has fragmented into, amongst other groups, a wide diversity of Filipinized Christian Churches. Hundreds of uniquely Filipino churches have been established with highly variable relationships to more orthodox forms of Christianity. They are characterized by their structural

similarities to one another given common theological and political frictions within the realities of Christianity in the Philippines. While many Filipinos may hold the theological morality of Roman Catholicism to be intrinsically valuable, the canonical context can seem distant from the Filipino experience. Politically, factors such as the Catholic Church’s attempted control over ideation around secular issues, direct political activism, and association with a painful colonial past all have disillusioned many Filipino perceptions of the true purpose of the Catholic Church as an institution in their country.

It is useful to group major Filipinized Christian Churches into a matrix based on answering the following two questions about their origins:

1. “Was the church formed as part of independent religious movement started in the Philippines or part of a religious movement with direct foreign antecedents?”
2. “Was the church formed proactively (not excluding indirect reactive motivations) or in direct, explicit reaction to discontents with realities of Christianity in the Philippines?”

Filipinized Christianity, Origins Matrix

	Proactive Origin	Reactive Origin
Domestic Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus is the Lord Church Worldwide (0.23%)</li> <li>• Union Espiritista Cristiana de Filipinas, Inc. (0.15%)</li> <li>• Crusaders of the Divine Church of Christ, Inc. (0.06%)</li> <li>• Iglesia sa Dios Espiritu Santo, Inc. (0.05%)</li> <li>• Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association (0.05%)</li> <li>• Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ/ 4<sup>th</sup> Watch (Classical Pentecostalism Cat.)</li> <li>• Jesus Miracle Crusade International Ministry (Apostolic Oneness Pentecostal Cat.)</li> <li>• Kingdom of Jesus Christ, The Name Above Every Name, Inc.</li> <li>• Members Church of God International/ Ang Dating Daan</li> <li>• Shepherd’s Call</li> <li>• Jesus Christ to God Be The Glory (Apostolic Oneness Pentecostal Cat.)</li> <li>• Rizalista Religious Movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iglesia Ni Cristo (2.45%)</li> <li>• Iglesia Filipina Independiente (Aglipayan Church) (1.00%)</li> <li>• Philippine Independent Catholic Church (0.15%)</li> <li>• Apostolic Catholic Church</li> </ul>
Foreign Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bible Baptist Church (Baptist Cat.) (0.52%)</li> <li>• Church of Christ (Stone-Cambellite</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Igreja Catolica Apostolica Brasileira nas Filipinas (Independent Catholicism Cat.)</li> </ul>

	Restorationist Cat.) (0.28%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Pentecostal Church – Philippines, Inc. (Apostolic Oneness Pentecostal Cat.) (0.18%)</li> <li>• Evangelical Christian Outreach Foundation (0.10%)</li> <li>• Faith Tabernacle Church/Living Rock Ministries (Neo-Charismatic Cat.) (0.04%)</li> <li>• Church of the Foursquare Gospel in the Philippines, Inc. (Pentecostal/Evangelical Cat.)</li> </ul>	(0.01%)
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\*Cat. = “categorization”

There has been a tendency in both the domestic and international literature on faith in the Philippines to pejoratively and wholly dismiss certain religious movements as “cults” or “sects”. This has been done with weak consistency and seemingly willful ignorance about the fact that many of these churches have coalesced intense local power over political and social development activities. Some Filipinized Christian Churches such as Iglesia Ni Cristo and the Aglipayan Church have become widespread at the national-level in the Philippines and in the expatriate Filipino community, reaching what could be described as a tenuous acceptance in greater Filipino society. However, most Filipinized Christian Churches are intensely local. The localization of Filipinized Christian Churches to districts and neighborhoods does not diminish their influence, but rather intensifies their role in the daily lives of adherents.

- Why are localized Christian movements so common in the Philippines? How far does the hegemony and stringency of Roman Catholicism at the national level fuel the rise and intensify the local power and isolation of Filipinized Christian Churches? Does corruption and the national government’s unequal distribution of basic goods and services fuel the rise and intensify the local power and isolation of Filipinized Christian Churches?

*Independent and Affiliated Transnational Christian Churches (>5.90%)*

Many transnational Christian churches are present in the religious landscape of the Philippines. While Filipinized Christian churches such as Iglesia Ni Cristo and the Aglipayan Church also have considerable international reach, this section concerns religious groups that originated outside of the Philippines and are not characterized by significant Philippines-specific theology or syncretism. The landscape of Non-Catholic Christianity in the Philippines can be understood through the system of independent and cooperative denominational ministries represented in the chart below:

Transnational Christian Churches, Independent and Cooperative Ministries

<p>Independent (1.34%)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seventh-Day Adventist (0.74%)</li> <li>• Jehovah's Witnesses (0.45%)</li> <li>• The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (0.15%)</li> </ul>
<p>National Council of Churches in the Philippines (1.21%) (Mainline Protestant/Non-Roman Catholic)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Apostolic Catholic Church</li> <li>• **Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches</li> <li>• Episcopal Church in the Philippines</li> <li>• Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en las Islas Filipinas</li> <li>• *Iglesia Filipina Independiente (Aglipayan Church)</li> <li>• Iglesia Unida Ekyumenikal</li> <li>• Lutheran Church in the Philippines (0.05%)</li> <li>• The Salvation Army</li> <li>• United Church of Christ in the Philippines</li> <li>• United Methodist Church of the Philippines</li> </ul> <p>*= Filipinized, Holds NCCP Membership; Counted in Non-NCCP Category **= Holds NCCP Membership and Another Cooperative Ministry Membership; Counted in a Non-NCCP Category</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 Member Churches</li> <li>• 9 Associate Member Organizations</li> </ul>
<p>Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (Evangelical/Mainline Protestant) (2.68%)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;70 Member Churches</li> <li>• &gt;210 Affiliated Para-Church Organizations</li> </ul>
<p>World Baptist Alliance (&gt;0.07%) *Cooperative Ministries Affiliated to WBA (Mainline/Southern Baptist)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baptist Conference of the Philippines, Inc. (~430 Member Churches)</li> <li>• Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches, Inc. (~1079 Member Churches) (0.07%)</li> <li>• Convention of Visayas and Mindanao of Southern Baptist Churches (~1700 Member Churches)</li> <li>• General Baptist Churches of the Philippines, Inc. (~275 Member Churches)</li> <li>• Luzon Convention of Southern Baptist Churches, Inc. (~508 Member Churches)</li> </ul>
<p>Association of Fundamental Baptist Churches in the Philippines (0.12%) (Fundamental Baptist)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;2000 Member Churches</li> </ul>
<p>Uncategorized Protestant (0.31%)</p>	
<p>Uncategorized Baptist (0.17%)</p>	

*Focusing on the landscape with reference to development approaches and action*

The landscape of minority Christian religions and their involvement in social development work is complex. The remarkable number, reach, and diversity of these churches is difficult to summarize clearly, but there is nonetheless considerable denominational coherence of social development and political action. In the case of Roman Catholicism, each local Catholic Church has an independent capacity to engage in social development and political activism; the unifying voice of Catholicism at the national-level is spearheaded by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). In non-Catholic Christianity, similar dynamics are at play. Each local non-Catholic church in the Philippines has its own social engagement capacity, but affiliation or non-affiliation to a cooperative ministry has a perceptible effect on the actions and priorities of a church within a particular denomination. Cooperative ministries as outlined above are not passive organizations. They are open and active about their development and political agendas. These denominational agendas are not necessarily forced upon local churches through hierarchies, but nonetheless there are powerful unifying effects on the direction of their activities.

- Are non-Catholic, non-Filipinized churches in the Philippines recognizable as part of their wider transnational movements by the particular denominational values espoused and acted upon in the field of development or is the landscape of these groups simply too diverse to characterize systematically? If the landscape is too diverse, what is the significance of cooperative ministry entities placing intense emphasis on very particular aspirations for social development?

*Islam (>5.57%)*

Islam was the first Abrahamic religion to reach the Philippine Islands, marked by the arrival of the Arab merchant Tuan Masha'ika on the island Jolo in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It was firmly established as the majority religion in the Sulu Archipelago and Southern Palawan through the Sultanate of Sulu in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and in Western Mindanao through the Sultanate of Maguindanao in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Islam became fundamentally associated to the Moro demographic group in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century as the Sultanates (including the Sultanate of Brunei and Confederation of Sultanates in Lanao) actively resisted Spanish colonial occupation.

The “Moro” people, who comprise an estimated 11 percent of the Filipino population today, are often erroneously characterized as a distinct, singular ethnicity or race. This mischaracterization is the result of centuries of xenophobia/violence against Muslim peoples in Philippines and in turn their unification into a new social identity based on a shared history of oppression. The demonym “Moro” originates from the artificial separation of converted Catholics from Muslims by Spanish colonizers who referred to all Muslims as *moro*, meaning “moor”, regardless of any other social identity factor. In terms of race, the Moro people are descended from the same Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian branch peoples as almost all indigenous Filipino ethnic groups. Filipino ethnic divisions, some spanning different religious identities, also exist amongst those who identify as Moro. The ethnic composition of the Moro people typically includes the following 11 major groups: Bajau, Iranun, Kalagan, Kalibugan, Maguindanao, Maranao, Palawano (notably not Palaweno, neither the Cuyunon nor Agutayanon Palaweno subgroups), Sama (including the Banguingui, Bihing/Lipid, Dea/Darat, Dilaut, Jama Mapun, Pangutaran, and Ubian peoples but excluding the Abaknon people of the island of Capul and a

significant minority of Christian Sama in Davao del Sur), Sangil, Tausug/Suluk, and Yakan. While there are noteworthy Arab, Iranian, Indonesian, and Sindhi Muslim ethnic communities that have had citizenship for generations in the Philippines, these groups do not possess the shared history necessary to be recognized as Moro. Despite the complex origins, the division of the Filipino people on the basis of religion—specifically the stratification of Filipinos by Catholics, non-Catholic Christians, and Moro Muslims—became and remains a fundamental force in the intricate organization of Filipino society and identity.

Bangsamoro (“Moro Nation”) resistance was never fully suppressed under the Spanish colonization and, although there was a large exodus of Moro emigrants when the United States laid colonial claim to the entire territory of the Philippines after the Spanish-American War, resistance continued and was also never fully suppressed under the American colonial administration. Through periods of armed and unarmed conflict of varying length and goal-orientation since independence, the “Bangsamoro Question” remains a central issue in the modern state of the Philippines.

The Duterte administration (2016-present) has already proved to be a significant new chapter in the long history of the Bangsamoro Question as well as Christian-Muslim relations in the Philippines in general. Duterte himself is non-Muslim (he may be best described as an anti-Catholic Church non-practicing Christian deist), but he is the first president from Mindanao (Davao City) and of Moro descent (mixed descent, Cebuano through his father and Maranao through his mother). He has shown measured sympathy to the Moro struggle in the Philippines; for example, he clarified at a public event in Marawi City following its liberation from the Daesh affiliated Maute Group, “I am not Catholic...we are all the same—Moro”. Genuinely building upon the 2014 Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro, which intended to formally end armed hostilities between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Government of the Philippines, the Duterte administration has championed the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL; Republic Act No. 11054) through the legislative process. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of January, 2019, cities, municipalities, and barangays in designated Moro territories will decide by referendum whether to secede from their current provinces to join the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), set to replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The BARMM creation plebiscite carries real consequence for territories that ratify and the greater Philippines. The BOL will alter the strict unitary state governmental structure of the Philippines into a federalist system. It will set forth that the BARMM has its own parliament and ministers with the President of the Philippines only “[exercising] general supervision over the Bangsamoro Government to ensure that laws are faithfully executed”. Understanding the true distinction between the *de jure* and *de facto* political nature of the BARMM will only come with time after the referendum.

A watershed moment looms in the already complex history that intertwines political status, religious affiliations, and ethnicity as the referendum approaches. What is certain is that the structural relationships between religious communities in the Philippines will fundamentally change after the establishment of the BARMM. The already significant aversion to association between religious communities will likely widen. Furthermore, substantial new majorities and minorities will be created. There is great concern amongst Christians and adherents of folk religions in Moro territories that they will face discrimination should their surrounding communities overrule them and join the BARMM. In turn, Moro leadership appears unsympathetic to minority concerns as they push to maximize autonomy

and territory within their effort to extricate themselves from the systemic discrimination they have faced as a minority within the unitary governmental structure of the Philippines.

- Will the establishment of BARMM dangerously further divide the Philippines along religious lines or will it institute a new social order in which the power and privilege of Catholicism begins to face limitations? For which cities, municipalities, and barangays is the referendum the most consequential—in a sense—where are the “swing” areas and how will their outcomes affect the future of the BARMM? Can the extensive efforts at peacebuilding and reconciliation work be assured (what has worked and what has not)? What are wider regional implications of the struggles and conflicts in the Southern Philippines?

#### *Folk Religions (>0.19%)*

Statistics on indigenous folk religions are poorly represented in the literature. Official national data asserts that 0.19 percent of the population are adherents to the wide diversity of folk religions in the Philippines whereas the Pew Research Center has estimated as high as 1.6 percent. Data is marred by the fact that there is no consistent definition on which groups fall under the “folk religion” category and indigenous tribal groups often live outside the reasonable reach of surveyors. Data could also be undone by subjective decisions of inclusion or exclusion; for example, including or excluding certain Catholic syncretistic movements or the Chinese folk religion can result in the non-representative categorizations.

Indigenous folk religions in the Philippines are too diverse to be effectively represented by any singular entity at the national level. In terms of indigenous rights in general, the Philippines has only over the past 40 years moved from policies emphasizing assimilation to those that endorse cultural pluralism. Recent successes of the indigenous rights movement in the Philippines have ensured that indigenous can practice their religions and continue cultural ways of life without state-sanctioned interference. Indigenous communities living outside of mainstream Filipino society or on protected tribal land reservations are typically highly self-sufficient and largely uninformed with affairs external to their group, thus not dependent on development outreach. Their independence has not kept other groups from claiming to speak for the religious interests of indigenous groups as has been the case with the lead up to the establishment of the BARMM. In that case, it seems Christian groups who fear becoming minorities in the new BARMM have attempted to represent or have openly stated without verification that adherents of folk religions also fear enjoinment to the new BARMM.

- Are there any political or social development issues outside of the immediate context of the general indigenous peoples’ rights movement or internal tribal affairs on which adherents or leaders of indigenous folk religions have been vocal? Is there any evidence in national affairs to suggest any collective action on the part of “folk religions”? What is the nature of debates on indigenous rights and the implications for development agendas in the Philippines?

#### *Buddhism (0.05%)*

Buddhism is a relatively small minority religion in the Philippines. Archeological records present considerable evidence that Buddhism reached the pre-colonial Philippine islands around the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE in association to some Filipino tribes of the period becoming tributary states to the Srivijaya

Empire. However, any pre-colonial foothold of Mahayana Buddhism in Philippines seems to have been relatively negligible upon the arrival of Spanish in 1521 and remains small among Filipinos of Malay or Javanese descent.

The contemporary Buddhist community in the Philippines is comprised primarily of two groups, the Chinese-Filipino ethnic group (including both full Chinese and mestizo Chinese groups) and the recently converted. Chinese-Filipinos, or *Tsinoy* as they are sometimes called, are not modern immigrants to the Republic of the Philippines. There was a well-established, permanent community of Chinese-Filipinos in the pre-colonial Philippines. Until the nationalization policies of dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the 1970s-1980, the Chinese-Filipino community was characteristically insular, unassimilated, and disproportionately empowered. A minority of Chinese-Filipinos were Pure Land Buddhists and the continued presence of Buddhism in the country is intrinsically linked to this community's motivation to retain practices that differentiated themselves from other Filipinos. Still, through several centuries of Christian authority, privilege, and active proselytization, Buddhism as a percent share of the population has declined over time as Chinese-Filipinos have become more integrated into mainstream Filipino society.

Much more common than full identification with Buddhism in the Chinese-Filipino community are syncretistic practices. These may include venerating the Virgin Mary with traditionally Buddhist offerings and/or representing on her as the Guanyin. Chinese folk religion and Taoist syncretistic practices are also common.

- In its approach to the religious mapping report, how can WFDD best represent experiences of small but significant religious communities in context? Does the Buddhist experience in the Philippines speak to a wider religious identity dynamic of communities turning inward to avoid assimilation into the Filipino national identity? If yes, is this because the Filipino national identity carries with it certain Christian elements? What are development roles and impacts of Buddhist focused transnational groups such as the Tzu Chi Foundation?

## **Key Development Issues and Their Religious Dimensions**

### *Disaster Preparedness, Resilience, and Relief*

The 2018 World Risk Index describes the Philippines as the world's third most vulnerable country to natural disaster—a composite indicator of exposure, vulnerability, susceptibility, coping capacity, and adaptive capacity in regard to natural hazards including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, storms, floods, droughts, and sea level rise. Of 172 countries considered, the Philippines follows only Vanuatu and Tonga.

Eight of the ten most destructive typhoons in the recorded meteorological history of the Philippines have occurred in the past ten years. Super Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda), which made landfall with 190 mph winds in Samar, Eastern Visayas, Philippines in 2013, is the strongest tropical cyclone by wind speed to have ever made landfall in recorded history. Directly uprooting the lives of 16 million people, the typhoon was the costliest (2.2 billion USD) and the second worst by casualties (6300 dead, 28,688 injured, and 1062 missing in the immediate aftermath) ever documented in the Philippines.

The mobilization of disaster relief response following Haiyan was unprecedented. International faith-inspired organizations were highly involved in these efforts and understanding the Haiyan case provides insight into the capacity of faith-inspired disaster relief in the Philippines.

In the aftermath of Haiyan, World Vision reports that its programs reached almost 800,000 people in 3 months for immediate basic needs relief, 320,000 for recovery efforts over the next year, and 84,000 in the rehabilitation phase that lasted until the end of 2016. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Caritas Internationalis worked in tight partnership in their Haiyan relief efforts, providing approximately 200,000 people in Leyte and Eastern Samar with emergency shelter, clean water, and sanitation within three months. Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) reached approximately 130,000 people in Northern Cebu with food and temporary shelter within three months. The Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation created a cash-for-work program to clean debris in the city of Tacloban that came to employ 15,000 people per day; it also provided major basic needs relief in the city of Ormoc. Hare Krishna Food for Life (International Society for Krishna Consciousness; Hindu) provided food relief for five months to areas that did not receive food relief from the government. Iglesia Ni Cristo, under the charity arms *Lingap sa Mamamayan* and the Felix Y. Manalo Foundation, provided medical and dental relief most significantly in Ormoc City. INC notably drew criticism during the aftermath of Haiyan for claiming that divine intervention caused their churches to survive the typhoon and simultaneously refusing to open those churches to shelter the thousands of displaced people in the immediately surrounding communities. The Aglipayan Church (Iglesia Filipina Independiente, IFI) created its own Task Force for Emergency Relief, but its outreach in comparison to capacity was limited. WFDD has found little evidence that IFI provided relief to individuals other than those living inside IFI parishes, most of whom were IFI members.

While there are efforts to engage these diverse religiously affiliated entities in broader strategic planning and response preparedness, far more could be done. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNDP collaborated on a consultation on the topic in 2016, but follow up steps still need to be explored.

The Haiyan case represents the apex of faith-inspired disaster relief in the Philippines. Organizations that have been involved in disaster relief in the Philippines for decades mobilized their most support ever and new organizations entered the landscape of faith-inspired disaster response for the first time. Because the Philippines is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters and the Haiyan relief effort was a relative anomaly in terms of mobilization of support, the patterns of response are suggestive of which organizations are involved long-term disaster preparedness and climate adaptation in the Philippines. World Vision's support for 566 communities and 48 municipalities in some of the worst disaster-stricken communities more than three years after the initial landfall is a key example. Providing shelter, WASH, education, and cash-based programs as well as working to repair and replace vital public infrastructure, World Vision's efforts were more holistic and forward-looking than most other faith-inspired organizations. CRS supported the construction of approximately 20,000 permanent homes until 2015, but the organizational capacity was focused on initial response. IRW remained involved in disaster response after Haiyan, notably in the aftermath of 2014 Typhoon Hagupit, but it seems to have pivoted to conflict-associated humanitarian aid following the 2017 Marawi Crisis. The Tzu Chi Foundation ran one of the largest and most successful cash-for-work programs during the Haiyan

response, but while they remained involved in disaster relief, notably after 2015 Typhoon Koppu/Lando, their recent efforts have been relatively muted and typically limited to response alone. Major Filipinized Christian Churches such as Iglesia Ni Cristo and the Aglipayan Church have the capacity and local connectedness to act more to support disaster relief efforts.

- How can WFDD better understand aid effectiveness within the field of faith-inspired disaster preparedness, resilience, and relief? How can WFDD best map faith-inspired disaster relief given the reality that most of the organizations follow little perceptible consistency as to when they do and do not provide support? Are there specific ideas as to how to enhance capacity and coordination?

### *Education*

Since the Spanish colonial era, at which time education was near exclusively conducted by Catholic orders such as the Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits, religious actors have played a major role in the Filipino education system. The specifics of these roles during the American colonial era are more complex to define because, while the administration itself typically set up or reinstated former Spanish Catholic schools and universities as secular without any required religious curriculum, it also opened the Philippines to the establishment of dozens of Protestant private educational institutions. Furthermore, although the 1074 American volunteer soldier-teachers (“Thomasites”) taught no explicitly religious curriculum in laying the foundation for the Filipino public school system, a significant number of these volunteers were documented to have been explicitly motivated by their Christian (typically Protestant) faith. The first non-Christian U.S. army chaplain would not be appointed for almost a hundred years.

The Second Philippine Republic (1942-1945), also referred to as the Japanese-sponsored Philippine Republic or the Japanese puppet state in the Philippines, is a short but significant chapter for understanding the intersection between education and religion in the Philippines. Through Military Order No. 2 (1942) the Japanese attempted to dissolve the predominantly Christian educational system that had been created under the previous colonial regimes and replace it with a new pro-Japanese system that emphasized Asian identity and the “spiritual rejuvenation” of the Filipino people. Though it left scars, Japanese ambitions for indoctrination in the Philippines ultimately failed in tandem with the Japanese surrender in 1945. With the establishment of the independent Republic of the Philippines, public education was established as secular. However, history, American influence, Filipino hatred of Japanese education policy, and the resource limitations of the young government paved the way for education in the Philippines to carry religious tendencies.

The role of faith, particularly Catholicism, in the public education system today has some distinctive complexities. The 1987 Constitution of the Philippines provides that “the separation of Church and State shall be inviolable”, unambiguously determining the foundation of public education as secular. Still, until Department Order No. 36 forced revision in September of 2013, the Department of Education’s (DepEd) vision statement revealingly included “developing functionally literate and **God-loving** Filipinos”. Conventionally, religious studies should not enter public school classroom outside of their relevance in history or humanities subjects. Yet, within the wider criticism of public education in Philippines being “Tagalog-centric” (a people of South/Central Luzon, dominantly Catholic) also

comes the criticism that curriculum and its structure carry inherent pro-Christian bias. Some anecdotal evidence suggests there has been improvement in the religious literacy of Islam and its history in the Philippines within public education in recent years, but the wider criticism that Christianity holds disproportionate place in secular public education persists.

Private school enrollment at the primary level is 17 percent and secondary is approximately 22 percent. At the tertiary level, 88 percent of colleges and universities are private, comprising 60 percent of total enrollment. Most private educational institutions are religiously affiliated, typically with Catholicism or a Protestant denomination. There are several hundred madaris in the ARMM and greater Mindanao with formal curriculums; however, the percentage of these that are full systems meeting national education standards rather than weekend schools intended exclusively for the study of Islam is unclear. It appears that as Filipinos progress through the educational system, they are more likely to receive or have received education from an openly religious, usually Christian, institution—especially when preparing for middle or upper class professions.

Thus, faith-inspired organizations of several quite different kinds are highly involved in both public and private education in Philippines. Private schools often publicize their affiliated or supporting actors. Understanding such relationships within the public school system is more complicated. The Department of Education (DepEd) has recently faced major structural problems such as budget shortages relative to need, declining quality of public education as represented by falling national test scores and primary school completion rates, and widening socioeconomic divides. These issues have led DepEd to partner with international aid as well as faith-inspired organizations. For example, World Vision was a key funding entity behind the implementation of DepEd's Kindergarten Catch-Up Education Program (KCEP), trained public school teachers for the World Vision Culture of Reading (CoR) project, and donated school supplies to public schools. Faith-specific programming in public education initiated or funded by faith-inspired agencies has been less common/documentable. The Tony Blair Faith Foundation (TBFF), now rebranded as the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, was a notable exception as they initiated and funded major faith-centric initiatives within the public education system in the Philippines. Four private Catholic universities and one public university in the Philippines were members of the TBFF's Faith and Globalization Network and TBFF's Face to Faith program for interfaith dialogue around conflict was briefly mainstreamed into public education by DepEd for Filipinos aged 12 to 17. Australia (AusAID) has been a major bilateral donor supporting education in the Philippines, focused notably on supporting the training of Muslim teachers and schools that include Islamic education in Mindanao.

- How does faith enter public school classrooms at the primary and secondary level in the Philippines? How does it enter formally through curriculum as compared to informally through other means? What are the motivations behind Christian protectionist behavior inside a secular public institution such as public education?

### *Health*

National health expenditure as a percentage of GDP in the Philippines (4.41 percent) is roughly on par with other lower-middle income countries (4.05 percent). Still, healthcare provision and quality has not kept pace with healthcare demand. Shortcomings in the Filipino healthcare system manifest themselves

in the form of regional and economic inequities of health outcomes, service delivery, and financing. Working towards addressing the structural gaps in the healthcare system has been a key social development agenda of many faith-inspired organizations.

Economic disparities in health outcomes, service delivery, and financing are deep-rooted and widening. At 554 cases per 100,000 people, the Philippines has the third highest incidence of Tuberculosis in the world. Filipinos in the poorest quintile are at a staggering 60 percent higher risk of contracting TB than those in richest quintile. Despite a trend of improvement in morbidity rate, diarrheal diseases remain a key health risk for Filipino children under 5 years old and indicator of relative child health outcomes. They are responsible for 7 percent of all deaths of children under 5. Filipino children under 5 years old in the poorest quintile are at a 35 percent higher risk for contracting a diarrheal disease than those in the richest quintile. Utilization of health services in all forms has been steadily declining (controlled for population growth), the steepest decline being in the use of rural health stations. Provinces in the poorest quintile consistently have the lowest utilization rates, usually with a 5-10 percent differential to the richest quintile of provinces. Healthcare cost considerations are paramount in the differences observed. Pharmaceutical prices in the Philippines are typically among or the highest in Asia and out-of-pocket costs as source of total healthcare expenditure have steadily increased, from 47 percent in 1997 to 57 percent in 2007. Quality of healthcare available to poor Filipinos is also a major concern; tellingly, 74 percent of Filipinos in the richest quintile sought inpatient care exclusively from private hospitals. Impoverished Filipinos face disparate health impacts. By wide margins, they face the highest risks, have the lowest relative access, lowest ability to pay, and lowest utilization rate.

Regional disparities are particularly pronounced when comparing majority Muslim provinces to the rest of the country. Such disparities are the most visible in the ARMM, which consistently fares the worst in health outcomes, service delivery, and financing. Nationally, the Philippines is in a four-way tie with Afghanistan, Benin, and Uganda for the 6<sup>th</sup> lowest rate of hospital beds per 1000 population at 0.5. The rate of hospital beds per 1000 population in Metro Manila is approximately 2.47 (27,779 total beds), a rate comparable to Sweden. The ARMM has a rate of 0.17 (586 total beds). The five provinces of the ARMM have extremely low life expectancies compared to the national average. Basilan, with the highest life expectancy in the ARMM, is 8.5 years below the national average and Tawi-Tawi, with the lowest life expectancy in the ARMM, is 17.2 years below the national average.

Faith-inspired organizations are highly involved in health initiatives. Donations from domestic and international civil society organizations (not exclusively from faith-inspired) cover on average 17 percent of inpatient health expenditures in private hospitals and 23 percent in public hospitals. The involvement of faith-inspired organizations is typically highly specialized within the health sector. They usually limit their outreach to specific conditions and areas, differentiating themselves from one another. World Vision focuses on child nutrition and preventative care from tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS. NASSA/Caritas Philippines, which is separate from Caritas Internationalis and formally the “humanitarian, development, and advocacy arm of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines”, focuses on healthcare and medical supply access in post-disaster situations. The International Medical Corps (IMC) focuses on first and emergency response in post-disaster situations. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation typically acts through funding existing or new health

initiatives in the Philippines; for example, it funded the faith-inspired organization Lutheran World Relief \$400,000 to support and expand its health-focused typhoon relief work.

Prior to the Marawi Crisis most Christian faith-inspired organizations did not have significant, long-standing, non-relief centric programs in majority Muslim areas. Many organizations now claim involvement in majority Muslim areas, but upon deeper investigation WFDD finds that most of these efforts fall after the 2017 Marawi Crisis. Insight from consultation participants on the geographic distribution of faith-inspired health sector involvement would be appreciated.

- How do the health-centric fundraising efforts of faith-inspired organizations reach Filipinos in need? How does the finance fall into donation-based decreases in total health expenditure and how does it fall into FIO-run healthcare activities? How can WFDD better understand the geographic distribution of health activities of faith-inspired organizations? Do the participants have any insight on non-Christian faith-inspired organizations that are involved in health activities not related to disaster relief? What role do these organizations play in formulating health policy and programs as well as in accountability for health outcomes?

### *Gender and Development*

The 2017 World Economic Forum Gender Gap Index ranks the Philippines as the tenth most gender equal nation in the world and the most gender equal nation in all of Asia. The index measures gender differentials in economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, and health outcomes. The improvement and success in gender and development overtime in the Philippines should be recognized. Still, there remain major gender and development issues—most of which intersect with faith dynamics—and these are worth analyzing with diligence.

Along with the Vatican City, the Philippines is one of only two countries in the world where divorce is illegal. It remains illegal largely because of conservative Catholic congressmen and the powerful Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) lobby that have advocated against divorce bills that have come to votes in the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and now 17<sup>th</sup> congress. The illegality of divorce makes failed or violent marriages difficult to escape. According to the 2013 National Demographic and Health Survey, 17 percent of the population has experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner and 15 percent of first marriages were before age 18. Conservative politicians and the CBCP hold that there are legal and religiously appropriate manners to terminate a marital union. The Philippines allows for marital annulments under the 1987 Family Code in cases of “lack of parental consent, psychological incapacity, fraud, marriage by force or intimidation, inability to consummate the marriage, and if one party has contracted a sexually-transmitted disease”. Precedent is well established that annulments are not granted on the grounds of domestic violence, varying types of coercion, illegal activity or imprisonment, drug addiction, a change in sexual orientation, infidelity, abandonment, etc. The narrow case applicability for annulment paired with the fact that the process can often take 10 years and cost \$5000 (USD) bars many, particularly women, from personal autonomy and safety after marriage contract has been signed. Remarriage is legal in cases where annulments were granted.

The aforementioned cases where annulments are not applicable have been accepted as the basis for legal separation, the other option available to exit a union. An intricate legal institution, legal separations

only constitute the termination of conjugal partnership. Former spouses who have completed a legal separation may live and conduct their affairs separately, but they are still technically legally married to their former partner and cannot legally remarry.

The Catholic Church, through the CBCP, is the driving force of advocacy behind complicated family and marriage law in the Philippines. Most Filipinos marry in churches with Christian services. A further complicating reality is that divorce, full separation outside of annulment conditions, is legal for individuals who married in Islamic ceremonies. WFDD seeks to gather insight from consultation participants to understand whether this combination of legal intricacies suggests that the Catholic Church possesses formal power over national marriage law. Meaning, is the legal line drawn between annulment and legal separation marked by what the Catholic Church deems are grounds for religious rather than secular separation? Would such a legal situation present a violation of the Constitutional separation of church and state and what might be the implications for the future? Are Islamic and Catholic marriage ceremonies recognized by the state in a different way?

All recent polls suggest that the majority of Filipinos support the legalization of divorce. On March 19<sup>th</sup> of 2018 the most recent divorce bill, House Bill 7303, passed in the lower house by a vote of 134 to 57. WFDD could not find evidence that 7303 came to a vote in the Senate as there was no counterpart Senate Bill. More importantly, President Duterte publicly expressed in April that he would reject 7303 if it ever came to a presidential signature—effectively killing any chance that a divorce bill could pass during his administration. Interestingly, he publicly deferred the rationale of the decision to his daughter, Mayor of Davao City Sara Duterte-Carpio, who identifies as Catholic and has consistently distanced herself from her father on matters of religion.

Through advocacy groups, the Catholic Church exerts a similar degree of influence over matters of reproductive health in the Philippines. The average total fertility rate is 2.7, but there are wide discrepancies associated to rural-urban divide, educational attainment, and wealth quintile. Religious affiliation plays a key role in Filipino perceptions of family planning and are often cited as a social barrier to access as well as source of personal objection. Family planning education trainings, most often conducted by secular NGOs, are common and there is little evidence that they face public backlash in a generalizable way. The 2017 Demographic and Health survey held that 49 percent of single, sexually active women and 17 percent of married women have an unmet need for contraception. All studies on family planning and unmet need over the past 30 years suggest that these figures are both accurate and consistent.

In January of 2017, President Duterte issued a major executive order on family planning, which aims to ensure that all Filipinos have access to reproductive health and sexual education as well as free contraception by the end of 2018. In his motivation for the executive order, Duterte framed lack of access to family planning as a driver of high poverty rates and a form of economic discrimination given the reality that many impoverished Filipina women could not afford high-priced contraceptives. The executive order also represents a key turning point in the speed and variability by which family planning policy has been conducted in the Philippines. For example, contraceptive implants faced a Supreme Court ruled restraining order on procurement, distribution, and medical administration in 2015 that lasted through 2017. The legalization of contraceptive devices was only passed by Congress

in 2012 and the Supreme Court ruling forced 51 contraceptive drugs and devices to be reevaluated to ensure that they could not cause an abortion.

The National Demographic and Health Survey (2008) reported that 36 percent of pregnancies are unplanned—20 percent are mistimed and 16 percent are unwanted. Undergoing or procedurally assisting an abortion is a criminal offense in the Philippines; any involvement carries a mandate in the Penal Code for imprisonment. Exceptions are uncommon and formally unlisted, though a precedent has been set that an abortion may be carried out in order to save a pregnant woman's life. Thousands of women in the Philippines seek illegal and/or unsafe abortions as a result, often through a wide variety of black market means. In 2012, over 100,000 women were hospitalized due to complications that were known to have arisen from an unsafe abortion and almost 25 percent of all hospitals in the Philippines reported unsafe abortions as a top ten cause for admission.

- Gender and development is a broad category to include as a single section in this concept note. What issues within GAD not mentioned in this concept note do consultation participants advise WFDD focus on in the field and final report? Are there especially significant areas relating to religious links that merit explicit exploration during field work?

### LGBT Community

The Philippines is considered the most LGBT tolerant country in Asia. Seventy-three percent of Filipinos agree that “society should accept homosexuality”, per a national survey conducted by the Pew Research Center. The perception of “general tolerance”, however, obfuscates the reality of the LGBT experience in the Philippines. There exists a uniquely severe line between answered response and behavior as well as between “tolerance” and “acceptance” with respect to the LGBT community in Filipino society.

LGBT rights are variable in the Philippines, especially as they relate to what are considered religious institutions. Homosexual activity is and notably has always been unambiguously legal in the Philippines and any form of LGBT discrimination in employment, housing, the military, and general is strictly illegal. The assurance of these fundamental rights speak to the culture of tolerance of the LGBT community in the Philippines as they concern the capacity to privately self-identify and not be discriminated against.

Rights and protections in the public sphere reflect the lack of true LGBT acceptance in Filipino society. Family law and practice are particularly complicated and tenuous, largely due to the fact that the Filipino family is seen by many policymakers as a Christian institution that must be actively protected. The rights of LGBT persons in the Philippines appear to end with any publicly exercisable family rights. Same-sex marriage is illegal. Same-sex private civil unions are legal, but are publicly unrecognized. An LGBT individual may adopt a child, but their sexuality in this case is not considered; same-sex couples may not adopt children. It is illegal for an individual to actively initiate the change of his or her gender in public records in all cases, even for individuals born intersex or for individuals who have undergone a sex reassignment surgery and hormone treatment. It is also notably illegal for men who have sex with men (MSMs) to donate blood.

Another major underlying current contributing to the dynamics of faith and LGBT rights is the legality and thriving industry of conducting what is most often termed gender conversion therapy. Conversion therapy in the Philippines is conducted openly through both formal organizations and informal means, but it is invariably a religious affair. Bagong Pag-asa (New Hope) Ministries in Makati City is perhaps the most established entity. Although it is now independent, it received foundational support in the 1990s from Love in Action founder and Exodus International co-founder Frank Worthen, who is considered the originator of the “ex-gay movement”. Filipinos who have undergo conversion therapy do not always do so by their own volition. While each has his or her own experience, it is common for individuals to have been forced by or have faced enormous pressure from their families or religious communities to enter conversion therapy programs in order to “accept God/Jesus Christ in their life”.

Premeditated, targeted violence against the LGBT community in the Philippines is prevalent enough to be incongruous with the purported LGBT tolerance of the country. Between 2008 and 2016, there were 41 known hate-crime murders of trans people in the Philippines—the highest total in Southeast Asia. Hate-crimes against the LGBT community are the most common in Muslim Mindanao where there is a troubling yet widespread misconception that mistreating, committing crimes against, or outright murdering LGBT individuals is *wajib*, or necessary for all Muslims. Notably, most contemporary Islamic scholars agree that, while homosexual acts are stated to be sinful in the Quran and hadith, there is no direct scriptural justification for the punishment of any form of non-heterosexual behavior. The public experience of the LGBT community in the Philippines is defined by open contradictions within the state and religious order.

The LGBT experience in the Philippines appears to reflect a clear example of religion exerting influence on the delineation of Filipino society by what is accepted and what is tolerated. Why is there a major disconnect between what Filipino politicians say on LGBT issues and how they act as policymakers? How do religious protectionist agendas enter into other aspects of the social development narrative in the Philippines?