CHAPTER 6

Frictional Binaries: Hybridity, Civil Society, and Liberal-Local Peacebuilding in Mindanao

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INTRODUCTION

International and local civil society organisations (CSOs) have typically been included within the conceptual and theoretical discussions of liberal and post-liberal peace approaches. On the one hand, liberal peace approaches identify civil society actors as key players in peace and conflict resolution because of their crucial role in fostering democratic principles and institutions. Civil society is assumed to run in parallel with liberal peacebuilding because it provides platforms for greater participation and accountability from the state in the context of peace processes. Post-liberal approaches, which are referred to as the ‘local turn’ (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Mac Ginty 2015, 2016) in

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peacebuilding, on the other hand, emphasise the importance of local power structures. This takes into account as to why the emergence of the hybrid peace, for example, has highlighted the need to empower local civil society actors. The local turn in peacebuilding recognises the agency of sub-national actors and practices towards the goal of effective peacebuilding in collaboration with international entities (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015; Mac Ginty 2011). Critics of the local turn in peacebuilding, however, highlight the dangers of romanticising the concept of hybridity. One of the main issues stressed against the local turn in peacebuilding has focused on the inability of hybrid peace to practically and conceptually transcend beyond the dichotomised categories of 'illiberal-local' and 'liberal-international' which overlooks local power structures on the ground. For civil society, this has resulted to the detachment of international interventions from local realities and marginalisation of community-based organisations (Popplewell 2018).

This chapter contends that discussions on liberal-local hybridity can most meaningfully gain from asking questions not only about the processes of internationalisation and localisation, but also about the ways in which hybrid mechanisms are able to produce more or less stable outcomes. The goal is therefore to describe not only the competitive, but also the co-constitutive relationships between international and local actors. By turning into the agency of civil society actors, it suggests that the concept of hybridity, which is often represented using dichotomised categories (i.e. 'liberal-international' and 'illiberal-local'), tends to oversimplify the conceptual intricacies and dynamic relationships between top-down and bottom-up peace approaches (Mac Ginty 2010). These 'new binaries' (Richmond 2009: 229) have been theorised as oppositional forces. Such binaries, however, disregard that local ownership and international governance are not always in contestation with each other. The analysis in this chapter contributes to the debates on hybridity by illustrating how civil society actors are able to negotiate the frictional binaries between liberal institutions and resources vis-à-vis local practices, power relations and norms.

This chapter demonstrates these arguments using examples from the subnational conflict community of Mindanao in the southern region of the Philippines. Mindanao provides important insights as a case for this chapter for two reasons. First, Mindanao's civil society serves as an excellent case to examine hybrid peacebuilding because of the strong international-local linkages in the region. Many non-governmental

organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBO) have played an important role in peacebuilding and serve as recipients of large amounts of humanitarian aid and development assistance. Several international organisations and foreign governments have been involved in peacebuilding activities in Mindanao, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), United Nations (UN), World Bank (WB), European Union (EU), New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), among many others. The presence of liberal democratic institutions in the Philippines, however, has entailed that the government did not require state-building mechanisms from the external actors, which is different from the large-scale peacebuilding missions and humanitarian interventions in such neighbouring countries as Cambodia and Timor-Leste. Uesugi (2018: 8), nevertheless, has also observed that “there is a noticeable cleavage stemming from the qualitative difference between the nominal application of a liberal governance system and whether such a system operates properly on the ground.” This is due to the existence of local authoritarianism despite the overarching national democracy in the Philippines. Some scholars describe this phenomenon as “competitive authoritarianism” (Helmke and Levitsky 2004) that generates “systemic incoherence” due to the existence of opposing forces “when elements of democracy and autocracy are combined” (Davenport and Armstrong 2004: 541). After all, the protracted conflict in Mindanao has been a result of the failures of existing liberal-democratic institutions to accommodate the interests of the ethnic minorities in the region (Kagawa 2020; Abuza 2016).

Second, Mindanao has been considered as a “hybrid political community” (Deinla 2018) which is characterised by the amalgamation and interaction between liberal-formal and illiberal-informal actors. This entails that local and international CSOs function in intimate local power structures, which are based on the dynamics amongst political lords, insurgents and millenarian families, and marginalised communities (Espesor 2017). The existence of these power players means that the success of liberal-international actors has been dependent on the manner they are able to enmesh themselves within these local networks. In this case, illiberal-local actors cannot be conceptualised without the examination of the influence of liberal-international actors. In Mindanao, it is not unusual to find locals who have been engaged in international NGOs or have

participated in long-term and short-term UN-supported projects. These realities have demanded some amount of localisation and internationalisation, which affect the manner both local and international actors are able to operate in not only the local contexts, but also within the purview of the external entities they identify themselves with such as international organisations. In this regard, there is also a necessity to elucidate whether local peacebuilding and civil society empowerment efforts are intended to hold local governments accountable to their actions and to foster “transformative relationships” (Kagawa 2020) between formerly antagonistic identity-based (e.g. ethno-religious, regional, women) communities. In some ways, liberal-international organisations have also empowered local CSOs to determine their own peace agendas. Local CSOs are strategic agents to penetrate and cascade exogenous liberal norms in the conflict zone.

The rest of the chapter is divided into four sections. It begins with a conceptualisation of hybrid peacebuilding and civil society. It emphasises the role of civil society as a recipient of international and local norms, ideas, and practices, which may sometimes lead to unequal and asymmetrical encounters between international and local actors. The second part presents the role of civil society in internationally-supported peace and development assistance programmes in Mindanao. In this case, CSOs are situated in hybridised contexts which entail that local and international entities are not able to implement their objectives without compromising and taking into account the dynamics of their relationships with other key players. Building on the attempts of the preceding chapters to problematise the practical dimensions of hybrid peacebuilding, the third part describes the following as sites of liberal-local hybridity vis-à-vis civil society involvement in Mindanao: people’s diplomacy, indigenous people’s participation, and women empowerment. The case of the civil society in Mindanao supports the notion that peacebuilding is a hybrid process of international and local factors (norms, actors, and agencies). The chapter concludes that there is a need to examine the ways in which the hybrid peace approach is able to take into consideration how local civil society actors can possibly leverage international contexts by tapping into the resources they can gain from liberal-international peacebuilding institutions.

HYBRID PEACEBUILDING AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society comprises a wide range of local and international actors, which may include both independent and quasi-government actors (Marchetti 2015). In hybrid peacebuilding, civil society actors have usually been characterised based on their ability to navigate through local actors (e.g. community leaders, local security groups, political elites, CBOs, and NGOs) and international political players (e.g. UN officials and decision makers, international organisations, regional bodies, foreign states, and other international donors). In post-conflict contexts, Richmond (2011: 5) contends that civil society actors have provided a vehicle for the liberal peace agenda's emancipatory promises based on "grounded legitimacy, being derived from local agency as well as international liberal norms." Mac Ginty (2011) has coined the term "hybrid civil society" to support his argument about the need to incorporate the agency and power of local actors. As a process, hybridisation is dependent on the negotiation of opposing forces in which the amenability of liberal-international actors are confronted with local resistance and indigenous alternatives. In this regard, there has been a tendency to ignore and underestimate indigenous expressions of civil society. Mac Ginty (2010: 398) has perceived this issue this way:

Indeed, it is useful to think of entities (individuals, communities, institutions) as being hybridised from the outset. In this view, social and political processes—such as peacemaking, peacebuilding or postwar reconstruction—involve the interaction of a series of already hybridised actors and structures.

Many scholars have attempted to illustrate the usefulness of hybridity as an alternative approach to the inability of liberal peacebuilding to engage local actors in post-conflict societies (Wallis et al. 2018; Belloni 2012; Uesugi 2020). The questions and criticisms about liberal peacebuilding approach have always been about the suitability of introducing value-laden institutions into the fragile and volatile conditions of post-conflict communities. Hybridity has been touted as a response to the critique that liberal peacebuilding approach has not allowed for the emergence of local forms of conflict resolutions and governance dynamics. In many cases, democracy-building and economic development projects have been

labelled as peacebuilding initiatives without adequate support by international actors in resolving the different grievances on the ground (Burke 2012). Mac Ginty (2011: 7) accentuates the necessity to create a “new understanding of how liberal internationalism operates, especially in its dealings with the local.” The contention is therefore geared towards the ability of the hybrid peacebuilding approach to obtain grounded legitimacy from the actors in the peace process and to foster a more inclusive approach in peace and conflict resolution (Richmond 2011: 28). This means that more attention must be slanted toward ‘the local’ in the form of grassroots local agencies and indigenous people (Mac Ginty 2011: 47). Hybridity has also been conceptualised as a space where international and local actors produce constitutive and competitive interactions with each other. For example, hybridity has been used to interrogate the ability of local actors to resist the top-down approaches of liberal-international actors (Jackson and Albrecht 2018), analyse the relational aspects of peacebuilding between local and international actors (Boege 2018), and consider the ways in which hybridised environments have impinged on gendered powers relations (Grenfell 2018).

Hybridity, however, is not without its limitations as demonstrated in Chapter 2. Hybridity has often been criticised for the concept’s over-stretched notions about the boundaries and interactions between liberal and local actors. Millar (2014), for example, has observed that hybridity has been conceptually used in different strands of the post-liberal peace literature (e.g. hybrid peacekeeping missions, hybrid criminal tribunals, hybrid governance, and the hybrid peace) without taking into consideration the multiple layers of relations behind this approach. In this regard, he has proposed the need to clarify the institutional, practical, ritual, and conceptual definitions of the hybrid peacebuilding approach. Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam (2011) have also emphasised that following a strict binary schema between liberal-international and illiberal-local actors may pose some limitations in terms of the different sets of questions which can be asked about the political logics of inclusion and exclusion within the peace process. In the same manner, Boege’s (2018: 115) research on Bougainville’s peace process also highlights the necessity to perceive hybridisation from a relational perspective, which basically involves the presence of “fluid and dynamic process of interaction between ‘local’ and ‘international’ actors.”

Another criticism about the hybrid peacebuilding has to do with the dangers of the romanticisation of the traditional approaches of the local,

which may be inherently in opposition to liberal values such as human rights, gender equality, and democratic order (Anam 2018). Grenfell's (2018: 237–252) fieldwork in Timor-Leste, for example, has provided an account of the clash between “customary” and “modern” forms of spatiality in relation to violence against women. In Timor-Leste, the dependence of women in their partners has been institutionalised through modern modes of production work, which have also compounded the level of violent experiences of women in the country. In India and Indonesia, meanwhile, hybrid peacebuilding has contained armed separatist movements at the expense of the fundamental liberties and human rights of the marginalised sectors of the population (Wilson 2020: 115). In these cases, hybridity presents a double-edged sword of the constraints confronting locally-brokered agreements and the illiberal character of the peace process which ignore the rights and voices of minority groups.

In consideration of these criticisms, the use of hybrid peacebuilding approach in this chapter is therefore not aimed at demarcating the dichotomised logics between liberal and local hybridity given that the boundaries between these binaries are not always fixed. In Mindanao, for example, the interventions of Islamic and non-liberal “hybrid facilitators” have provided an alternative approach to the Bangsamoro peace process (Uesugi 2018; Santos 2013). In the same manner, as in the case of the community-based peace activities of the Buddhist monks in Cambodia, locally-initiated peacebuilding may not necessarily represent the aspirations of the local people (Lee 2020). Instead, the goal of this chapter is to set out from these categories to examine the spaces of hybridity between international (e.g. international CSOs, UN, EU, Asia Foundation, etc.) and local (e.g. community leaders, local NGOs, sectoral bodies, etc.) actors, which cannot be neatly categorised as liberal and non-liberal. In this regard, Simangan (2018) has used a similar approach in her study about the entanglements between international-liberal institutions and illiberal-local elites in Cambodia based on the analytical utility of the hybrid peacebuilding approach (Mac Ginty 2011; Björkdahl and Höglund 2013). In her study, she finds that the persistent resistance of liberal norms from local elites has resulted to negative hybrid peace in Cambodia where peace can be described as neither liberal nor emancipatory. In the case of Mindanao, the critical analysis of the agency and encounters of civil society actors provides a conceptual space away from the dichotomised notions of the liberal-local hybridity.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND PEACEBUILDING IN MINDANAO

It is critical to emphasise some contextual differences between Mindanao and other cases within the hybrid peacebuilding literature. Mindanao has often been portrayed based on the political and economic roots of the conflict in the region. Politically, the genesis of the conflict in Mindanao can be traced all the way back to the colonial past of the Philippines, which was problematised through the unsuccessful integration of Muslim minorities within the Catholic-dominated country. In the Muslim Mindanao, there was a perceived struggle between the two religions with Christianity as the anti-thesis of Islam (Tadem 2008: 102). The conflict has mainly been a result of the rejection of the Moro communities against the decision that their 'ancestral domain' should be integrated into the territory of the Philippines. The overarching struggle of the conflict has been an attempt by groups within the region to obtain the right to self-determination or independence, which has evolved into a decades-long secessionist movement (Kagawa 2020).

The complexity of the Bangsamoro peace process, of course, has to do with the presence of competing peace processes which have been running simultaneously under the same territory (Abuza 2016). The first that formed was the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), created in the 1960s by Moro leaders who wanted to achieve self-determination for the region. This has culminated with the 1996 final peace agreement between MNLF and the Philippine government. In 1984, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), however, broke off from the MNLF largely from what is viewed as a disagreement of the leaders towards what the goals of the organisation should be. By splitting the organisation, it has also resulted in many other much smaller actors, some more radical than others. For example, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was established in 1991 as an offshoot organisation from the MNLF, whilst the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) broke away from the MILF. Although the peace process between the MILF and the Philippines government has been institutionalised due to the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) and the legislation of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) the recent episodes of political violence by insurgent groups in the Southern Philippines, including the Zamboanga siege (2013), Mamasapano incident (2015), and the Marawi crisis (2017), have also indicated that the peace process is still in a fragile and unstable condition.

Civilian communities, meanwhile, have been confronted with the possible eruptions of Islamic State-inspired violence and greater militarisation due to the recent imposition of martial law. In this sense, there is no clear-cut answer as to whether Mindanao can be considered as a war zone (taking into consideration the presence of breakaway groups like the BIFF and ASG), a conflict area (mostly because of the rampant cycles of violence and extra-judicial killings during elections and terrorist and organised criminal activities), or a post-conflict society (due to the 1996 peace deal with the MNLF and the 2014 CAB and 2018 BOL with the MILF). Nonetheless, the grassroots rivalries between political clans and landlords have also been a matter of concern for peace activists in the region. Such conditions produce “negative hybrid peace” in which liberal norms are challenged, and a repressive status quo is maintained (Richmond 2015: 54).

A major lesson from the Mindanao peace process was the realisation that the government cannot and should not do it alone. There is a need to consult with civil society actors who are demanding for participation since the peace process impacts the lives of the local stakeholders. After all, the “failed experiment” of the peace deal with the MNLF has indicated that autonomy and economic growth are not necessarily mutually inclusive. The fall of the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos during the 1986 Peoples Power Revolution is often seen as one of the major factors which have enabled the growth and development of civil society in the Philippines. In fact, the role of civil society actors in the country’s socio-economic and political development has been enshrined within the 1987 Philippine Constitution’s Article II (Declaration of Principles and State Policies), Section 23, which states that it is the policy of the state “to encourage non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organisations that promote the welfare of the nation.” This takes into account as to why civil society participation has been institutionalised as one of the fundamental laws of the land. It is not hard to imagine that the same political condition has enabled civil society in Mindanao to engage the government in the peace process.

In addition, the passage of the 1991 Local Government Code (RA 37160) has also provided an enabling legal environment for the direct participation of civil society actors in the local governance. The growth of the civil society and the development of the peace process have coincided with the trend towards greater democratisation and decentralisation of political power and economic-decision making process in the Philippines.

These conditions have also opened sectoral representations for women, indigenous people, youth, urban poor, and farmers, among others. In Mindanao, there is an expectation that local CSOs should play an active role in the consultative process of provincial and regional peace and order councils which also provide the accreditation for them. It goes without saying that support for civil society actors has been one of core features of international peacebuilding in Mindanao. Civil society actors in the region have gained a broad level of support from many international NGOs and donor agencies. Aside from the development aid from foreign governments and financial institutions, many local CSOs have also worked with international NGOs, including the Catholic Relief Services, Asia Foundation, and International Crisis Group. International organisations frequently support local CSOs in the form of technical-logistical assistance, facilitation services, and capacity-building programmes.

There have also been attempts from international actors to work with local civil society groups to create different platforms for reconciliation at the grassroots level. MILF's reliance on the expertise of international and local civil society groups, for example, is evident in the establishment of the Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly (BPCA), which has been instrumental in providing important inputs and policies regarding the negotiated autonomy with the Philippine government. In Mindanao, Rood (2005: 21–29) enumerates that the involvements of civil society groups in peacebuilding efforts are three-fold: (1) dialogue between communities (e.g. Bishops-*Ulama* Conference in support of bridging the sectarian divide and preventing communal violence in Mindanao); (2) horizontal spaces for peace (e.g. the establishment of 'peace zones' in Mindanao as a concerted effort between local and international organisations); and (3) vertical involvement in peace policy-making (i.e. the goal of the civil society to influence the peace process through consultative and collective action efforts. Local CSOs, however, have been prone to the capture of both national and local elites. In a report from the Asia Foundation on development assistance in the region, Parks, Colletta and Oppenheim (2013: 120) note that:

... patronage and corruption are so deeply entrenched that the well-designed plans and aims of donors rarely result in transformative impacts, and more often than not, actually reinforce traditional political power and patronage structures. In sum, aid in Mindanao has become yet another

source of contestation among local actors, as well as a self-perpetuating industry for donors, government, and NGOs, alike.

Nevertheless, local CSOs have maintained a crucial role in the Mindanao peace process given that minority groups (e.g. Moros and non-Muslim ethnic communities) have very restricted powers in the national political landscape. Civil society groups have wide-ranging and broadly-defined activities in the region, including peace movements and alliances, peace education and research, relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, truth commissions and investigative missions, grassroots ceasefire monitoring, dialogue and consultations, interfaith dialogue, arts and culture for peace advocacy, and peace journalism (Abubakar 2007). From this view, the dependence of the MILF peace negotiators, for example, on BPCA's recommendations suggests that civil society actors have become supplementary players in the peace process by pushing for strategies against political violence in the region. Most notably, local and regional CSO networks (e.g. Mindanao Caucus of Development NGO Networks and Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society) have been instrumental in terms of fostering 'transformative relationships' and creating diagonal platforms for negotiations. In this regard, an adequate degree of international support opens an opportunity for civil society organisations to strengthen their capacity in building and maintaining 'transformative relationships' as part of the peace process. Kagawa's (2020) critical analysis of the mid-space actors in the context of the Bangsamoro, for instance, includes the involvement of *Ulama* leaders, who have not only supported humanitarian endeavours in the region, but have also served as a religious blanket for local and national peacebuilding efforts.

In this sense, the role of the civil society can also be attributed to that of mid-space actors or gatekeepers (see Chapter 4) who have the capacity to wield some influence in knowledge formation and possess locally-grounded legitimacy as agents of hybrid peacebuilding. This is concomitant to the ability of local actors to have access to different sources of power, i.e. formal and informal, due to their normative understanding of the contexts and complexities on the ground. Local and international resources, on the one hand, can enable CSOs to play the role of 'bridge-builders' who have the ability to navigate themselves across different levels of peace engagement. On the other hand, however, locally-based actors can also unintentionally become spoilers

especially when their interests and demands constrain the peace process (see Chapter 5).

Surprisingly, peacebuilding activities have not been evenly spread within the southern part of the Philippines. Many local CSOs have pointed out that international peacebuilding has not been extensively entertained in the region if it is not supplemented by developmental and financial interventions, which target such sectoral needs as education, livelihood, and healthcare. Some NGOs, for example, have pointed out the challenge of getting people to participate in their programmes, which is why community-based activities in Mindanao have been geared towards particular interests (e.g. youth, women, indigenous people, etc.) to narrow down the sets of local grievances that need to be addressed. Peace education, for example, is popular area of work which most local and international CSOs have engaged in because it covers not only educational institutions in Mindanao, but also grassroots communities which are willing to learn about better inter-faith relationships and ethnic tolerance. In peace education programmes, local NGOs have usually followed internationally-accepted frameworks such as the curriculum of University for Peace in Costa Rica on intercultural respect, harmony, and active non-violence (Bacani 2004).

Two points are worth emphasising about the dynamics of civil society involvement in Mindanao. The first is that despite the violent conflict the (flawed) liberal-democratic system of the Philippines has still provided some openings for the growth of civil society in Mindanao. Morada and Tadem (2006: 429) have noted that “these openings for civil society are meant to promote not only popular participation but also local accountability and transparency.” This is quite different from the experiences of the authoritarian post-conflict countries in Southeast Asia such as Cambodia and Timor-Lester where foreign liberal influence in peace-keeping missions was needed to achieve peace. There has also been a significant level of variation in the activities of civil society actors, which are not completely captured by “outsiders” such as international development groups and security analysts. In reality, “conflict dynamics in one community may contrast starkly with conflict in neighbouring communities where, due to a different configuration of political actors, family or clan networks, ethnic cultural groups, security forces, and/or insurgents, local conflict conditions may be very different” (Schuler et al. 2013).

The second point is that the presumed tensions within the hybridity literature between illiberal-local and liberal-international communities

have not always been clear-cut. This is also perhaps reflected in the lack of comprehensive and critical studies about the wider range of peacebuilding initiatives within the region. In Mindanao, some organisations have drawn from discourses and practices from both local and international sources. The presence of these organisations has resulted to a broad range of programmatic concerns which are not only rooted in communities, but are also located within the radars of international actors. Liberal-local relations contribute to the hybridisation of the peace process. Hence, it is important to identify the areas of dynamic entanglements between local and international actors (Boege 2018: 117).

SITES OF LIBERAL-LOCAL HYBRID PEACEBUILDING IN MINDANAO

Hybrid peacebuilding encourages the everyday processes of local-international exchange which demands a process of recalibration and re-negotiation in the relationships between the local and international actors in the course of peacebuilding. It is therefore productive to think about hybridity as a continuum in which locally-based organisations are able to frame their personal grievances within the wider discourses of the international community. In this sense, the specific interplay of the hybridised relationships between the international and the local actors produces a space for accommodation and resistance to liberal peace agendas. In Mindanao, as implicated in the above discussion, the success of local CSOs and community leaders are largely dependent on the manner they are able to take advantage of “skills that allow them to manoeuvre within the intricate power relations that are part of conflict-affected communities” (Espesor 2017: 78).

Three spaces of hybrid peacebuilding engagements in the region, where there have been considerable encounters and entanglements between local and international actors, are people’s diplomacy, indigenous people’s participation, and women empowerment. The first example in this section shows the ability of local and international CSOs to create innovative and non-formal mechanisms to address the shortcomings of the formal peace process. It supports the contention that hybrid structures may enable local and international actors to strengthen the potential of their engagements. The second example, meanwhile, illustrates the ways in which local actors are able to utilise international ideas to frame their grievances. The presence of international treaties and agreements on

indigenous people's rights, for instance, has provided an opportunity for CSOs to enhance their call for inclusivity in the formal peace process. As discussed in the third example, the goal of empowering women within the formal and informal aspects of the peace process has also been accompanied by the hybrid cooperation between local and international actors. In these cases, the objective of local and international actors has been the encouragement of non-elite actors to exercise their agency and diversify the local voices within the peacebuilding process.

People's Diplomacy

People's diplomacy has been considered as one of the key innovations of the civil society in achieving their role as a third party in the Mindanao peace process. This was pioneered by the Initiative for International Dialogue (IID) which introduced the idea of 'South-to-South Solidarity' as a new framework for peacebuilding and international development intervention. As a Mindanao-based international NGO, IID was founded in 1988 with the goal of promoting human security, democratisation, and people-to-people solidarity. Aside from their work in Mindanao, IID has also been very active in other parts of Southeast Asia, including Myanmar, Southern Thailand, West Papua, and Timor-Leste. One of the achievements of IID was the formation of the Mindanao Peoples Caucus (MPC) which has served as a platform for conflict-affected grassroots communities and organisations in the region. Several NGOs have supported this platform, including the Community and Family Services International (CFSI), Salaam-Mindanao, and Habitat for Humanity, ranging from rehabilitation and livelihood projects for displaced communities to psycho-social interventions and relief operations for victims of trauma.

In 2001, IID provided technical assistance to MPC for the formation of *Bantay Ceasefire* (Ceasefire Watch), a grassroots and community-based ceasefire-monitoring network aimed at connecting the Philippine government's top-down strategies with the civil society's bottom-up efforts in Mindanao. This civil society-led initiative provided an opening for local organisations to independently monitor and verify ceasefire violations with international organisations. It can be considered as one of the first "citizen security" mechanisms and "hybrid structures" (i.e. local-international civil society information exchange) within the evolving peace infrastructures of the Mindanao peace process. In an online interview with the

Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (2019), IID's regional coordinator Marc Batac has noted that:

IID's Moro and Mindanao partners sought the assistance of civil society and IID in helping to galvanize a response and projection of their voices and perspectives into the entire peace process. IID then proceeded to establish platforms and networks to concretize this accompaniment, forming the Mindanao Peoples Caucus (MPC)—a Tri-people (Moro, settlers and Indigenous peoples) network that engaged the peace process.

In essence, the success of Bantay Ceasefire provided a venue for the Philippine government and MILF to recognise the need for the expansion of a civilian-led and third-party mechanism, which targeted the active participation of Mindanao-based and foreign civilian monitors (Iglesias 2013: 4). In addition, Bantay Ceasefire also supported the Independent Fact-Finding Committee (IFFC) under the Notre Dame University Peace Education Centre, the Maguindanao Professional Employees' Association, and Cotabato City Media Multipurpose Cooperative. IID assisted this movement by involving groups from the Global South, especially from the member-states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In effect, this initiative has provided an opportunity for conflict-affected communities in the region to share their experiences and best practices in resolving the security challenges facing them. This has also proven that local CSOs in Mindanao are capable of mobilising support from organisations at the national and international levels. Eventually, Bantay Ceasefire resulted to a broad consortium of peace organisations in the country dubbed as Mindanao Peace Weavers. There have also been attempts from the part of the Philippine government to include an International Monitoring Team (IMT) within the formal ceasefire monitoring structure. As discussed in Chapter 8, Japan, along with some member-countries of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), was part of this team. The official monitoring system, however, was constrained by the lack of independence and influence of the IMT and Local Monitoring Teams (LMTs) at the grassroots level. These gaps have been addressed by civil society-led initiatives such as Bantay Ceasefire (Colleta 2006: 27).

The strong networks between local and international CSOs have therefore provided an opening for the Bantay Ceasefire to promote people's diplomacy based on the concepts of good governance, peace monitoring,

and citizen participation. In this case, there is blurred notion of the international and the local given that the CSOs in this initiative cannot be easily characterised using liberal peace agendas. For the most part, the formation of this civil society initiative was a hybrid process, which gave priority not only to the participation of international actors, but also to the wishes of the local actors. It also raises the need to underscore the role of the civil society, for example, in terms of their influence during the critical junctures of the peace negotiations. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that broad-based civil society coalitions are important in promoting non-violent mechanisms and mobilising popular support towards the peace process. In this case, the diverse involvement of and cooperation between the international and local actors in the peace process has been considered as beneficial because of the ways in which they have enhanced the legitimacy and the credibility of their political claims. From this perspective, it can be surmised that this cooperative mechanism has opened a window of opportunity for local and international CSOs to create spaces of cooperation (as shown in this book's conceptualisation of mid-space actors). After all, the horizontal and vertical functions of the civil society actors have provided them with foundations for their diagonal functions as bridge-builders and gatekeepers.

Indigenous People's Participation

In Mindanao, civil society groups have generally focused on three broad categories relevant to the rights of the indigenous peoples and minorities which are embodied in the international legal system: rights to protection, empowerment, and preservation of identity. The rights pertaining to protection and empowerment are perhaps the more controversial categories given that the status of indigenous peoples and minorities has always been a matter of political debate. There has been an expectation for the Philippine government to provide indigenous peoples in the region with special protections based on the assumption that such minority groups have been subjected to protracted historical, socio-political, and economic injustices within the purview of colonisation and forced dispossession of lands, territories, and resources. From this perspective, local and international CSOs, for example, have pointed out that the peace process has not fully enshrined the equitable participation and protection of indigenous peoples and non-Muslims.

More concretely, there have been different proposals to address this problem. One of the most prominent solutions has emanated from the inclusion and development of the concept of ‘ancestral domain’ as part of the power-sharing mechanisms for the proposed Bangsamoro political entity. The formulation of the ancestral domain started during the Tripoli Agreement of 2001, although this concept came into public consciousness as a result of the signing of the 2007 Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD), which was aimed at adding more villages to the autonomous region in the southern Philippines. The agreement, however, was scrapped after the Philippine Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional. CSOs supported the ancestral domain aspect of the peace process not only because it could foster an enabling legal environment for the realisation of one of the important aspects of the 1997 Philippine Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), but also because of the possible institutionalisation of the land rights of the indigenous peoples and non-Muslims within the Bangsamoro peace process. Because they were not included in the official peace process between the government and MILF, indigenous peoples have formed a major part of the membership of the civil society networks in Mindanao.

The efforts of Mindanao-based civil society coalition movements for indigenous people’s security of tenure in ancestral domain coincided with the approval of the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG), for example, has contributed in helping indigenous movement leaders deepen their understanding of how existing legal regime promotes indigenous rights. Eventually, the ancestral domain has been included as BOL’s core feature. The global recognition of the indigenous rights may have helped create the openness of the Philippine government to entertain the term of ancestral domain. The proposed autonomous entity of Bangsamoro attempts to address the needs of the indigenous peoples in the region, including their freedom of choice and the protection of their rights. Rood (2014), as part of the Asia Foundation’s involvement as a peace mediator, raises challenges for the indigenous rights, including the recognition of their ancestral domains:

Indigenous people’s organisations and their allies, though, point out that what is missing from this is a recognition of their ancestral domains (plural). Immediately, lobbying sprang up both in the media and in Congress, and has found an echo among some members of the legislature

... The MILF has been firm on this matter, regarding those who press the case for recognition of plural ancestral domains as “spoilers” who are diluting the meaning of the Bangsamoro people and the Moro’s ancestral domain.

Whilst international donors have been instrumental in supporting the financial needs of local NGOs some community leaders have noted that their intervention has not always been developed based on careful planning. Nonetheless, there is an expectation from these ‘outsiders’ to be integrated and consulted for the areas and types of assistance that local NGOs need. There have also been unwritten preferences from international donors to mainly engage with large CSO coalitions instead of working with smaller organisations. Rural-based organisations, for example, have been excluded in internationally-organised trainings. The unequal level of resources among local NGOs can additionally be connected to the inability of some grassroots actors to grasp the complex monitoring systems and concepts which are being brought in by international donors. In some cases, international development projects fail because of the lack of coordination between the international donors and local partners. In the case of conflict management mechanisms, local indigenous CSOs also lament that international donors usually ask them to introduce new liberal-based systems of governance even though the norms and practices at the grassroots level are different. Such practices neither set out with conventional values of liberal peacebuilding, and produces tension with the local actors. Richmond (2012: 4) argues that there are dilemmas produced by the encounters between liberal-formal institutions and illiberal-informal actors:

From the perspective of the international actor agency revolves around how to use its capacity to legitimately induce a top-down liberal peace, so addressing the local causes of conflict. From the perspective of its local subjects agency revolves around how to both learn from peacebuilding or statebuilding in order to address root causes, and how to merge international support or prescriptions with local political frameworks necessary for localized autonomy and identity. However, many of those advocating this are, in fact, quite sympathetic to the peace process and have been operating for years under a “tri-people” framework trying to promote peace and development in Mindanao by bringing together Muslims, Lumads, and “settlers” (Christians whose family origins are from outside Mindanao).

Nevertheless, peace negotiators have also learned that the need to gain input from civil society is not only a local but also a global trend in the light of the inclusion of the rights of the minorities and indigenous peoples in the proposed Bangsamoro autonomous region. International organisations like the UN Development Programme (UNDP), meanwhile, have offered technical assistance and funding to advocate for the participation of indigenous peoples. It goes without saying that indigenous people's organisations also pushed for the expansion of their rights at every step of the way. The support of international actors has been instrumental in enhancing the capacity of local groups to undertake broader engagements in the form of policy consultations. A major success which local actors have viewed in their peace engagements is the improved awareness of the government about the legitimacy of the core grievances of the minorities in Mindanao and the necessity to address the different historical injustices they have encountered.

Women Empowerment

Gender inequality has emerged as one of the leading issues within the hybrid peacebuilding literature (see Grenfell 2018; George 2018). In the issue of the Mindanao peace process, the international community has often lauded the presence of the women in the negotiating team of the Philippines. In this regard, there have been numerous provisions to advance women's rights and participation in the Bangsamoro autonomous region. At first glance, it can be said the gender provisions of the BOL have been heavily influenced by the commitment of the Philippines to such international legal instruments as the UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. After the BOL's passage, the UN Women, for example, commented that:

These provisions create a positive environment for women's participation and gender-responsive governance. However, the advocacy and support from communities, NGOs and other actors—and the buy-in and support from government officials—will be vital to guarantee women's rights and gender equality. Women's participation in the new government is critical to meeting women's needs in laws and policies. These should be crafted in an inclusive process with women, youth and indigenous peoples. They must also consider the conflict, including threats of violent extremism, that has constantly challenged the region.

Such a statement, however, indicates that women empowerment within the peace process has not only been achieved through the political opportunity structures embedded with global gendered norms, but also through the efforts of the local actors. The government's previous lead negotiator Professor Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, for instance, has noted that the civil society groups in the Philippines have been overwhelmingly comprised of women (Santiago 2015: 13). In particular, the international engagements of Mindanao-based CSOs have ranged from organising consultative meetings and capacity-building programmes to writing resolutions and the policy agendas of women for the proposed autonomous region of Bangsamoro. In this sense, women's civil society groups can be treated as hybrid spaces due to the high level of engagements that they have with international organisations and agendas. They can be considered as local in that the main goals of these organisations are focused on the development of Bangsamoro, but at the same time they can be seen as international because of their engagements with external actors.

The gendered hybrid spaces, however, can also be viewed outside the boundaries of the formal peace process. In particular, women's NGOs have played an extremely important role in the different areas of local peacebuilding such as peace monitoring, conflict mediation and resolution, and gender-based planning. Some women leaders have also formed peace platforms and networks which have partnered with international aid donors (e.g. Bangsamoro Women Solidarity Forum, Mindanao Human Rights Action Network, and the Kadtabanga Foundation). These women-led platforms have been active in informal mechanisms such as Bantay Ceasefire in which they have been applauded for their roles in highlighting the rights and concerns of women in times of conflict (Arnado 2012: 13). In Mindanao, it is worth noting that women's engagement in the peacebuilding activities are also embedded within hybridised power structures which are composed of formal players such as the local and national government agencies and such informal actors as clans and ethnic groups. Some women leaders have also been involved in preserving their traditional approaches through clan organising as a form of conflict resolution. Hall and Hoare (2015: 107) note that women have also participated in the implementation and preservation of hybridised conflict management mechanisms for clan-based conflicts (e.g. *rido*):

Rido does not generally target women and children, but when violence erupts between clans, Muslim women act as pacifiers and documenters...

Women NGO representatives working on security and peacebuilding are cognisant of the serious challenges faced by IDP women and rido-burdened Muslim women. Nonetheless, they have not been able to map these out in the formal peace process in terms of specific mechanisms or programmatic commitments by the future Bangsamoro Government.

In some cases, local CSOs have also used international spaces to amplify their agendas. The Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society, for example, has often partnered with the UN Women to diversify their understanding of gender issues (Hall and Hoare 2015). In Mindanao, these empirical examples show that there is an intersection between local NGOs and their foreign donors. Although the Philippines has made advancements in terms of the formal participation of women in politics and the peace process, local CSOs can be considered as hybrid spaces where gender issues have flourished. These spaces have allowed women to exercise their agency whilst navigating the different tools and mechanisms available to them at the local and international levels. It can also be surmised that international engagements towards women empowerment for the Mindanao peace process have opened spaces for transformative form of local involvement.

In this regard, the participation of women in peacebuilding activities has emancipatory elements as evidenced by the local agencies of the civil society groups through localised and internationalised approaches to peacebuilding. However, this also leaves an important question of whether hybridised contexts have provided an opening for the representation of women on the ground. It also raises similar questions on the ability of minorities and vulnerable populations to enhance their participation given that these concerns also offer an opportunity to operationalize hybrid peacebuilding. Such key issues warrant further investigation from the purview of hybrid peacebuilding as they directly affect the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in peace processes.

CONCLUSION

The sites of liberal-local hybridity discussed in this chapter imply the need to contextualise the spaces of interaction between dichotomised categories in peacebuilding. The experiences of civil society groups in Mindanao illustrate the ways in which local and international actors operate within hybridised environments. The interactions between these “new binaries”

have been characterised by resistance and accommodation. From the view of the local actors, international donors, for example, can be considered as a double-edged sword. Whilst international actors can enhance the capacity of local CSOs, the former's lack of engagement with the political realities on the ground can also create tensions between them. International actors, meanwhile, is expected to have a dynamic relationship with local actors beyond financial support. As such, the encounters between local and international actors must be analysed in terms of agencies, norms, and spaces. In the case of Mindanao, it is also important to analyse hybridity by taking into consideration not only the institutions, but also the practices and the competitive and cooperative relationships amongst the actors across multiple levels of interaction. Encounters of local and international organisations particularly raise important issues about the tendency of post-liberal approaches to recognise some degrees of emancipation with the support of international agents.

In the hybrid peacebuilding literature, the international-local interface of the actors has typically been seen as a unidirectional mechanism in which the international affects the local. For future research, it would be worth examining the ways in which local actors can contribute in the expansion of international peacebuilding agendas. Of course, this is deeply connected to the challenges confronting the institutionalisation of civil society participation in peace processes. Theoretically, one of the remaining constraints facing the hybrid peacebuilding approach is to develop a practical tool to consider how top-down approaches (i.e. influence of international declarations on national peace processes) can amalgamate with the bottom-up agendas of CSOs to impinge not only on the peace process, but also on policy outcomes such as human rights.

As mentioned, one of the main criticisms about hybrid peacebuilding has been about the use of dichotomies. The process of hybridisation, of course, could not and should not be merely confined within the neat categories of the international and local actors. Mac Ginty (2011: 46), nevertheless, underscores that whilst hybrid peacebuilding tends to bifurcate between the spheres of 'local' and 'international' "it does seem that many international peace-support actors are more comfortable thinking about and exercising material forms of power, while local communities in some settings tend to think about power in terms of legitimacy and moral standing." This chapter does not intend to suggest the problematic approval of situating the self-representations of actors. Instead, it contributes to the existing knowledge on hybrid peacebuilding by

citing concrete examples based on the perceived level of entanglements between local and international actors. The varying levels of success of civil society actors in these examples, however, show that hybridised contexts can somewhat produce different outcomes. This entails hybridisation is inherent in the dynamics of conflict that may also lead to the burgeoning of the everyday local spaces whereby international and transnational relations of power may co-constitute one another.

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