



Republic of the Philippines
BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao

— PRLS —

POLICY RESEARCH AND LEGAL SERVICES

*Igniting the culture of research for the betterment
of the Bangsamoro people.*

2021

MIDYEAR ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT



Bangsamoro Transition Authority - Extension Office
87 De Mazenod Avenue, Barangay Rosary Heights V,
Cotabato City, 9600 Maguindanao, BARMM,
Philippines



barmm_parliament_research@nassef-m-adiong.com



<https://nassef.info/barmm-parliament-research/>



(064) 557-4755



@BARMM.Parliament. Research



@BARMM_Research

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ACCOMPLISHMENT
REPORT



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Bangsamoro Transition Authority - Extension Office

87 De Mazenod Avenue, Barangay Rosary Heights V, Cotabato City, 9600

Maguindanao, BARMM, Philippines

Tel: (064) 557-4755

Email: barmm-parliament_research@nassef-m-adiong.com

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Message from the Officer-in-Charge of the Policy Research and Legal Services

The Policy Research and Legal Services (PRLS) has recently been activated to provide succinct yet thorough reviews and legal commentaries on legislative measures, programs, concerns, policy issues, and legal needs. Analytical frameworks both multidisciplinary and legal approaches are used so as to comprehensively cover the nitty-gritty and essential details of legislative works by our principal clientele, the Members of the Parliament.

Through our indispensable mandate of assisting the Parliament's research works and related legal assistance, we are delighted to welcome everyone to our 2021 midyear accomplishment report. It conspicuously exhibits the PRLS first half-year's travails and oftentimes elbow grease works necessary to obtain a compendious overarching research and legal services. Forbye with prodigious labor, the PRLS team is duty-bound to uphold excellence and integrity in providing research/legal-grounded legislations through our scholarly and jurisprudential exertions understandable by multiple (lay) publics that are clear and devoid of legalese and academese writings.

Withal of upholding research integrity and legal credibility, PRLS mission ignites a research culture imperative to create a significant space to homegrown ways of knowing and world-making that are grounded on multiperspectivist thinking, legal interpretations, and lived experiences of the Bangsamoro society. Howbeit epistemological orientations, PRLS core values envisage a tolerant and inclusive society for both Muslims and non-Muslims guided by the esprit de corps of the "moral governance" conduit to the five immutable principles on faith, freedom, moral authority, common good, and social ethics.

Nassef Manabilang Adiong, PhD



Message from the Officer-in-Charge of the Legislative Measures and Legal Assistance Division

Assalamu alaikum!

I am privileged to serve as OIC of the Legislative Measures and Legal Assistance Division. I am especially honored to join the Policy Research and Legal Services, knowing that as a social scientist-attorney, the PRLS supports of the mission to ignite a research culture for the betterment of the Bangsamoro people.

The activation of the LMLAD is timely. Nowadays, officials and attorneys in the BARMM speak largely if a matter is legal or constitutional. While it is no excuse that the region is new to the government set-up, we need to understand how to best serve the needs of the region that is within the bounds of law and jurisprudence. It is the touchstone for my personal belief that BARMM right now is in a prime condition to help further the understanding of the Parliamentary setup in the region through legal scholarship and experience that can only be derived from the unique situation of BARMM.

With that said, the LMLAD is clearly in need of more attorneys and other legal specialists that are trained in the areas of bill drafting, legal opinions, and in policy and legal reform. As the newly-minted OIC Head of the LMLAD, I have much to learn, and I look forward to the opportunities of learning and working ahead.

Abdel Jamal Ramos Disangcopan



Message from the Officer-in-Charge of the Legislative Research Division

Bismillahi Rahmani Raheem.

For more than two years since its existence, the BTA Parliament, headed by Speaker Atty. Ali Pangalian M. Balindong together with the members of the Bangsamoro Parliament, accomplished most of its tasks on the priority codes cited in the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL). They had been relentlessly working in the passage of legislative measures that address the needs of the Bangsamoro region and its constituents.

We, in the Policy Research and Legal Services, cater to the requests of the members of the parliament during the transition period.

We support the moral governance of Chief Minister Ahod B. Ebrahim and the government of the day in achieving lasting peace and development in the Bangsamoro region.

Moludin G. Bernan



About PRLS

Policy Research and Legal Services

The Bangsamoro Parliament is supported by the Secretariat in providing the Parliament Members with adequate, relevant, and efficient administrative and technical assistance that enables them to perform legislative tasks and responsibilities. The Secretary General heads the Secretariat and is assisted by different departments and divisions, including the Policy Research and Legal Services.

The Mandate of PRLS

Under the Divisional Structure of the Bangsamoro Parliament and exemplified by the December 2020's Resolution No. 96, the Policy Research and Legal Services (PRLS) shall provide support to the Members of the Parliament—including the Parliament's departments and division offices—with scholarly, systematic, and legal exertions of reviews, analyses, studies, and research utilizing multidisciplinary and legal approaches across legislative measures, programs, concerns, agenda, policy issues, and legal needs.

Services Offered

PRLS advances a research culture grounded on multiperspectivist thinking both critical and jurisprudential, including lived experiences of the Bangsamoro peoples in addressing the following focal service areas:

1. Review of MP requests on existing laws—whether in local, regional, and national—and proposed bills in the Parliament.
2. Assistance in drafting the legislative measures constituting bills and resolutions in the Parliament.
3. Review of drafts of legal documents such as MOU, MOA, contracts, among others, in relation to matters affecting the Parliament.
4. Response to policy inquiries and legal requests in matters affecting the Parliament.
5. Request for technical assistance on policy and legal matters.
6. Conduct of activities within the Bangsamoro Research and Legal Services Program.

Divisions

PRLS is divided into two divisions which, upon requests of Members of and offices in the Parliament, carry and deliver specific focal service areas:

- (1) Legislative Research Division whose responsible for the conduct of research works, reviews, commentaries, and studies on legislations, policy issues, and other specific legislative concerns of the Parliament; and,
- (2) Legislative Measures and Legal Assistance Division, who is task at providing the following services: assistance in reviewing legal documents and drafting legislative measures, technical assistance and legal advice to the Members of the Parliament, providing legal materials to committees on proposed legislations, and legal assistance on administrative cases.

Spirit of Collaboration

In the pursuit of effectively performing its mandate, PRLS collaborates with research institutions and development partners in both public and private sectors for knowledge sharing, policy dialogue, and capability building. It also assists in the formulation of the legislative agenda of the Parliament and undertakes analyses of the impact of legislation, research, and in-depth studies on identified policy issues.



FEATURED ARTICLE

MORAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR BARMM

The leadership of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) is determined to lead and manage the Moro society based on ‘moral governance’. However, it is difficult to understand what moral governance means. By using an exploratory design to frame research as inquiry and gain insights on moral governance as BARMM’s agendum, this research will navigate and conceptualize the meaning of moral governance based on my proposed framework that constitutes five immutable principles: Faith, Freedom, Moral Authority, Common Good, and Social Ethics. By constituting these interrelated principles that will map the framework towards practice, a sustainable BARMM is envisaged as a tolerant society to various Muslim groups and non-Muslim communities—Christians and Indigenous Peoples in particular.

Faith

The expression of one's strong belief in the transcendence of an unimaginable divinity—God (Allah). Faith includes the magnanimity in confidence acquired through sets of duty-bound obligations, constructive responsible actions as well as dynamic and effective measures of believing and thinking. In Islamic terms, it represents the affirmation of the inner self with the confession of the mind and the action of the body (Mihlar, 2018). The strong positive inner self-assertion guided by one's thought and acceptance is reflected from the freedom and freewill to affirm wholeheartedly and confess firmly, while the “action of the body” refers to the ethical pursuits of the heart, mind, and soul. Faith is the unyielding belief in the oneness of Allah, in the transcendental attributes, in angels, in the revealed scriptures, in messengers or prophets, in the day of judgment and destiny, and in the perpetuating battle between good and evil.

Quranic chapter 2, verses 2–4 states that “this is the Book in which there is no doubt, a guidance for the reverent, who believe in the unseen and perform the prayer and spend from that which we have provided them, and who believe in what was sent down unto thee, and what was sent down before thee, and who are certain of the hereafter.” Faithful believers must have the audacity to believe in the scriptures of past monotheistic faith traditions, in the completeness and uncorrupted Quran, and in the predestination of faith. Islam signifies submission and obedience foregrounded on the confirmation of one's true heart. A heart that is accepting of one's true nature and intent. From shariah's viewpoint, faith goes hand in hand with Islam, without faith there is no Islam in the heart of an individual. In short, it is not enough to believe in the transcendence unless the mind and the body express faith through loyalty, allegiance, and unfettered submission.

The testimony of faith in Islam, the highest level, was revealed in the Quran 37:35, “indeed, when it was said unto them, there is no god but God, they waxed arrogant...” and in the Quran 47:19, “know, then, that there is no god but God, and ask forgiveness for thy sin and for the believing men and the believing women. God knows your coming and going, and your abode.” The illuminating phrase—there is no god but Allah—does not only concern divine unity and transcendence, but also a means to integrate positive qualities of the importance of Allah’s oneness. The divine unity in the testimony of faith conveys that there is ultimately no reality but the divine reality itself. A world of faith and Islam makes up one’s spiritual journey where faith starts from the heart and attains perfection through the conveyance of external deeds and actions (see social ethics), while Islam starts from external deeds and regarded as perfect when it reaches the faithful’s believing heart and mind.

Consequently, human activities such as words, deeds, and attributes have manifested human’s understanding of faith. People who practice them in their lifetime will eventually succeed in this worldly life and hereafter. In the Bangsamoro Organic Law (Republic Act no. 11054), “faith” is enshrined in the preamble: “Imploring the aims of Almighty God, in recognition of the aspirations of the Bangsamoro people ... reflective of their system of life as prescribed by their faith, in harmony with their customary laws, cultures and traditions...” This starting point of the law asserts the philosophy and purpose of the creation of BARMM which revolves around the sanctity of a faith-based community.

Freedom

A highly essential part of Islam that explains human freedom in the realm of worldly affairs and the life hereafter and integral in establishing a just society based on the rule of law and respect for human dignity. Freedom is the absence of human coercive forces which would arbitrarily limit and curb decision.

Similar to Prophet Muhammad's (may God's blessings and peace be upon him) actuation of freeing the slaves and the oppressed from the captives of oppression, the Quranic chapter 90, verse 13, in the phrase of "[it is] the freeing of a slave" where the prophet, in the Hadith (Prophet's sayings) tradition collected by al-Tirmidhi, heard that "whoever releases a believing slave, he will be his ransom from the fire." In the classical exegesis (tafsir) scholarship, there is a debate as to which is more praiseworthy, charity or the manumission of a slave. Some point to the placement of this verse before the following verses as an indication that manumission of a slave is superior (Malik, 2016). It can also imply the importance of repentance or acts of worship by which one attains paradise, since that is the greatest freedom.

The call for the abolition of all forms of deity except the oneness of Allah is integral to the notion of freedom and vaguely resonates with a political idea. In fact, this notion transcends the duality of the mundane and ecclesiastical, the private and public, and the material and spiritual. The Quran states in no equivocal terms, "we have honored the children of Adam... (17:70)" and "he has subjected you, as from Him, all that is in heavens and on earth... (45:13)." Freedom's multi-dimensional character supersedes human faculty of reason, which is deemed as a blessing for humankind to explore the complexity of natural laws and social relations. Freedom is both instrumental and relational that provides a conducive environment and equitable conditions for a good life in society.

Accountability and responsibility characterize freedom in Islam. Al-Attas (1995) defines freedom—similar to free choice and free will—with the right to select between good and bad based on the act of one's true nature. The choice between the good and the bad is best described as an act of justice and based on rational knowledge detached from any hegemonic forces. Islamic freedom is an inward act that links the spiritual self with exaltation connected to dignity and respect.

It tacitly entails and necessitates knowledge of heaven and earth, and of virtues and vices—whereas the ultimate exercise of freedom is precisely the operation of being free from the influence and domination of the egotistical desires that may incite evil. The state of perfect submission to Allah, the choice of good, and wanton affection of the transcendence are attributes pertaining to individual freedom in Muslim societies.

In the Bangsamoro Organic Law (Republic Act no. 11054), “freedom” is enshrined in the following articles of their corresponding sections:

Article 4: General Principles and Policies

Section 10. Freedom of Choice: The freedom of choice of all people within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region shall be respected. Indigenous peoples shall have the freedom to retain their distinct indigenous and ethnic identity in addition to their Bangsamoro political identity. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of identity, religion, and ethnicity.

Article 9: Basic Rights

Section 5. Religious Freedom: The Bangsamoro Government shall guarantee religious freedom and the free exercise thereof pursuant to the Constitution, national laws, and principles of international law. The Bangsamoro Government shall protect all persons from harassment or any undue pressure, coercion, and violence on account of religion. Any establishment and institution shall be free to implement policies and undertake activities pursuant to their respective religious beliefs and values.

Moral Authority

The prophethood bestowed to Muhammad (may God’s blessings and peace be upon him) with strong leadership skills in execution, legislation, and judiciary exemplifies moral authority in Islam. With the Prophet’s demise, the Quran provided revelations that will guide the growing community.

Quranic chapter 24, verse 55, states that “God has promised those among you who believe and perform righteous deeds that He will surely make them vicegerents upon the earth, as He caused those before them to be vicegerents, and that He will establish for them their religion, which He has approved for them, and that He will surely change them from a state of fear to [one of] security. They will worship Me, not ascribing any partners unto Me. And whosoever disbelieves thereafter, it is they who are iniquitous.”

This verse has served as the locus for reflections on the question of the successors to the Prophet. For some Sunni commentators, it describes some or all of the period of thirty years subsequent to the death of the Prophet when the Muslim community was led by the four rightly guided Caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. Some have posed the question whether vicegerency refers only to the companions or to all believers in general. For some Shiites, this verse refers to the coming of the Mahdi (i.e. eschatological redeemer of Islam) and the vicegerents are the People of the House (ahl al-bayt), meaning the descendants of the Prophet. Alternatively, some say that it describes the period of the reign of the first two Caliphs specifically, since after their rule Muslims became divided among themselves.

Moral Authority is legitimized if it serves the higher purpose or objectives of shariah (Maqasid al-Shariah), including the epistemological sources of Islam. The crucial element of moral authority in shariah is to regulate the welfare and the prevention of harm by considering the significance of life, intellect, faith, wealth, and progeny (i.e. securing descendants or offspring). Thus, the Quran and Sunnah establish sovereignty belonging to Allah alone, and humans are endowed with a mandate to govern through popular viceregency—the exercise of delegated power on behalf of a sovereign which can be attained in various ways as long as agreed by the ummah.

In the Bangsamoro Organic Law (Republic Act no. 11054), the aid with which to establish popular viceregency in the modern word is represented through the political expression of democracy. Article 4, sections 3, 4, and 5 emphasized the democratic system of the Bangsamoro, including women participation in Article 9, section 11.

Article 4: General Principles and Policies

Section 3. Democratic Political System: The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region shall have a democratic political system that allows its people to freely participate in the political processes within its territorial jurisdiction. The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region shall have a parliamentary form of government.

Section 4. Electoral System: The Bangsamoro Government shall adopt an electoral system which shall be consistent with national election laws, allow democratic participation, encourage the formation of genuinely principle political parties, and ensure accountability.

Section 5. Civilian Government: Governance in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region shall be the responsibility of the duly elected civilian government. Civilian authority is, at all times, supreme over the military.

Article 9: Basic Rights

Section 11. Participation of Women in the Bangsamoro Government: Aside from the reserved seat for women in the Parliament, there shall be at least one (1) woman to be appointed to the Bangsamoro Cabinet. The Parliament shall enact a law that gives recognition to the important role of women in nation-building and regional development, ensuring the representation of women in other decision-making and policy-determining bodies of the Bangsamoro Government. The Parliament shall create by law a commission on women and shall define its powers, functions, and composition.

Common Good

The attainment of public welfare (maslaha) and public interest (istislah) is the higher objective and meaning of common good in Islam. Maslahah is described as prohibiting or permitting a regulation based on whether it contributes to public welfare. The use of istislah, on the other hand, is limited to specific situations or conditions upon which permission is only given in cases that are not related to religious exercises—and in which its application does not contradict the principles of Islam.

Public welfare is the good life essential to the healthy implementation of Islamic law. It underlined the essential aspects of the higher purpose of shariah—life, intellect, faith, wealth, and progeny—moving towards achieving progress and mutual gains while preventing harm. Malik (2016) reiterated this by stating “the greatest of all the objectives of the Qur’ān is to facilitate public welfare and the means that secure them and that the realization of benefit also included in the prevention of harm.” The concept of public welfare is helpful in cases not regulated by the epistemological sources of Islam— the Quran, Sunnah, or sometimes qiyas (analogy). Taking into account the importance of maslaha, equitable considerations can override strict analogy. However, not oftentimes juridical positions based on maslaha alone is sufficient.

Ibn Hanbal, one of the great mujtahids in Islamic jurisprudence, used public interest in cases that provide the best solution to societal problems. Although its usage is quite limited to specific circumstances that may require new exegetical interpretation to and hermeneutical understanding of Quranic verses, hadith, and juristic materials. The application of istislah to non-religious observances must not contradict the higher objectives of shariah. Another great mujtahid, Al-Shafi’i digresses to ibn Hanbal’s position. Istislah, in his legal position, may be subjected to unrestricted subjective human opinions that vary in context and time. Nevertheless, 21st century Muslim communities may find istislah helpful in non-historical precedent cases, for example, health science cases or pandemic tragedies.

In the Bangsamoro Organic Law (Republic Act no. 11054), common good is enshrined in Article 5, section 3.

Article 5: Powers of Government

Section 3. General Welfare. The Bangsamoro Government shall exercise the power expressly granted, those necessarily implied therefrom as well as powers necessary,

appropriate or incidental for its efficient and effective governance and those which are essential to the promotion of general welfare. Within its territorial jurisdiction, the Bangsamoro Government shall ensure and support, among other things, the preservation and enrichment of culture, promote health and safety, enhance the right of the people to a balanced ecology, encourage and support the development of appropriate and self-reliant scientific and technological capabilities, improve public morals, enhance economic prosperity and social justice, promote full employment among its residents, maintain peace and order, and preserve the comfort and convenience of its inhabitants.

Social Ethics

The last principle of the framework for moral governance is social ethics which constitutes, according to Dakake (2015), the interrelated theorems of community, justice, peace, and equality.

The importance of a faith-based community is a collective representation of faithful believers that has no resonance to authority or governance, but the Quran conveys obedience for those in authority among them (4:59) with no specific criteria on how to exercise political power or select a leader. Politics is extensively discussed in the Hadith literature. The Quran does, however, persuade the faithful believers to consult among themselves (42:38), be protectors of one another and share moral responsibility for the sake of the ummah (9:71), and even directs the Prophet Muhammad (may God's blessings and peace be upon him) to consult with his followers in certain matters (3:159).

Justice, the second theorem, primarily concerns with just treatment of faithful believers to all creations of Allah, particularly the marginalized and silent voices of the ummah such as slaves, orphans, and women—recurring themes in the socio-ethical verses of the Quran.

The utilization of justice rests largely upon the duty-bound believer's truest nature. The Quran (4:135) enjoins believers: "O you who believe! Be steadfast maintainers of justice, witnesses for God, though it be against yourselves, or your parents and kinsfolk, and whether it be someone rich or poor, for God is nearer unto both. So, follow not your caprice, that you may act justly. If you distort or turn away, truly God is Aware of whatsoever you do."

Having peaceful relations among the faithful believers is the third important theorem of Islamic social ethics. Maintaining harmonious relations within the ummah by amicably settling disputes is highly prescribed in the Quran. The proscription is that when conflict arises between faithful believers, the entire ummah must adjudicate the two warring parties until reconciliation is obtained. If one party uses violence, then, the community is obligated to repel the aggressive party through force until they concede and in which diplomatic negotiation may start anew.

The last theorem is the essential notion of human equality before Allah and the revealed message. The emphasis is placed in the realization of equal opportunities of faithful believers' moral and spiritual potentialities. In the Quran, race, gender, wealth, social class, political status, etc., are meaningless when it comes to the spiritual worth of a faithful believer. The Quran clearly states that those who have made substantial sacrifices for their faith (4:95; 9:20) as well as those who have achieved high levels of religious knowledge (39:9; 9:109) enjoy a higher standing than those who have not. This distinction is identical across social boundaries for the entire humankind.

In the Bangsamoro Organic Law (Republic Act no. 11054), these are explicit to the following articles' sections:

Article 4: General Principle and Policies

Section 6. Promotion of Unity: The Bangsamoro Government shall promote unity, peace, justice, and goodwill among all peoples, as well as encourage a just and peaceful settlement of disputes.

Section 7. Social Justice: The Bangsamoro Government shall ensure every Filipino citizen in its territorial jurisdiction the provision of the necessities and equal opportunities in life. Social justice shall be promoted in all aspects of life and phases of development in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region.

Section 9. Rights of Non-Moro Indigenous Peoples: The Bangsamoro Government shall recognize and promote the rights of non-Moro indigenous peoples within the framework of the Constitution and national laws.

Article 9: Basic Rights

Section 6. Human Rights: The Bangsamoro Government shall fully respect human rights.

Section 8. Right of Access to Basic Services: The Bangsamoro Government shall provide, maintain, and ensure the delivery of basic and responsive health programs, quality education, appropriate services, livelihood opportunities, affordable and progressive housing projects, power and electricity, and water inhabitants of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region. It shall maintain appropriate disaster-preparedness units for immediate and effective relief services to victims of natural and man-made calamities. It shall also ensure the rehabilitation of calamity-affected areas and victims of calamities.

Section 10. Rights of Labor: The Bangsamoro Government shall guarantee the fundamental rights of all workers to self-organization, collective bargaining and negotiations, and peaceful concerted activities, including the right to strike, in accordance with the Constitution and the Labor Code of the Philippines. . In this regard, the rights of workers, whether publicly or privately employed, to form unions, associations or federations shall not be abridged. The workers shall participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting their rights and benefits, as may be provided by a law that shall be guaranteed. No trafficking of persons and engagement of minors in any hazardous or deleterious forms of employment shall be tolerated. The Parliament may pass labor laws that expand or enhance the rights stated herein.

Section 13. Rights of the Youth: The Bangsamoro Government shall recognize the vital role of the youth in nation-building, promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, and nationalism, encourage involvement in public and civic affairs, and promote mental and physical fitness through sports. The Parliament shall create by law a commission on youth affairs and shall define its powers, functions, and composition.

Section 14. Rights of Children: The Bangsamoro Government shall respect, protect, and promote the rights of children, especially orphans of tender age. They shall be protected from exploitation, abuse, or discrimination. Their education and development, both physical and mental, shall be protected from exploitation, abuse, or discrimination. Their education and development, both physical and mental, shall be fully addressed. Bangsamoro policies and programs shall take into utmost consideration the best interest of children, and promote and protect the rights of children, youth, and adolescents, including their survival and development. The Bangsamoro Government and its constituent local government units shall provide for adequate funding and effective mechanisms for the implementation of this policy.

Article 13: Regional Economy and Patrimony

Section 12. Rights of Indigenous People to Natural Resources: The Parliament shall enact a law recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in relation to natural resources within the areas covered by a native title, including their share in revenues as provided in this Organic Law, and priority rights in the exploration, development, and utilization of such natural resources within their area. The right of indigenous peoples to free, prior, and informed consent in relation to development initiatives and exploration, development, and utilization of the natural resources within the ancestral domains covered by Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title shall be respected.

That sums up the suggested framework for BARMM's moral governance.

Firstly, faith is the affirmation of the inner self with the confession of the mind and the action of the body.

Secondly, freedom is integral in establishing a just society based on the rule of law and respect for human dignity.

Thirdly, the Quran provided revelations that will guide the growing community in seeking moral authority.

Fourthly, common good is understood as the attainment of public welfare (maslaha) and public interest (istislah).

Lastly, social ethics constitutes the following interrelated theorems of community, justice, peace, and equality.

Consequently, the confluence of faith, freedom, moral authority, common good, and social ethics comprised my framework which can produce a Bangsamoro government that embodies moral governance for all its inhabitants.

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ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

This accomplishment report includes: (1) Policy Research and Legal Services' official engagements, (2) researches conducted by the office, and (3) the finished and on-going tasks and services requested in the office.

PRLS' ENGAGEMENTS

Here is the list of the official engagements that the Policy Research and Legal Services attended since the office's activation in March 2021:

March

Continued administrative and technical support to MILF-Ad Hoc Joint Action Group under Facility for Advisory Support for Transition Capacities (FASTRAC)

The UNDP granted funds to Institute of Bangsamoro Studies to undertake the project “Continued administrative and technical support to MILF-Ad Hoc Joint Action Group” under Facility for Advisory Support for Transition Capacities (FASTRAC). The project aims to provide administrative and technical support to MILF-AHJAG. PRLS Anisah Lingga was contracted by the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies as Project Officer.

PRLS meeting with Development Academy of the Bangsamoro (DAB)

The purpose of the meeting was to explore mutual collaborations between PRLS and DAB in ascertaining effective policy research that will aid legislative concerns of the Bangsamoro government. The meeting ends by continuing the dialogue in extrapolating symmetries in terms of vision, mission, core values, strategies, goals, objectives, and action plans.

APRIL

PRLS meeting with the Mindanao State University Marawi's College of Social Sciences and Humanities' Department of History to craft a Memorandum of Understanding

BARMM Parliament's Policy Research and Legal Services (PRLS) and Mindanao State University (MSU) Marawi's College of Social Sciences and Humanities' Department of History are planning to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that promotes a "collaborative policy research works in advancing historical approaches to the Bangsamoro which will aid and intellectually supplement legislative works in the Bangsamoro Parliament as well as the university's History department's research works."

Workshop on SUBATRA Seminar-Workshop Series: Introduction to Bangsamoro Parliament

The event provided a series of lectures on the basics of the Parliamentary system as applied in the Bangsamoro context. It discussed the interactions between members of the parliament and the ministries. It also presented the different functions of the Parliament, especially the process of passing bills and resolutions. The seminar equipped PRLS with the knowledge to effectively function in the Bangsamoro Parliament.

MAY

Workshop on the Legislative Agenda of the Cabinet

The 3-day workshop sets an avenue to collectively discuss priority bills and resolutions of the Bangsamoro Ministries. Informed with the recent development from the Bangsamoro Development Plan, the participants listed the priority bills that should be taken into consideration for the opening of the session. The PRLS led the presentation of the bills and resolutions under the Moral Governance and Development Administration Cluster; in particular, the team proposed a resolution to review BARMM's financial management system, establish a Moral Governance Research Cluster and the Bangsamoro Identity Research Cluster.

Training on Policy Research organized by the Leadership Advocacy Bangsamoro, Inc. (LEAD) and the Embassy of Switzerland in the Philippines

The Leadership Advocacy Bangsamoro in partnership with the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and with the support of the Embassy of Switzerland in the Philippines continues its implementation of the capacity building project entitled, BARMM on Policy Research. The project aims to promote the role of research in policy making and capacitate forty-one (41) BARMM employees on policy research. PRLS Anisah Lingga was invited as resource person to discuss “Processing and Analysis: Quantitative Data (Part II)” as well as “Processing and Analysis: Qualitative Data (Part II)” on May 18-19, 2021 at Diamond Hall, Em Manor, Cotabato City.

JUNE

Technical Working Group (TWG) on ‘Knowledge Sharing and Training Capacity’

The Technical Working Group (TWG) on ‘Knowledge Sharing and Training Capacity’ brings together development partners and selected organizations that are operating in BARMM. After the successful inception meeting (October 2020), the group has convened members around special thematic sessions. Last April 15, 2021, the topic was Public Financial Management, co-hosted by WB and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

PRLS, Dr. Nassef M. Adiong was invited as a resource speaker to present and discuss the Moral Governance Framework as an accountability framework in implementing effective ethics standards in government and the civil service (see indicative activity outline for exact date and time of engagement).

The session will focus on Civil Service Reforms in BARMM and will be co-hosted with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The tentative schedule of knowledge sharing activity is on June 15, 2021, Tuesday, at 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 noon via Webex.

BARMM on Policy Research

The Leadership Advocacy Bangsamoro in partnership with the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and with the support of the Embassy of Switzerland in the Philippines continues its implementation of the capacity building project entitled, BARMM on Policy Research. The project aims to promote the role of research in policy making and to capacitate forty-one (41) BARMM employees on policy research.

PRLS, Dr. Nassef M. Adiong was invited as a resource speaker to deliver on “Writing the Findings” and “Writing the Conclusion and Policy Recommendation” The session also included a workshop to see improvements on the participants' papers.

PRLS' RESEARCH WORKS

Here is the list of the finished and on-going research of Policy Research and Legal Services since the establishment of its office in March 2021.

“The Evolution of Islamic Education in the Philippines: Schools and Institutions.” (A. al-Moghrabi, Translated in Arabic: تطور التعليم الإسلامي في الفلبين... المدارس والمعاهد). Al-Mesbar Studies & Research Center Monthly Book.

The implementation of Madrasah education in the Philippines is seen as a strike to achieving inclusive society while guided by quality Islamic education. Ways of learning in Muslim setting and their integration to the Filipino society are gradual steps implemented by the national and local government units. These actual recognitions are aimed to improve discourse on Madrasah and further elicit its significance by showcasing a number of notable degree-granting academic units in the Bangsamoro community.

“The Principles and Practice of Moral Governance in the Bangsamoro” co-authored with Potre Diampuan for the Development for Peace: The Case of the Bangsamoro

Governance has been at the fulcrum of the Bangsamoro’s leadership. Whether it has been—or can yet be—good or moral governance is the question at hand. The discussion of good governance precedes that of moral governance in this article, with the former describing a modern-secular form of good governance as defined by international and multilateral organizations, while the latter propounds the idea of an Islamic-rooted moral governance. The new BARMM autonomous government is the opportunity for the Bangsamoro people to chart up their future in accordance with their distinct beliefs, culture, and aspirations, a shift from the struggle into fighting against oppression, corruption and discrimination, and other malpractices that are worsening the situation of the Bangsamoro people.

Its leadership is determined to lead and manage the Moro society based on “moral governance.” However, it is difficult to understand what moral governance means. By using an exploratory design to frame research as inquiry and gain insights on moral governance as BARMM’s agendum, the research navigated and conceptualized the meaning of moral governance based on a proposed framework that constitutes five immutable principles: Faith, Freedom, Moral Authority, Common Good, and Social Ethics. By constituting these interrelated principles that will map the framework towards practice, within the distinct historical and faith context of Muslim Philippines, an authentic Bangsamoro leadership is envisaged as a tolerant society to various Muslim groups and non-Muslim communities—Christians and Indigenous Peoples in particular. Consequently, the juxtaposed comparison of ARMM and BARMM will in effect highlight the tasks that were not successfully or satisfactorily implemented by ARMM. These are areas where BARMM can build its introductory steps to come up to the challenges of moral governance.

“The irony in the Global South: The “Othering” perpetuates” for Challenging institutional racism and discrimination in International Relations: Reflections and experiences

There seems to be an emerging awareness of systemic racism, the political economy of knowledge production and recognition, academic dependency, and professional discrimination between the Global North and the Global South IR academics, but it is unheard of and uncommon to talk about these issues lingering within the Global South, in general, and the Philippines, in particular. In comparing the global north-south academic spaces, Southern intellectuals wonder how come their geography possesses rich data with comprehensive homegrown concepts and yet foreign (Western) theories are predominantly used, preferred, and taught at their academic institutions. How come most research institutions, academic IR journals, and book publishers based in the U.K., U.S., and Western Europe are regarded as having top quality and ranked higher than their counterparts based in Asia, Africa, and Latin America? Are there ways to decolonize IR knowledge and eliminate academic dependency towards Euro-American colonial structures and paradigms by authorities in higher educational institutions and state’s educational agencies in the global south? These are some of the questions and pressing concerns whenever I think of the disparity of IR knowledge production between the global north and global south hemispheres. It reminds me of Dabashi’s work—*Can Non-Europeans Think?* (2015) that questions coloniality in theoretical musings on current affairs and laments whether Westerners can read and aptly appreciate IR knowledge originating from the oriental world

“Historical Background: Transformation of Education through Modernization and Nationalization processes” for Education Policies in the 21st Century: Comparative Perspectives (Maarif Global Education Series)

As society changes so as the system and institutions in the educational sector transforms. The 21st century educational system is becoming highly commercialized and the learning process is tainted by capitalist pursuits, often bought by corporations. It is now transformed to outcome-based education to secure the needs of industry-based economies. By exploring the past, we might find answers how the educational system ends up in the captives of capitalist and industry-based leviathan. This contribution will tackle the following contents:

1. Introduction: Centrality of a complementarity of faith and reason in Oriental education
2. Privileging positivist approach to education in the West
3. Compartmentalized secular science: A Colonial legacy
4. Conclusion: Bureaucratizing education in postcolonial states

The Converging Role of Traditional Leaders and Non-Traditional Leaders in Conflict Resolution: The Cases of the Sultanate of Marawi, Philippines and Negeri Batu Merah, Ambon City, Indonesia

This study attempts to compare the role of traditional leaders and non-traditional leaders in land conflict resolutions in Sultanate of Marawi, Philippines and Negeri Batu Merah, Indonesia and to explain the convergence of their role in the execution of their respective authority—traditional authority and government authority—relative to land conflict. It particularly focuses on comparing the mechanism used in land conflict resolution, the concept of adat, the indigenous strategies on land conflict resolutions, the colonial legacies, and the contemporary government laws and policies on traditional leaders as these influence the traditional leaders' stature and function today in the traditional community. This is a qualitative study, in particular, a case study as a research method. Key informant and library research (secondary data analysis) are used as a data-gathering technique.

The major findings of this study include the following: One, the nature of land ownership in both countries is influenced by the kind of land policy instituted by the colonial masters. Two, the cultural practices such as the observance of the traditional ceremonies, the way the traditional institutions are looking up to, and the way the traditional leaders are chosen are maintained, however, with quite significant changes. Three, not all the traditional leaders in Negeri Batu Merah are recognized by the government, only the raja and saniri. Raja and saniri function both the role of the traditional leaders and non-traditional leaders for being the adat community leader and at the same time as a recognized village official under Law No. 6 of 2014.

Rethinking the concept of Self-determination in Bangsamoro Struggle

The agreement of MILF and GPH in signing the BOL establishing the BARMM marks what can be considered as the achievement of the struggle for self-determination. Many scholars believe that these developments are key to addressing the decade-long struggle for autonomy. Yet the others still argue that the formation of BARMM does not really achieve self-determination, especially that similar problems still exist. This research looks at the notion of self-determination and underscores its problems as a ground for a better Bangsamoro community. A survey of the development of the concepts showed how the notion has been utilized to mean something that addresses a particular condition. Hence, new development in MILF and BARMM requires redefining what self-determination means. It clarifies that the Moro problem cannot be reduced to self-determination and although important, it does not solve the whole of the problem. Second, it further calls to put forward and redefine autonomy in terms of achieving just governance and sustainable development.

An Energy System Study for Reliable Off-Grid Electrification of BASULTA

In this work, a comparative study on decentralized and clustered hybrid renewable energy system microgrids in Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi islands in the Philippines, using HOMER Pro, was performed. Microgrids comprising solar photovoltaics, lithium-ion battery energy storage, and diesel generators were designed on each island. Clustered systems encompassing multiple islands in the island group were simulated by also considering the least-cost interconnection paths. The techno-economics of each decentralized or clustered system and the four-island system were evaluated based on the levelized cost of electricity (LCOE).

The Question of Illiberal Post-conflict strategies to Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao

The establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and the ratification of Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) can be understood as significant steps to achieve peace in the long-standing ethnic, religious, and social conflict in the Southern Philippines. However, although there are high hopes on what BARMM can achieve, this new political setting is still at its nascent and fragile state, and the return of violence is a possibility. Issues in democratic governance and intra-Moro conflicts are some of the key problems that need to be addressed. To address these difficulties, this paper introduces an openness to illiberal peacebuilding as a strategic approach to further provide stability to the fragile region. The argument is based on the practical character and effectiveness of illiberal approach in building peace, as shown by different Asian countries, such as in Kachin state in Myanmar and Acer region in Indonesia. Such an approach could be fitting consolation to BARMM's strong clans and patronage culture, especially those who are threatening to be spoiler of the newly achieved peace conditions. Moreover, the illiberal peacebuilding emphasizes the lack of need to impose the Western style liberal democracy as promoted by various international organizations, and it opens the region for new forms of governance and peacebuilding that can address its unique social, cultural, and political conditions.

Effects of School Based Feeding Program to the nutritional and school performance of school children in Maguindanao

The study aims to evaluate the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education School-Based Feeding Program. Specifically, it aims to determine the effects of SFP to the nutritional and school performance of school children in Maguindanao. The study utilizes difference-in-difference method of evaluation. The economic

COMPLETED AND ONGOING TASKS

This report includes the accomplished and ongoing tasks of the Policy Research and Legal Services as requested by different Members of the Parliament.

Comparative review on Bangsamoro Appropriations Act No. 3 and Bangsamoro Appropriations Act No. 15

PRLS wrote a comparative review on Bangsamoro Appropriations Act No. 3 and Bangsamoro Appropriations Act No. 15. The result of the review indicates that the 2021 budget is 15% higher than the 2020 budget. The MFBM, MILG, Miscellaneous and Other Personnel Benefit, and Contingent Fund are the only four offices/Ministries that decreased their budget. Moreover, MBHTE has the highest budget of all of the ministries for both years.

Review of the proposed resolution of “Establishing the Bangsamoro Legislative Institute for the continuing education, studies, research and training programs for the Members of the Parliament, its officers and staff, providing funds therefore, and for other purposes”

PRLS copyedited the draft of the resolution on “Establishing the Bangsamoro Legislative Institute for the continuing education, studies, research and training programs for the Members of the Parliament, its officers and staff, providing funds therefore, and for other purposes.” PRLS enriched the basis of the necessity of the resolution. It also improves the overall structure and coherence of the proposed resolution.

Review of the proposed concept note on the establishment of the Bangsamoro Parliamentary Learning and Training Center

PRLS digested proposal to approve a Bangsamoro Parliamentary Learning and Training Center (BPLTC). The review shows that the proposal to create a Bangsamoro Parliamentary Learning and Training Center (BPLTC) can strategically set the impetus needed by the Bangsamoro Legislative Institute (BLI) to achieve its objectives. Both projects also share the same goal of capacity building, expertise development, and promotion of public awareness.

Review on Bangsamoro Development Plan (2020–2022)

PRLS collected the data from the reports of the ministries and agencies to determine initiatives that are yet to be operationalized. PRLS coordinated with BPDA to collect the data needed. Currently, BPDA is updating their results and matrices.

Review of the BTA Transition Plan

PRLS reviewed the BTA Transition Plan particularly its preparation, legislation, and implementation. PRLS determined the relevance and usefulness of the transition plan about the functions and priorities of the BTA.

Request to draft a bill on the creation of the Bangsamoro Agricultural and Fisheries University similar to UP Los Banos

Considering that the Bangsamoro region has vast agricultural areas and fishing grounds, this condition can set a ground to create an Act for the establishment of agricultural and fisheries university like in the UP Los Banos and UP Visayas Miag-ao.

Comments on the following measures for improvement: Bangsamoro legal holidays (Bill No. 80)

The following were suggested on Bill no. 80:

- To lengthen the holidays in Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha like in Malaysia and Indonesia so that Muslims could spend more time with their family during Eid.
- Creation of Bangsamoro Historical commission to validate and authenticate the Jabidah Massacre in order to make it a holiday.
- Creation of “Sheikh Hashim Salamat Day” to honor the founder of Moro Islamic Liberation Front.
- Commemorate the Malisbong Massacre which killed at least 1000 Moros inside a mosque by units of the Philippine Military on September 24, 1974, in the coastal village of Malisbong in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat, Mindanao.

Review of shari’ah and justice system and provisions within PD No. 1083, RA No. 11054, and BAA No.13 along with MMA No. 292.

One possible problem are the provisions on child marriage. Child marriages are acceptable in PD 1083 following certain conditions. While MMA No. 280 adopts a policy advocating discouragement against child marriages within the region. Perhaps, there are other subject matters within these laws that also need assessment.

Review of PD No. 1083.

If the national government sees fit to update PD No. 1083 into a Public act, the Bangsamoro government should be prepared in engagement at the Philippine congress Bangsamoro Parliament forum to ensure the new enacted law does not create discrepancies.

Comments on the following measures for improvement: Bangsamoro Covid-19 Related anti-discrimination act 2020 (Bill No. 65)

The cases of discrimination with COVID-19 patients and frontliners were rampant in 2020, hence the need for the bill. However, reported cases declined in 2021 which can probably be attributed to the “social media appeals” from COVID-19 frontliners as people become more aware and informed of the COVID-19 situation.

Comments on the following measures for improvement: Bangsamoro Official Gazette Act of 2021

PRLS recommends to look at the organizational structure of BIO and verify whether they have enough staff to manage the gazette. If there are areas in BIO that can still manage the gazette, then one can merely assign such organization for the task. Or if there is none, then there is a need to establish a separate body that will focus on the operations of the official gazette.

Review of Hajj provision within RA No. 9997, RA No. 11054, and BAA 13

Given that both the NCMF and the Bangsamoro pilgrimage authority have mandates on the administration of annual hajj/ Muslims pilgrimage to Mecca, the PRLS Legal Services Division conducted an initial study of cited laws to identify possible conflicts.

Review of halal provision within RA No. 9997, RA No. 11054, and BAA No. 13.

Similarly, both the NCMF and the Bangsamoro Halal board are tasked with developing halal industry, so it is necessary to examine any gaps or overlaps in its functions. The PRLS Legal Services Division conducted an initial study of cited laws to identify possible conflicts.

CONCEPT NOTES: BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

The following are concept notes of bills and resolutions PRLS thought to be critically important to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao:

An Act establishing the Bangsamoro Commission on Anthropocene, Ecosystem diversity, and Climate Change.

As the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic into a recession, policymakers need to consider catastrophic crises in ecosystem diversity spearheaded by the Anthropocene and perpetuated by climate change (and global warming). How should the Bangsamoro government pursue environmental sustainability alongside economic recovery both domestically and in the wider Mindanao region? This proposed bill shall address the long-term effects of Anthropocene and climate change in the ecosystem diversity of the Bangsamoro lands. Experts have warned that, without proactive policies to limit global warming to below 4°C, climate change threatens permanent inundation of coastal areas, famine, and extreme weather that will endanger lives and livelihoods worldwide over the next century. By 2050, coastal cities will be permanently flooded, displacing millions. All coastal cities are facing sea-level rise, but some will be hit harder than others. Bangsamoro coastal areas are in for a particularly rough ride. Part of the reason for that is that the populations of coastal cities are bulging: about four out of every five people impacted by sea-level rise by the middle of this century will live in East or Southeast Asia.

A carbon path that limits warming to 2°C would reduce exposure for more than 10 million in each country such as India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Indonesia, Japan, the US, Philippines, Egypt, Brazil and Thailand. Despite this threat, the Philippines, particularly the Bangsamoro government, have been slow to adopt the necessary measures to prevent climate change. The devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic—another anticipated global crisis for which the world was largely underprepared—has highlighted the need for countries to address global threats before they reach catastrophic proportions. At the same time, as governments enact sweeping restrictions on the movement of goods and people to fight COVID-19, the pandemic has demonstrated that countries can in fact adopt the dramatic measures necessary to address urgent threats.

As the world emerges from this crisis, policymakers have an opportunity to apply the lessons learned from the pandemic to advance the fight against climate change. The pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented drop in global greenhouse gas emissions, but at astronomical economic cost, disrupting livelihoods and triggering a global recession. Moreover, as the Bangsamoro government ramps up economic activity to begin recovering, it will likely produce a spike in emissions that erases the reductions achieved in 2020. As a result, more than ever, meaningful progress in the fight against climate change will require robust, sustainable policies that slow climate change while promoting economic growth. Environmental measures that risk slowing economic growth could appear overly burdensome as the Bangsamoro government seeks to restart its economy.

Past economic crises have provided opportunities to transition economies to firmer footing. During the Great Depression in the 1930s, large-scale government reforms, public works projects, and social programs facilitated the rise of new industries and spurred economic growth. In the wake of the pandemic, policymakers could similarly support new green initiatives, including environmental regulations, emissions restrictions, investments in renewable energy sources, and green infrastructure projects. As the world emerges from the pandemic into significant economic uncertainty, the Bangsamoro leaders will be more challenged than ever to develop policies that balance the acute need to address climate change with promoting economic growth and stability.

An Act Strengthening the Land Administration and Management in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

As stated in the power-sharing arrangements in the Bangsamoro Organic Law, the Land Administration and Management (LAM) functions are to be transferred from national government to Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), such functions include:

1. Classification of public lands;
2. Administer and manage lands of the public domain (dispose public agricultural lands, conservation of environment, parks, forest management, wildlife and natural reserves);
3. Dispose Alienable and Disposable (A&D) lands under a public land granting system defined by the Bangsamoro Legislative Body; and
4. Sub-classify lands and cadastral and other land surveys in coordination with the Central Government.

The transfer of LAM agencies already began in late 2019, however, this has not yet been fully operationalized. This calls for a need of additional strengthening from the Parliament through legislating laws pertaining to LAM functions.

An Act to License and Regulate Microfinance Institutions to Help the Poor in BARMM

The legislation aims to reduce malpractice and the charging of “excessive interest” rates by microlenders as well as to boost risk management practices, sector transparency, and the disclosure of product pricing and terms. Another goal is to attract more players into the industry thereby facilitating greater access to credit at a lower cost.

Founded by Noble Peace Laureate Muhammad Yunus, microfinance has helped millions of people to escape poverty. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) defines microfinance as the provision of a broad range of financial services such as deposits, loans, payment services, money transfers and insurance products to the poor and low-income households and their microenterprises. A key defining characteristic of a microfinance loan is the ability to secure credit without collateral. Moreover, BARMM could also establish a microfinancing institution that has no interest rates (riba) in the borrowed money through the establishment of a waqf institution.

An Act to Improve and Support the Ecotourism Development in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao

During the recent workshop of BARMM's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism held on February 16-17, 2021, the output of the activity noted how BARMM is rich in "natural and cultural resources, exotic tourist spots, and unique wildlife." [1] Because of the region's fecund natural and cultural assets, it has a great potential to be further developed as a top tourist destination in the country. This goal is more conceivable compared to its previous form of government, as BARMM provides more stable governance and financial flexibility. The normalization of peace and security and the generous support of the national government are great developments that are indicative of the future of the region to be the destination for both locals and foreign visitors.

Anticipating the better tourism industry in the future, BARMM should strengthen its institution not only to promote its scenic views and unique cultural experience, but to educate its visitors and local communities about their responsibilities. As such, a bill to strengthen the Eco-Tourism of the Region is proposed to be passed. Although there are some efforts to enhance tourism in the region, the bill aims to improve its existing tourism programs. Its focus is to frame tourism in the region under the framework of sustainable, ecological, culturally sensitive, and mutually benefitting practices. Ecotourism promotes responsibility from the tourists and the community. It pays importance to the respect of culture, indigenous rights, environmental education and ethics, while providing benefits to the community. [2] This framework is critical to ensure that the tourism industry will protect the cultural identity of the region and its natural resources. In particular, the bill proposes to:

1. Develop and promote ecological tourism
2. Protect eco parks (prevent pollution and vandalisms)
3. Facilitate an improved mode of transportation to make it more attractive and conducive to the visitors.
4. Create and promote ecotourism products.
5. Educate the local and visitors in eco-tour practices.
6. Establish an eco-tourism council
7. Explore areas that can be developed as eco-parks.

In the end, an improved ecotourism in the region shall benefit the locals as it generates more jobs. Studies on ecotourism in Palawan and Batangas have shown the increased income and better livelihood of the locals.[3] Lastly, ecotourism shall elevate the region in a better light. An effective promotion of the beauties of the region can counter the different biases against the region and narratives that are set in an unjust light.

Institutionalizing the Bangsamoro Alternative Dispute Resolutions: Issues, Prospects and Challenges

This study attempts to map out the prospects, issues, and challenges in institutionalizing the Bangsamoro Alternative Dispute Resolutions, meaning the use of the traditional leaders and non-traditional leaders in addressing conflict, particularly the communal conflicts or locally known as rido among the Meranaos, Maguindanao, and Tausug, in place of or complimentary with the existing means of settling disputes such as the Judiciary (i.e. Civil courts and Shariah Courts), Office of the Philippine National Police, and the Katarungang Pambarangay, to name a few, in addressing communal conflicts in the Bangsamoro areas.

Existing data have shown that even though there have been existing institutions in the Bangsamoro areas that cater for conflict cases such as the agencies mentioned above, there still are numerous cases of communal conflicts or rido that persist. Hence, drawing from these scenarios, it can be deduced that these institutions had not prevented nor it did they solve this kind of problem. One research shows that from the 1930s to 2005 alone, there were 1,266 rido cases recorded (Torres III, 2007)[1], and most of them are yet to be solved. Moreover, what is more alarming in this issue was how it has been affecting the community: involved in these rido cases were curtailed to roam around freely, do their day-to-day activities, and even prevent looking for economic activities.

Keeping in mind the magnitude it had to the community—rido cases, it is no brainer that there is a need to look for alternatives to address these issues. Among the prospective alternative is the hybrid means, a means of conflict resolutions combines the traditional leaders (i.e. Sultan) and non-traditional leaders (i.e. Mayor), of solving conflict, which has been employed by numerous localities across the region (i.e., Bangsamoro areas) (Panganting, 2020)[2].

A proposed policy resolution establishing the "Moral Governance Research Cluster" (MGRC) that explicitly addresses the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) or R.A. 11054

Same abstract on Moral Governance chapter proposal: "Governance has been at the fulcrum of the Bangsamoro's leadership. Whether it has been—or can yet be—good or moral governance is the question at hand. The discussion of good governance precedes that of moral governance, with the former describing a modern-secular form of good governance as defined by international and multilateral organizations, while the latter propounds the idea of an Islamic-rooted (or Abrahamic faith-rooted) moral governance. An authentic Bangsamoro leadership is envisaged as a tolerant society to various Muslim-oriented groups (theological, philosophical, methodological schools of thoughts), ethnolinguistic communities (Maguindanaons, Meranaos, Tausugs, among others), and non-Muslim communities (such as Christians and Indigenous Peoples or Lumads in particular)."

A proposed policy resolution establishing the "Moral Governance Research Cluster" (MGRC) that explicitly addresses the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) or R.A. 11054 which directly relates to the five immutable theorems and their key relevant organic law provisions: (1) Faith – BOL's preamble; (2) Freedom – BOL's art. 4, sec. 10 & art. 9, sec. 5; (3) Moral Authority – BOL's art. 4, sec. 3, 4, 5 & art. 9, sec. 11; (4) Common Good – BOL's art. 5, sec. 3; (5) Social Ethics – BOL's art. 4, sec. 6, 7, 9 & art. 9, sec. 6, 8, 10, 13, 14 & art. 13, sec. 12. This resolution aims to streamline policies and programs in accordance with the MGRC study on moral governance. The said resolution will be spearheaded by the BARMM Parliament's Policy Research and Legal Services and constituted by the research units and planning divisions across institutions of the 'Government of the Day', including university academics in Mindanao.

Resolution to Review or Improve BARMM's Financial Management System

The existing financial management system is adopted from the national and is not attuned to the needs of the region. Aside from that, the system is prone to financial mismanagement. Given the condition, BARMM needs to improve its financial system; it needs an efficient, transparent, and up-to-date financial management system that is attuned to the needs of the region. This reform addresses the inefficiencies and delays in the financial matters.

A proposed policy resolution establishing the "Bangsamoro Identity Research Cluster" (BIRC) that directly addresses Article II (Bangsamoro Identity) of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) or R.A. 11054.

To contribute to the priority legislative agenda of the 1st Bangsamoro Development Plan 2020-2022 under chapter 6 on the "Preservation of Identity," there is a need to address the historical and precolonial roots of the Bangsamoro identity by upholding decolonial methodological approaches in framing, theorizing, and designing literature on both written and unwritten Bangsamoro's history by decoding and transposing it to relatable lay language understood by all Moro communities. The proposed cluster aims to contribute to the limited literatures on the historical roots of the Bangsamoro's identity available in the public, which is oftentimes written based on outside sources such as Spaniard's narratives or written by foreign or Manila-based authors. It also provides the insider's or we perspective (pantayong pananaw) positionality in writing and decoding Bangsamoro historical literature that upholds decolonial thinking and praxes in understanding and preserving the Bangsamoro identity. The said resolution will be spearheaded by the BARMM Parliament's Policy Research and Legal Services and constituted by the research units and planning divisions across institutions of the 'Government of the Day', including university academics in Mindanao.

Absence of a Procedure distinguishing priority bills from non-priority bills, and resolutions (PRLS helped in crafting the legislative proposal)

Bills are filed by MPs. In the transition period, the BOL identified priority legislations. As of date, there are 17 laws enacted by the Parliament. There are more than 100 bills filed pending deliberation. The current Parliament's passing of bills into law is affected by several factors, such as insertion of bills outside of those initially identified as priority. Even resolutions are given more time and effort rather than bill-making. To create a clear mechanism of bills, classified as priority or non-priority, as well as resolutions, the body proposes a bill that seeks the enhancement of the Rules of the Parliament on bills and resolutions. This bill, when pass, will increase the number of bills enacted, expedite the process of bill-making, and make it orderly. It will also make a more productive BTA Parliament.

Mandatory Civil Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Other Civil Acts such as Muslim Divorces, Muslim Divorces, Conversion to Islam, Legal Instruments; and Court Decrees/Orders

Taken from WHO: "When deaths go uncounted and the causes of death are not documented, governments cannot design effective public health policies or measure their impact. Civil registration is something that all developed countries have, and that developing countries need. Information on births and deaths by age, sex and cause is the cornerstone of public health planning." Planning of the BARMM government needs accurate data to determine the plans and programs to be provided.

To develop a well-functioning civil registration system in the BARMM that reflects accurate and timely data, not just approximate ideas of the numbers, the longevity and the health of their population, as well as the marital status of the population; and to revisit the national Administrative Order No. 1, series of 2005 dated June 2005 (Rules and Regulations Governing Registration of Acts and Events Concerning Civil Status of Muslim Filipinos, the body proposes the enactment of the BARMM One-Time Civil Registration Period (Provide a one-time opportunity to avail civil registration for all residents of BARMM) . This bill seeks an accurate data for policy use and program implementation, incentivize by making copies of the civil registered documents free of charge during the first application.

MEMBERS OF PRLS

Officer-in-Charge of the Policy Research and Legal Services



Nassef Manabilang Adiong

is the founder of Co-IRIS (International Relations and Islamic Studies Research Cohort), PHISO (Philippine International Studies Organization), and DSRN (Decolonial Studies Research Network). He works on interdisciplinary research between Islam and International Relations (particularly, comparing Muslim governance with the nation-state system), and explores Muslim polities in Southeast Asia. He is the founding editor-in-chief of the *International Journal of Islam in Asia* (Brill Publishers), *Islam and Global Studies* series (Palgrave Macmillan/Springer), *International Relations in Southeast Asia* series (Routledge), *Islam in Southeast Asia* series (Palgrave Macmillan/Springer), and *Islam in the Philippines* series (IIUM Press). In the policy realm, he led the review of policies on Madrasah education and served as a member of the AFP Civil Service Relations' Multi-Sectoral Advisory Board. With his unrelenting academic service, he was awarded with the Centennial Professorial Chair by the University of the Philippines Diliman and conferred as Professorial Chair in Political Science and International Relations by the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

Officer-in-Charge of the Legislative Research Division



Hajji Moludin G. Bernan

is the former head of the defunct BTA Reference and Research Affairs Division, which is now the newly constructed “Policy Research and Legal Services. The previous Reference and Research Affairs Division prepares and drafts the bill and resolution upon the Member’s of Parliament request. It provides legislative counseling to the Members of Parliament and their staff, other legislative researchers, Secretariat officials and employees of the Parliament. It is responsible for all activities relating to the library and archival services. It is the repository of all legislative records of the Parliament.

Officer-in-Charge of the Legislative Measures and Legal Assistance Division



Abdel Jamal R. Disangcopan

is an attorney with more than nine (9) years of experience working in the humanitarian and development sectors and in the academe. His areas of expertise include law reform, public health and law, Bangsamoro law and related matters, and international human rights law. As a humanitarian and development worker, he previously served as Coordinator of Legal Issues for the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, as Humanitarian Affairs Assistant for Tropical Storm Sendong (Washi) Response at UN OCHA, and as a Technical Assistant for Super Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) Recovery at WHO Philippines. He has significant experience and training in human rights, with focus on specialized rights and minority rights, and international humanitarian law, which began when he worked for the BARMM's regional human rights commission as head of Provincial Office in Lanao Del Sur based in Marawi City in 2013. Aside from being a sought-after legal consultant in various fields of law and project management, he is also a lecturer of law since 2016 teaching undergraduate students, law students, and students of the Philippine Public Safety College and Philippine National Police Training Institute on substantive and procedural law courses.

Technical Staff Members of the Policy Research and Legal Services

Vincent L. Casil



Vincent works on the interrelated studies on justice, misrecognition, and formation of subjectivities in the Philippine society. His published and presented articles span from showing the different manifestations of alienation in the Philippines to scholarly reading of Heidegger and Marx's philosophy. As an academic, he has been teaching research courses to Political Science and Public Administration students at the City of Malabon University, where he has supervised numerous policy-related research. He was once designated as a researcher of the College of Arts and Sciences at the same institution, and he was tasked to conduct research on the areas of interest of Malabon's local government. Aside from working on research, he also taught a course on Ethics at the Ateneo de Manila University before being part of department of Theology and Philosophy of Dela Salle-College of St. Benilde.

Abdulwahid H.G. Panganting



Wahid earned his master's degree in Asian Studies major in Southeast Asia (2020) at the Asian Center, the University of the Philippines-Diliman while he finished his bachelor's degree in International Relations (2014) at the Mindanao State University-Main Campus, Marawi City. Wahid as he is fondly called by his close peers is likewise a participant in an international short-exchange program in Japan—the JENESYS Programme (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths) in 2014. Mr. Panganting is interested and has researched on the following issues for the past four years (2016 to date), namely: peace process in Mindanao, traditional conflict resolutions, Bangsamoro issues, and the Civil Society Organizations in Southeast Asia. The recent of which was his master's thesis titled "The Converging Role of the Traditional Leaders and Non-Traditional Leaders in Conflict Resolutions: The Cases of the Sultanate of Marawi, Marawi City, Philippines, and Negeri Batu Merah, Ambon City, Indonesia (2020)."

Technical Staff Members of the Policy Research and Legal Services

Anisah U. Lingga



Anisah is a graduate of Business Economics from the Mindanao State University, Marawi City. She is currently finishing her MA degree in Economics at the University of the Philippines School of Economics Diliman. She is skillful in operating various statistical software such as STATA, SPSS, MS Excel and R Programming. She is also proficient in Quantitative Analysis and Data Visualization. Her undergraduate thesis paper entitled “Decomposition Analysis of Local Revenue Inequality among Municipalities of SOCCSKSARGEN” was proclaimed as the Best Research Paper during the MSU-CBAA Research Colloquium. In the past, she has worked as Executive Assistant in the Office of Executive Secretary BARMM and has been engaged in many research projects from various non-government offices in the region. Her research focus is on development economics and is inclined in conducting economic analysis with strong policy relevance. Her motivation stems from her exposure to the sentiments of the grassroots and her aspiration of a developed and sustainable economy for the Bangsamoro region.

Mc Erschad D. Pabillan



Erschad is a graduate of BS Chemical Engineering in UP-Diliman last July 2020. He is currently studying Master in Engineering major in Chemical Engineering in Cebu Institute of Technology University. His group thesis entitled “Decentralized versus Clustered Microgrids: An Energy System Study for Reliable Off-grid Electrification of Small Islands” was published in *Energies* last August 2020. In his extracurricular activities, he was the Vice President for Internal Relation of UP Muslim Student Association in AY 2019-2020, Vice President for Finance of UP Muslim Student Association in AY 2017-2018, and the Vice President for Finance in Philippine Institute of Chemical Engineers-Junior Chapter Luzon in AY 2018-2019. He is also a member of Chemical Engineering Society. For his work experience, he was a student assistant of UP Third World Studies Center. His research areas focus on policy recommendations regarding energy, environment, risk analysis and communication. His method includes the use of technology in policy research making, analysis, and evaluation.

Technical Staff Members of the Legislative Measures and Legal Assistance Division

Ershad Sasapan Ibba



Ershad was Sociologist II of the Department of Public Works and Highways for six (6) years. Assigned at the Environmental and Social Safeguards Division, Planning Service, he was responsible for the review of various Right-of-Way/Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) documents and the conduct of public consultations with project affected families and stakeholders. He was also responsible for the conduct of the Gender and Development programs, activities, and projects of the DPWH and was a regular resource speaker on various topics on Gender and Development and social safeguards. Ershad earned his bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of the Philippines-Diliman and is currently finishing his Diploma in Industrial Relations from the same university. Lastly, he believes in the importance of and necessity for intercultural understanding and interfaith dialogue as building blocks in achieving just peace. This he learned early on as a high school exchange student to the United States through the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Program of the U.S. Department of State. He brings this, along with other core values he has gained along the way, to his work in the public and development sector.

Ma. Christine Macalinao Bactol



Christine is a specialist in ensuring positive overall customer experience and employing customer-focused approach to troubleshooting, resolving problems and delivering superior levels of service. Armed with years of training and experience, she delivers superior levels of service, which she intends to bring to the PRLS as Legislative Staff Officer. She previously worked for the Department of Public Works and Highways Regional Office VIII for two years under the Flood Control, Social and Environment Section (formerly known as Environmental, Social and Right of Way Section) where she assisted in different road construction projects and processed the resettlement of project affected persons. She also worked as executive consultants for two private companies where she underwent communication and leadership trainings. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Tourism degree from the University of the Philippine Diliman, Asian Institute of Tourism in where she was a student-leader, having served in the student council and her various organizations.

Technical Staff Members of the Legislative Measures and Legal Assistance Division

Airil B. Grefalda



was a scholar until she earned her Bachelor of Technology Major in Food Service Management degree from the Sorsogon State University. After graduation, she served as Accounts Payable and Receivables Assistant at the Raffles and Fairmont Hotel Makati, where she also accomplished her Internship. Her internship was the first ever from the Sorsogon province to get accepted by the prestigious hotel. Airil is always passionate and seeks efficiency in her work and personal endeavors which she is excited to do as she joins the PRLS as administrative staff. She takes working in a new area as both a challenge and a learning opportunity.

Masiding D. Cornell Jr.



Masiding is juris doctor graduate with a Masters degree in Public Administration. He previously served as a former senior councilor of the Municipality of Marantao in Lanao Del Sur where he was the chairperson of Environmental Protection and Ecology and Finance and Appropriation Committees. He was also the supervisor of Lake Lanao Watershed Reservation Program under DENR-EMB Region X which main advocacy was to determine the changing water quality through time and educate the Bangsamoro people on how to conserve Lake Lanao for future generations. He is a real estate broker which enabled him to learn about various community issues and make proposals on how to address them. He has great interpersonal skills which made him an expert in resolving all kinds of conflicts.

Administrative Aide of the Policy Research and Legal Services

Musthafa Mazhar P. Ali



is a recipient of Mangudadatu's Mag-PEACE scholarship for the earned bachelor's degree in Business Administration major in Marketing (2013-17, Cotabato City State Polytechnic College). He worked as Administrative Aide I at the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Region XII CCDEO (2020-2021) and as Election Assistant at the Commission on Elections in the Province of Talayan, Datu Anggal, Maguindanao.

Mujahid E. Ali



born on June 14, 1996 in Calsada in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, was a BS degree holder in Business Administration major in Human Resource Development Management from Cotabato City State Polytechnic College. He maintained a balanced equitable management between his sports, Sepak Takraw, and his well-endowed scholarship. In his post-college days, he worked as Promo Clerk at the Robinson's Department Store and as a Contact Tracer at the BARMM Ministry of the Interior and Local Government.

"Withal of upholding research integrity and legal credibility, PRLS mission ignites a research culture imperative to create a significant space to homegrown ways of knowing and world-making that are grounded on multiperspectivist thinking, legal interpretations, and lived experiences of the Bangsamoro society."

Dr. Nassef Manabilang Adiong

The seal of the Bangsamoro Parliament is partially visible in the bottom left corner. It features a circular design with the words "BANGSAMORO PARLIAMENT" around the perimeter. Inside the circle, there is a shield with a crescent and star, and a banner below it. The seal is rendered in a light green color, matching the background.