



## DENR-DOJ-NCIP Coordination Meeting on the Formulation of Joint policy on Land

23 February 2024, DENR Main Building, Visayas Avenue Quezon City.

Participants: DENR USec Joselin Marcus Fragada, DOJ USec Brigido Dulay, NCIP Chairperson Jennifer Pia Sibug-Las, LMB Director Emelyne Talabis, LMB Legal Chief Marlou Alutaya, Christina Rentzmann and the Bureau directors and staffs from NCIP and DOJ.

After more than a year of ongoing joint policy formulation to address overlapping mandates and conflicting claims, the working groups have finally started drafting the joint policy. For the first time, the high-level coordination meeting among the lead agencies happened, where the Undersecretaries of the Department of Justice (DoJ) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) met with the Chairperson of the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP). The meeting started with courtesies,

welcoming the newly appointed NCIP Chairperson and updating her with the processes that the National Technical Working Group has been undertaking in the past years, as well as the outlook of the planned activities and schedules in the coming year. The most important update from the meeting is that President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. himself is urging the agencies to fast track the finalization and signing of the joint policy on land, which naturally adds pressure to the lead agencies.

The meeting also provided space for the presentation of the output of Mapping and Inventory of CADTs and other Resource Use Instruments in Mt. Apo Natural Park in Region 11 which showed the complexities of land overlap and land conflict on the ground. As the way forward, the agencies requested support for coming up with a regional-level map showing the overlapping claims and conflicts, a way of viewing these overlaps by the involved agencies, and testing the proposed provisions of the joint policy on the ground to sharpen the policy prior to its signing. The joint policy is expected to be finalized this year.



### Gendered Manual Pilot Tested with Key Partner Agencies

On January 16-17, RoLMin pilot-tested vital sessions from the Gendered Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) manual with key partner agencies such as the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and Commission on Human Rights (CHR) at the regional and provincial levels. The pilot-testing sessions focused on the importance of aligning gender with existing ADR-related policies and guidelines. This ensures that the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes incorporate gender considerations. On February 13-16, on the other hand, key informant interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with key agencies and indigenous political systems to identify possible entry points for gender and social inclusion in the actual ADR processes, mechanisms, and approaches. This was held in RIMPONG, a peace hall for Bagobo Tagabawa, where they usually settle disputes including land related conflict.

Key findings from the pilot testing, interviews, and discussions include the following: 1) gender is treated in silos with ADR in terms of policies, capacity development, planning and programming, monitoring, and evaluation; 2) Profiling of cases lacks disaggregated data (such as sex, age, ethnicity, among others); 3) there is limited information on the quality of women's participation or their added value in ADR processes; 4) gender-fair and conflict-sensitive language and approaches are not necessarily in the consciousness and practices of those involved in land conflict resolution; and 5) capacities on gender and conflict-sensitive ADR approaches are insufficient.

The manual is hoped to be adopted by the various ADR actors at the local, regional, and national levels towards a gender and socially inclusive land conflict resolution.



#### GENDER IN FOCUS

### Understanding gender issues in land conflict resolution

“Mas emosyonal ang mga babaeng parties pagdating sa awayang lupa” (Women are more emotional as parties to land conflict), says one of the female alternative dispute resolution (ADR) officers in the focus group discussions of the Supplemental Gendered Manual under GIZ's Promotion of the Rule of Law in Mindanao (RoLMin) project.

Indeed, such a statement may hold true, as women are more disadvantaged than their male counterparts regarding inheritance and land ownership. Widows left behind, with a significant number of children, for example, may have to fight for their rights over land against their deceased spouse or male relatives. Land is their only resource for survival and the survival of their families. For those involved in resolving land disputes, understanding the contexts of conflicting parties is necessary to enable a gender-responsive and socially inclusive approach to land dispute resolution.



The Supplemental Gendered Manual is part of ROLMIN's efforts to support a more systematic and practical mainstreaming of gender in conflict resolution processes in the light of land tenure and rights. The manual will be designed based on the existing conditions in the Mount Apo area, primarily benefitting indigenous peoples and other inhabitants and relevant government agencies working on land tenure and land rights.





### Planning meeting with DENR LMB

Exactly one year after the first operational planning workshop of the project, the RoLMin team and representatives from DENR LMB gathered at the GIZ office in Makati to plan out the activities for the year 2024. One focus in 2024 will be on rolling out capacity development activities for duty bearers and IP representatives in the barangays in Region XI, as well as the national level for resolving land conflicts. At the same time, awareness-raising campaigns will inform the population in the project area about the available complaint mechanisms and the necessary steps involved. On the national level, the teams agreed to the continued support provided to the joint technical working group.

The teams also discussed the recommendations of the study on the typology of land conflicts and applicable grievance mechanisms. RoLMin consultant Maricel Aguilar shared her findings working on the gendered manual for alternative dispute resolution. Finally, the project presented the preliminary findings of the inventory of land titles and resource use instruments (RUIs) in the project area, serving as a foundational input for the national discussions on the resolution of overlapping claims going forward.

### RolMin Team joins series of meetings in Davao to strengthen partnerships.

RoLMin team arranged series of meetings from 22-26 January 2024 with local partners to align various initiatives with the project's activities. The team first met with the local office of Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) in Digos City to explore the use of the newly drafted training materials for the newly elected barangay officials which can be an opening to introduce the Barangay Human Rights Action Center (BHRAC), especially to the pilot barangays of the project. The team also visited the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) office in Digos City to discuss potential medium and channel for the planned communication campaign.

Potential collaboration with the University of Mindanao Center for Peace was also explored given their experience with outreach programs in the barangays. While at the provincial office of DENR and the Protected Area Management Office (PAMO), initiatives on awareness raising campaign and plans of upcoming activities were discussed. The team also visited the PAMO building in MANP and held a brief meeting with one of the captains of the piloted barangays to introduce the RoLMin project.



In Davao City, the team had a courtesy visit to the office of the DENR Regional Executive Director of Region XI, Atty. Ma. Mercedes Dumagan, to provide an overview of the program and discuss the areas where it can support the regional office, such as capacity building and awareness-raising.



### Training on KoboToolbox and setting up of feedback mechanism for MANP-PAMO

28–29 February 2024, Big 8 Corporate Hotel, Digos City, Davao del Sur

Participants: Protected Area Management Office (PAMO) of Davao del Sur and Cotabato provinces

The training on the digital application for data gathering, along with the setting up of a feedback mechanism for client satisfaction ratings, was identified as a priority capacity need for the PAMO office. The digital data collection tool, capable of gathering a wide array of information and functioning offline, was warmly welcomed by the PAMO staff. In fact, they identified many other uses of KoboToolbox, including the Biodiversity Monitoring System, Inventory of the Special Agreement on Protected Area (SAPA), Surveys and Registration of Protected Area Occupants (SRPAO), among others.

After the introduction on the first day, participants tried the tool and developed various questionnaires, which they tested on their own. The second day was dedicated to addressing the various challenges and issues that participants encountered the day before and learning new features of KoboToolbox.

PENRO Alberto Bandiola, PhD, graced the event with his presence and announced that this would be his last activity as PENRO of Davao del Sur, as he would soon be transferred to Davao de Oro. He mentioned that, while this might seem a bit late in his current assignment, he was confident that the learning by the PAMO staff would help improve services and expedite the processes necessary for the protection of Mt. Apo Natural Park. He urged participants to use the digital application, share it with other staff, and emphasized that seemingly insurmountable tasks would be feasible in a timely manner.

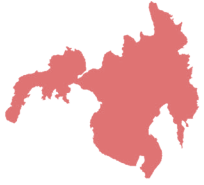
The client satisfaction rating questionnaire for MANP PAMO services is now available in both Davao del Sur and Cotabato provinces.



### Capacity Needs of Complaint Bodies Assessed for Strengthening Competence in Resolution of Land-Related Disputes

A series of Capacity Needs Assessment Workshops was conducted from 8–12 January 2024. One hundred and ten (110) representatives from the Lupong Tagapamayapa (LT), Barangay Human Rights Action Center (BHRAC), and Indigenous Political Structure (IPS) leaders in the eight (8) focused Barangays of the RoLMin Project actively participated in the workshops held in Digos and Davao City. The project covers the Barangays of Kapatagan and Binaton in Digos City; Sibulan and Sinoron of Sta. Cruz; Managa and Alegre of Bansalan; Daliaon Plantation and Sibulan of Davao City—all in Davao del Sur, straddling Mt. Apo Natural Park.

Before developing the capacity development framework, strategies, and training modules to strengthen the capacities of local complaint bodies, it is deemed essential to conduct a rapid assessment of existing conflict resolution mechanisms and capacities of local complaint bodies. The assessment focused on overlapping and harmonized processes in handling land claims and complaints.



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The assessment workshop provided the opportunity for the project to formally introduce and engage with key representatives of local government units and members of local conflict resolution structures, including the traditional leaders of Indigenous Cultural Communities/ Indigenous Peoples in the Mt. Apo area of the Davao Region. Most significantly, the workshop series was able to map out the existing mechanisms and processes applied by local complaint bodies for handling and resolving land-related disputes, identify and analyze the strengths, gaps, and challenges in facilitating land claims and disputes, and determine the existing and needed capacities of local complaint bodies at the individual and institutional levels. The results of the assessment will serve as the basis for crafting training modules and manuals to improve the competencies of key authorities and complaint bodies in promoting land rights and resolving land conflicts.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### March 20 (Regional) & April 2 (National)

Presentation/Validation of the "Supplemental Gendered ADR Manual"  
The validation with the regional and local offices are intended to enable them to apply key concepts and skills at their level while the validation with the national agencies is intended to advocate for the inclusion of gender and social inclusion considerations in their ADR policies, programs and approaches.

#### April 22-27

Comprehensive Course on Mediation and Conciliation for the partner agencies (DENR, NCIP, DOJ, CHR, DILG)  
Promote, develop, and expand the use of alternative dispute resolution, mediation and conciliation in the country, especially in the Davao region and enhance the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) capacity of the DENR and all its partner agencies.

#### April - May 2024

Series of trainings on Just and Responsible Handling of complaints and resolution of land-related disputes