

RAPID MIDTERM REVIEW OF THE BANSAMORO TRANSITION PERIOD

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conducted by the Mindanao Peoples
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Shukran. Magsukul. Daghan salamat,

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Abbreviations	
4PS	Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program
ADA	Advice to Debit Account
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AMBAG	Ayudang Medikal Mula sa Bangsamoro Government
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
ASP	Approved Staffing Pattern
BAA	Bangsamoro Appropriations Act
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BEP	Bangsamoro Expenditure Program (BEP)
BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
BIAF	Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces
BIR	Bureau of Internal Revenue
BLMI	Bangsamoro Leadership and Management Institute
BOC	Bureau of Collections
BOI	Board of Investments
BOL	Bangsamoro Organic Law
BSDB	Bangsamoro Sustainable Development Board
BTA	Bangsamoro Transition Authority
BWC	Bangsamoro Women Commission
BYC	Bangsamoro Youth Commission
CAAP	Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines
CAAR	Consolidated Annual Audit Report
CAB	Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro
CDA	Cooperatives Development Authority
CfPM	Christians for Peace Movement
CO	Capital Outlay
COA	Commission on Audit
COMELEC	Commission on Elections
CSC	Civil Service Commission
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CT4T	Coordinating Team for the Transition
CY	Calendar Year
DA	Department of Agriculture
DAB	Development Academy of Bangsamoro
DAP	Development Academy of the Philippines
DAR	Department of Agrarian Reform
DBM	Department of Budget and Management
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DepEd	Department of Education

DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
DOT	Department of Tourism
DoTr	Department of Transportation
DPWH	Department of Public Works and Highways
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
FGDs	Focused Group Discussion
GAA	General Appropriations Act
GOCCs	Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations
GPH	Government of the Philippines
ICM	Interim Chief Minister
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IEB	Intergovernmental Energy Board
IFPB	Intergovernmental Fiscal Policy Board
IGRB	Intergovernmental Relations Body
IIDB	Intergovernmental Infrastructure Development Board
IMT	International Monitoring Team
IPs	Indigenous People
IRA	Internal Revenue Allotment
JBZIC	Join Body for the Zones of Joint Cooperation
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LCEs	Local Chief Executives
LGRCB	Local Government and Regional Coordination Bureau
LGUs	Local Government Units
LTFRB	Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board
LTO	Land Transportation Office
MARINA	Maritime Industry Authority
MBHTE	Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education
MFBM	Ministry of Finance, Budget and Management
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MILG	Ministry of Interior and Local Government
MIPA	Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOOE	Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses
MPC	Mindanao Peoples Caucus
MPs	Member of Parliament
MSS	Ministry of Social Services
MSUS	Mindanao State University System
NAPOCOR	National Power Corporation
NCA	Notices of Cash Allocation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NLRC	National Labor and Relations Commission
NTC	National Telecommunications
OCM	Office of the Chief Minister
OPAPP	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process
OWWA	Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
PCBF	Philippine Congress-Bangsamoro Parliament Forum
PIA	Philippine Information Agency
POEA	Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

PPA	Philippine Ports Authority
PS	Personnel Services
PUIs	Persons Under Investigation
PUMs	Persons Under Monitoring
RA	Republic Act
READi	Rapid Emergency Action on Disaster Incidence
RLA	Regional Legislative Assembly
SAP	Social Amelioration Program
SARO	Statement Allotment Release Order
SPMC	Southern Philippines Medical Center
TABANG	Tulong Alay sa Bangsamorong Nangangailangan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rapid Midterm Review of the Bangsamoro Transition Period September 2020

Introduction

Halfway through the Transition Period, where is BARMM now?

Has the Bangsamoro Transition Authority been able to carry out its mandate and successfully implement its priority tasks? More importantly, are we closer to the achievement of the targets agreed upon in the peace agreement? Are the promised peace dividends already felt by the Bangsamoro people?

This Rapid Midterm Review contains findings about the status of the priorities set to be accomplished by the BTA, the gaps, challenges and problems encountered, the voices of the people from the local communities, and what remains to be done by way of recommendations.

This Report covers the Political or Legal Track. The Normalization Track will be covered in another report. In this report, Midterm Transition Period meant January 25, 2019 up to September 30, 2020, as provided for in Section 1 Article XVI of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL).

The Review Team approached the review by employing records review, key informant interviews and focused group discussions. The draft codes, reports, news articles, photographs, and other available documents and materials provided voluminous information about what transpired in the BARMM during the midterm transition period. Twenty-eight (28) key personalities in the Parliament, academic community and civil society organizations provided invaluable information that helped the Review Team to appreciate better the context of the information they considerately shared. Finally, this review sought the voices of 232 local people who are the ultimate beneficiaries of the creation of the BARMM, and as peace stakeholders, are the first people who would ask daringly the question: where's my peace dividend?

Scope and Parameters of the Rapid Midterm Review

The basis of this Rapid Midterm Review was, itself, the Bangsamoro Organic Law. Article XVI provides the functions and priorities during the Transition Period. Thus, the review specifically looked into the status of the functions and priorities of the BTA, namely:

1. Enactment of priority legislations such as the Administrative Code, Revenue Code, Electoral Code, Local Government Code, Education Code, and Civil Service Code.
2. Enactment of the law to recognize, protect, promote and preserve the rights of Indigenous Peoples
3. Determination of parliamentary districts for the first regular elections for the members of the Parliament
4. Organization of the bureaucracy of the Bangsamoro Government
5. Full transfer of powers and properties of the ARMM to the Bangsamoro Government, except those properties, land, and structures located outside of the ARMM.
6. The disposition of the personnel of the ARMM

7. Transition from the ARMM to the Bangsamoro Government
8. Submission and approval of Transition Plan
9. Appointment of the Interim Officers
10. Appointment of the Interim Cabinet
11. Setting-up of an independent, merit-based and credible placement and hiring process for all offices, agencies and institutions in the Bangsamoro Government and shall consider gender and ethnic balance
12. Disposition of Personnel and Assets of National Government Offices and Agencies
13. Other Matters that may be necessary for the protection and welfare of the constituents

This Review keenly examined the Moral Governance as the framework or principle set out to guide all actions of the Bangsamoro Government. Quoting from the Oath of Moral Governance it states: *“Moral Governance refers to the set of rules, practices, and processes completely devoid of all the evils of graft and corruption, and explicitly driven by moral principles of utmost dedication, devotion, honesty, justice, and integrity.”*

Results and Findings

A. Key Accomplishments

Viewed as the defining moment for the future of Mindanao, two plebiscites were held on January 21 and February 6, 2019 that ratified the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL). With the ratification of the BOL commences the transition period from ARMM to BARMM. BARMM’s significant midterm milestones are:

1. Established a fully operational and functioning Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA)

As provided for in the Organic Law, the BTA serves as the interim government in the BARM during the transition period. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) leads the BTA, without prejudice to the participation of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). The BTA has both legislative and executive powers in the BARMM during the transition period. Eighty (80) BTA members were appointed by President Duterte, of whom 41 were nominated by the MILF and 39 by the national government. Out of 80 members, 67 are males while 13 are females. The term of office of BTA covers from March 29, 2019 until June 30, 2022 when democratic elections are held. The legislative powers are vested in the BTA Parliament while the executive powers to the Interim Chief Minister who was likewise appointed by President Duterte.

2. Approved the Parliamentary Rules, Procedures, and Practices

The first order of business of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority Parliament was to pass Resolution No. 6 entitled “Resolution Providing for Parliamentary Rules, Procedures, and Practices of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao,” which provided for the legislative procedures in the conduct of all sessions, committee hearings and meetings, and other similar activities of the BTA. The Rules aimed (a) to ascertain the will of the majority, (b) to preserve the rights of the minority, and (c) to facilitate the orderly conduct of business in the BTA.

3. Organized the bureaucracy of the Bangsamoro Government during transition, the institution of a placement process for hiring of personnel during transition, including the

setting-up of office and other institutions necessary for the continued functioning of government and delivery of services in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region, as well as, those necessary for the smooth operations of the first elected Bangsamoro Government in 2022

- Approved the Enhanced Transition Plan – 126 pages long it identified the new structural framework of the BARMM based on the provision of the Organic Law, the priority legislations need to pave the way for the smooth transition from ARMM to the establishment of the BTA, the guiding principles and policies for the BTA, and descriptions of institutional linkages and mechanisms for transition. It also included a general Timeline of the Activities and the Assigned Ministry/Office responsible for each activity.
- Created important offices and institutions - The BTA Parliament approved the creation of five new offices, 15 ministries, and five other offices and institutions for the continuous functioning of government and delivery of social services, and for the smooth operations of the first elected Bangsamoro Government in 2022.
- Important legislations – BTA Parliament legislated the adoption of the Bangsamoro official flag, official emblem, and its national hymn.
- Approved the placement process for hiring of personnel during transition – The approved Transition Plan provided guidelines on the recruitment, selection and placement of human resource in the Bangsamoro Government. These guidelines were issued to facilitate the process of human resource recruitment, selection, and placements and filling up of positions in the Approved Staffing Pattern (ASP) as a result of the gradual phasing out of offices in the ARMM and the subsequent creation of new offices in the BTA. On December 30, 2019, the BTA launched a Bangsamoro Job Portal. Job seekers can now submit their resume online.

4. Phased-out the ARMM personnel - Separation incentives were reportedly given to the affected personnel. In the ARMM Transition Report, there were 5,062 employees holding *plantilla* positions outside of the three ARMM agencies (i.e., Education, Social Services and Health), as of September 2018. The number of employees phased out varied according to different sources. The Office of the Attorney General accounted 3,997 *plantilla* employees while various media outlets, including the government-owned Philippine Information Agency (PIA) cited about 6,000 employees affected by the phase out that took place in October until December 2019. Separation incentives in the amount of P4.1 billion were released for the 3,902 affected employees. Releases of the separation incentives had dates between December 2019 until May 2020.

5. Enacted the 1st Bangsamoro Appropriations Act - The enactment of the BAA on November 30, 2019 is considered as a watershed achievement of the BTA. This is the first time that the Moro leaders have all come together as a Parliament in order to plan and allocate the Block Grant in accordance with what they see as the actual needs of the Bangsamoro people. It is also the first budgeting process, under the Block Grant mechanism, where the BARMM can truly claim that there is fiscal autonomy as they no longer have to beg and justify funds before Congress. The total budget for Fiscal Year 2020 is P65.3 billion.

6. Released the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) - Eleven (11) municipalities that previously were not entitled to the IRA finally received their share per Notice of Cash Allocation No. NCA-LGRCB-20-00018 in the amount of P274 million to cover their first quarter budget. These municipalities are: Datu Salibo, Datu Hoffer, Mangudadatu, Pandag, Northern Kabuntalan, Datu

Blah Sinsuat and Datu Anggal Midtimbang in Maguindanao; and Akbar, Al-Barka, Hadji Muhtamad and Mohammad Ajul in Basilan. The release of the IRA was indeed a welcome development because these LGUs can now identify themselves as co-equal with the other LGUs.

7. Transferred full powers and properties of the Autonomous Regional Government in Muslim Mindanao to the Bangsamoro Government - On 26 February 2019, the ARMM through its then Regional Governor Mujiv Hataman was officially turned over to the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) through its Interim Chief Minister Ahod B. Ebrahim. Along with the turnover of the ARMM was the ARMM Transition Report composed of 34 documents divided into nine (9) books. The books summarized pertinent information from the then ARMM set-up, including assets, liabilities, personnel and plans, programs, and activities, lessons learned from the ARMM experience; and options for the transition to the BTA.

8. Priority legislations were partially enacted - As of September 2020, the Cabinet has filed three draft codes to the BTA Parliament, namely: Administrative Code, Local government Code, and Civil Service Code. The Education Code is already approved by the Cabinet and it is ready for filing as soon as the Parliament will convene. The Electoral Code is expected to be filed before 2020 ends. Printed copies of the Revenue Code and Electoral Code are not yet available to date for public dissemination.

9. Promptly filed as one of the priority legislation, Bill No. 40, entitled: “An Act to Recognize, Respect, Protect, Promote and Support the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, Creating the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs, Establishing the Implementing Mechanisms, Appropriating Funds Therefore and for Other Purposes,” on January 23, 2020, jointly authored by Melanio U. Ulama and Romeo C. Saliga who both represent the non-Moro Indigenous Peoples in the Bangsamoro Transition Authority. This was presented on First Reading during the 31st Session of the Parliament on February 19, 2020 but up to now, the BTA has not yet taken any action on the proposed legislative measure.

10. At the Cabinet level, the Parliamentary Districts for the first regular elections of the members of the Parliament were already determined. The Parliamentary districts will be incorporated in the Electoral Code inasmuch as the subject matter is election related. This matter will require massive consultations at the community level and among political clans and local government units.

11. Turned over 63 barangays/new areas to the BARMM – Sixty-three (63) barangays in North Cotabato voted to join the Bangsamoro during the plebiscite of the Bangsamoro Organic Law on 6 February 2019. On 20 November 2019, a North Cotabato Acting Governor Emmylou Mendoza led the turnover of the 63 barangays to Chief Minister Ahod Balawag Ebrahim. A Development Coordinating Office has recently been created for the purpose of planning and implementing the programs, projects and activities of the BARMM ministries and offices in the 63 barangays.

12. Constituted the Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) – Its mandate, functions, composition, joint secretariat, and holding of regular meetings have been approved. The national

government is represented by 10 members headed by Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez as the head while the Bangsamoro Interim Government is represented by 10 officials headed BARMM Education Minister Mohagher Iqbal. The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process serves the joint secretariat of the IGRB. The other intergovernmental relations bodies already constituted are the Fiscal Policy Board, Infrastructure Development Board, Energy Board, and Joint Body for Zones of Joint Cooperation. The intergovernmental bodies that have yet to be constituted are the Philippine Congress-Bangsamoro Parliament Forum and the Council of Leaders. On the other hand, the Bangsamoro Parliament has yet to enact the Bangsamoro Sustainable Development Board.

13. BARMM's responses to COVID 19 pandemic was hailed as commendable – No less than the Chief implementer of the National Action Plan Against Covid-19 Carlito Galvez Jr. said the newly-formed autonomous region quickly responded to the country's battle against the Covid-19 pandemic, noting that the cases in the region are comparatively low. Despite being geographically far from the National Government the Bangsamoro Government has been self-reliant in doing great with its battle against the pandemic. It provided financial support to frontline workers, provided strategic relief operations, allotted augmentation fund for LGUs, enhanced its testing capacity, constructed isolation centers, and implemented Social Amelioration Program.

14. Health services were made accessible and inclusive – *Ayudang Medika Mula sa Bangsamoro Government*, popularly known as *AMBAG*, has two-pronged purposes; one to provide medical assistance to indigent and poor Bangsamoro residents, and second to enhance the accessibility of health services, medicines, and medical procedures to its constituents. As of 30 July 2020, the AMBAG has provided medical assistance to 5,799 patients through its 10 partner hospitals. The BARMM has recently entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Southern Philippines Medical Center (SPMC) to cover not only Moro patients but also indigenous and Christians who need the medical services.

B. Transition Issues, Gaps and Challenges

1. Understanding the context and complexity of the transition from ARMM to BARMM -

A closer look at the tasks and demands of the transition from the ARMM to the Bangsamoro Government will show that it essentially encompasses two stages. One, the transition from the ARMM to the BTA. Two, the transition from the BTA to the Bangsamoro Government. As of this Midterm Review, the first stage of the transition is already accomplished with the full turnover of powers, functions, properties, assets, and records of the ARMM to the BTA through the Office of the Chief Minister. The second stage of transition from the BTA to the Bangsamoro Government is much more challenging and complex as it necessitates the establishment of a parliamentary form of government. On this score, both the National Government and Bangsamoro Government are embarking on an unchartered political experimentation which is laden with more questions than answers.

2. Challenges accompanying the transfer of powers and properties - The turnover and transfer of powers and properties during the period of transition under the law covers two levels,

namely, 1. Turnover of ARMM to BTA and 2. Turnover of the regional offices, agencies and GOCCs of the national government agencies to BARMM. As of February 26, 2019, the ARMM already turned over powers, functions, offices, properties, personnel and assets to the BTA while the turnover of the regional offices by the national government is still saddled with difficulties as to details. These are: (1) the transfer of power from ARMM to BARMM was legally deficient; (2) no inter-agency committee was created to conduct the required inventory; (3) the purchase of real properties located outside of the ARMM has also not yet materialized; (4) Cotabato City has yet to be turned-over to the Bangsamoro Government; (5) the transfer of national government offices and agencies, including their assets and liabilities to the BARMM has not yet been done; and the phasing out of ARMM personnel and offices had some controversies.

3. Challenges accompanying the exercises of fiscal autonomy - Section 1, Article XII of BOL states that the Bangsamoro Government shall enjoy fiscal autonomy with the end view of attaining economic self-sufficiency and genuine development. The first half of the transition period of the Bangsamoro Government, however, has full of fiscal challenges. The transition was not only at the level of the BARMM, but, as well at the level of the DBM and DOF -two departments that still need to adjust their current system for the release of the Block Grant to make it consistent with the law.

While it was understandable that the BARMM's first year of operations was tied down to the ARMM's 2019 Budget approved by the 2019 GAA, its fiscal challenges were numerous such as (1) lack of transition funds at the onset of the transition; (2) the Special Development Fund intended for rehabilitation, development and normalization process was not released in full to the Bangsamoro Government; (3) the release of the Block Grant was in a circuitous way; (4) the National Government has yet to release the additional funds that will subsidize expenditures for development projects and infrastructures in the BARMM; and lastly (5) the drafting of the Revenue Code has not yet been done.

4. Calls for extension of transition period – Without diminishing the remarkable performance made by the BTA during its first half of transition period, undeniably, so much of the targets have yet to be set in motion, as these have been pushed back by many factors, notably the exceedingly complex process of establishing a parliamentary form of government which demands the transitioning of systems and processes both at the regional and national levels of government. There is a growing realization that the timelines provided in the BOL may not be realistic. For example, the *Ad Hoc* Joint Body tasked to define the coordinates of the Zones of Cooperation in the Sulu Sea and Moro Gulf within 30 days after the ratification of the BOL. If we are to strictly abide with the law, this should have been completed in February 2019 but as of now, more than 18 months from ratification, the survey has not started yet. Another example is the turnover of National Government agencies, offices and GOCCs whose mandate and functions are transferred to or now vested in the BARMM. Under the law, this should have been completed within 3 months from the ratification of the BOL but the concerned agencies, such as the DA, DAR, DepEd, DILG, DPWH, DOST, DOT, LTFRB, LTO, DoTr, PPA, MARINA and CAAP have not yet completed the turnover. Consultations with the people on the ground have become a formidable task. Consider also the delay in the execution of the required activities that need to be jointly implemented with the national government. Then now comes the situation whereby the BTA is

dragged down by the pandemic and given the competing demands halfway in the transition, some timelines provided for in the Organic law have become unrealistic that a corresponding adjustment is being suggested. With time as the biggest problem, the League of Municipalities of the Philippines Tawi-Tawi Chapter passed a resolution urging Congress to enact a law providing for a sufficient transition period for the BTA to accomplish and complete the purpose for which it was created under RA 11054 by amending the first election of the Parliament from 9 May 2022 to 12 May 2025. Similarly, the *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* of the Province of Maguindanao unanimously passed Resolution No. 2019-349, calling for an extension of the transition period to provide the BTA sufficient time to accomplish its priority tasks. With 2019 gone and 2020 is about to be finished three months from now, there is no concrete assurance yet how 2021, the last year of the transition period, will figure out in terms of BTA's chances in getting its targeted outcomes on track.

5. Navigating the parliament as a new form of government - A feeling of uncertainty has been looming in the minds of some BTA members. *Are we running a parliament?* or, *Are we running an RLA with some semblance of a parliament?* - these are the opt-repeated questions some BTA members posed to themselves. It is apparent that the BTA members, individually and collectively are still adjusting and learning the ropes of the parliamentary system. Having no model to learn lessons from what is certain though is that to institutionalize the parliamentary system in the BARMM has still a long way to go.

6. Human capital shortfalls - The first challenge the MILF faced is its lack of governing experience. Chairman Murad was quoted by MindaNews to have admitted that running a government is thrice more difficult than running a revolution. MILF must face up to the challenge that the desired change it espouses does not happen overnight; that it necessitates organizational capacities and competencies to run the Interim Government. Capacity mobilization of Bangsamoro leaders and professionals to take the frontlines of the interim ministerial government to serve the immediate needs and deliverables of the BTA was in order. However, with the phaseout of the ARMM personnel there were complaints, particularly from the LGUs due to the interruption of the delivery of basic services. Moreover, some of those occupying positions in the Interim Government are new to their position that they must deal with the daunting learning curve.

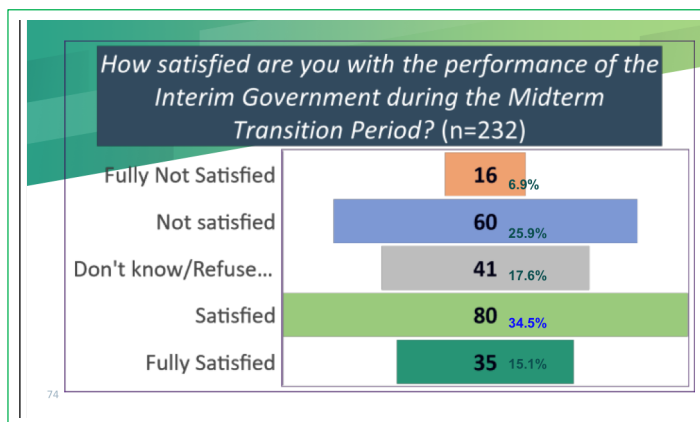
7. Barrage of applications in the job portal – The Job Portal is an attempt to develop a merit-based system of hiring that is free from the pressures of political patronage. This has been adopted to avoid recommendations and referrals from politicians that could unduly influence the hiring process. However, attendant to it was some serious hiccups as the Job Portal was barraged with huge volume of applications as of February 2020, causing major delay in the hiring. The sheer number of applicants proved to be a logistical nightmare as each applicant will have to be processed one by one in accordance to the standard recruitment and hiring process. Lack of personnel will obviously impact on the implementation of programs and projects. Without personnel no one can deliver the basic services to the people.

C. WHERE'S My Peace Dividend? Voices from the Bangsamoro Communities

Peace dividend is understood as a portion of funds made available for nondefense spending by a reduction in the defense budget (as after a war). The money can now be utilized for developing or reconstructing the economy, build the destroyed houses, construct and repair roads and bridges, spend for education, finance social services, build schools/hospitals/rural health centers, training centers for livelihood, and for improvement of science and technology, among others. Peace dividend cannot be understated. After the cessation of hostilities or war, that peace dividend becomes the lifeblood of the long-suffering Bangsamoro people.

This midterm review had the participation of the local people. Being stakeholders of peace, it is only imperative to ask them whether or not they have received the promised peace dividends. Twenty-one (21) focused group discussions were held across the BARMM provinces. Five common questions were asked. *First*, they were asked to revisit their hopes, aspirations, or the benefits they expected from the new government in the autonomous region soon after the ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL). *Second*, as far as they knew, what were the accomplishments made so far by the BARMM that have benefited them. *Third*, the challenges or difficulties they knew that the Interim Government encountered, or if they had issues, comments or observations about the Bangsamoro Government that affected the fulfillment of their hopes, dreams, or aspirations. *Fourth*, they were asked to give recommendations as to what their sector or community can do to assist the Bangsamoro Government to fulfill its mandate and its promise of peace dividends. And lastly, *fifth*, they were asked if they were satisfied with the performance of the Bangsamoro Government.

The chart shows the level of satisfaction of the focused group discussion participants of the performance of the Interim Government. As can be deduced from the chart, there were more FGD participants who were *Fully Satisfied* and *Satisfied*--that's combined 50% round-off or half of the total FGD participants--with the performance of the Interim Government compared to those who were *Not Satisfied* and *Fully Not Satisfied*--33% combined



Note however that 17.6% or less than one-fifth of the participants refused to answer the question; maybe because it's too early to give their opinion or they just did not know about what's going on in the Interim Government or maybe there were other reasons which they preferred not to say in public.

The table below provides detailed information as to the location of the FGD participants. The locations are instructive since these may provide clue and guidance in terms of validation or follow through activities that concerned agencies may plan to pursue. It behooves for the BTA to know the places where they are strong and weak in terms of the local people's perceptions.

FGD Locations	Fully not satisfied	Not satisfied	Don't know/Refused to answer	Satisfied	Fully satisfied	Total Responses
1. Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao	7	3				10
2. Butig, Lanao del Sur	4	6				10
3. Malabang, Lanao del Sur	1	8	3			12
4. Marawi City	1	6	4	2		13
5. Cotabato City		3	1	4		8
6. Datu Piang, Maguindanao		5	2	1		8
7. Guindulungan, Shariff Aguak, Maguidanao		4	2	5	4	15
8. Albarka, Basilan		3	2	3	1	9
9. Buldon/Barira, Maguindanao		3	2	4	1	10
10. Tawi-Tawi 1		1	3	5	1	10
11. Tawi-Tawi 2			2	7	1	10
12. Lamitan City, Basilan			2	8	3	13
13. Midsayap, North Cotabato			4	5	2	11
14. Pikit, North Cotabato			1	4	5	10
15. Kabacan, North Cotabato	1	4		5	5	15
16. Datu Paglas, Maguindanao				15	3	18
17. South Upi, Maguindanao			2	3	5	10
18. North Upi, Maguindanao		2	2	2	4	10
19. Jolo, Sulu 1	2	3	5			10
20. Jolo, Sulu 2		1	3	6		10
21. Indanan, Sulu 3		8	1	1		10
Total	16	60	41	80	35	232
Percent	6.9	25.9	17.6	34.5	15.1	100.0

Recommendations

Mindanao Peoples Caucus respectfully submits its recommendations for information and consideration to the various peace stakeholders, especially to the BTA/BARMM, National Government, Congress, GPH-MILF Peace Mechanisms, and the international community. These are enumerated below:

- 1. Extend the period of transition for another three years.** This would grant both National Government and the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) sufficient time to fully accomplish their priority tasks and duties especially those that need to be jointly implemented with national government counterparts and in due regard with the difficult demands of the normalization process and the larger context of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) implementation;
- 2. Accelerate the drafting and final enactment of Administrative Code, Local Governance Code, Education Code, Civil Service Code, Electoral Code, Revenue Code and the IP Code** and set actual schedules and timeline their passage and approval, without sacrificing the democratic requirements for consultations and consensus-building among the Moro leaders, constituents and stakeholders;
- 3. Institutionalize moral governance by creating an independent Anti-Corruption Office** that reports directly to the Bangsamoro Parliament with comprehensive policies, strategies and mechanism for implementation, monitoring and accountability;
- 4. Expedite hiring of personnel and explore other recruitment modalities** especially for those Ministries, Offices and Special Projects concerned with the implementation of tangible projects and the delivery of basic services for communities and target beneficiaries. Recruit consultants and experts for urgent tasks that require specialized trainings, competence, experience, highly technical and scientific knowledge. Heed the call of the Bangsamoro

professionals and returning scholars to open opportunities for them to serve the immediate needs and the deliverables of the BTA;

5. **Develop and implement a strategic/focused set of learning and development** interventions that will build on the current organizational capacities and competencies of the Interim Government. In this regard, the role the Development Academy of Bangsamoro (DAB) is essential inasmuch as it is the human capital development training and research arm of the Bangsamoro Government. It would be ideal if DAB works in tandem with the Bangsamoro Leadership and Management Institute (BLMI) since the latter was also primarily organized modeled after the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP).
6. **Encourage international financial aid and donor** support for the transition period and set-up the Bangsamoro Normalization Trust Fund through the speedy issuance of the Special Presidential Authority;
7. **Convene the Inter-Agency Committee** to implement the conduct of requisite inventory to ensure that the liabilities of the ARMM under law, contracts, or obligations will be assumed by the National Government. This necessitates the conduct of actual inventory of all the assets stated in the Summary Report of the ARMM to determine their status and existence as basis for the consequent accountability of the BTA;
8. **Immediately release the full amount of Social Development Fund to the Bangsamoro Treasury** to cover the required annual Five Billion pesos allocation for years 2019 and 2020, respectively. Adopt guidelines (e.g., BARMM and DBM Joint Memorandum) which shall provide for the date and manner of release of the Special Development Fund;
9. **Review and improve the manner of release of the annual Block Grant** to make it consistent with the fiscal autonomy standards for direct and comprehensive release. Increase transparency and representation of BARMM in the determination of the 5% net national internal revenue tax collection of the BIR and BOC to determine the accuracy thereof;
10. **Address the high expectations of the people** and deliver the peace-dividends (i.e. scholarships, employment, livelihood, farming inputs, tools and equipment, capitalization, housing etc.) as quickly as possible and on a massive scale to create real and visible changes on the ground. This can be pursued in partnership with local civil society organizations, NGOs, POs, cooperatives and the Social Welfare Committee;
11. **Set-up formal mechanisms** that will strengthen and concretize the participation and involvement of non-Moro indigenous peoples and settlers communities in the drafting of laws and policies, planning, and implementation of specific IP provisions in the BOL intended for their protection and Create the Office of the Settler Communities; and,
12. **Have a good strategic communication plan.** Consider the audience, messages, and the appropriate channels of communication. More so, strike a balance between social media and the cultural forms of information exchange which are more practical and effective in remote areas with no access to internet. In particular to the Bangsamoro communities, many of those who joined in the focused group discussions are not aware of what's going on with the BARMM.

