

Final Project Evaluation

Promoting conflict prevention, social cohesion and community resilience in BARMM in the time of COVID-19

December 2020 - December 2022



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November 2023

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AHJAG	Ad Hoc Joint Action Group
BIAF	Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BIWAB	Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade
BPAT	Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team
BPDA	Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority
BPOC	Barangay Peace and Order Committee
BTA	Bangsamoro Transitional Authority
BWC	Bangsamoro Women’s Commission
BYC	Bangsamoro Youth Commission
CAB	Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro
CBA	Community Based Association
CBO	Community Based Organization
CQRT	Community Quick Response Team
CMPL	Code of Muslim Personal Laws
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAD	Gender and Development
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GRES	Gender Results Effectiveness Scale
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IGD	Intergenerational Dialogue
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IRF	Immediate Response Facility
JP	Joint Project
JPST	Joint Peace and Security Team
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LGU	Local Government Unit
LMWOI	League of Moro Women’s Organization, Inc.
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MILG	Ministry of Interior and Local Government
MP	Ministry of Planning
MSSD	Ministry of Social Services and Development
MPOS	Ministry of Public Order and Safety
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPAPRU	Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity
OSY	Out of School Youth
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PDA	Peace and Development Advisor

PFSD	Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development
PSRO	Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office
PUNO	Participating UN Organisation
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
SEPF	UN Socioeconomic and Peacebuilding Framework for COVID-19 Recovery in the Philippines
TOR	Term of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNODC	United National Office on Drugs and Crime
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WIMRAM	Women Insider Mediators Rapid Action Mobilization Platform
WPF	Women Peace Facilitators
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
VAWC	Violence Against Women and Children
YPS	Youth, Peace and Security

Executive Summary

Evaluation background

The ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law in 2019 led to the creation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) between the national government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) was meant to address underlying causes of the Moro conflict. However, there are still other horizontal and vertical conflicts beyond the peace agreement's initial scope. The region's nascent steps towards stability continue to suffer by conflict between various identity groups, disputes between clans and factions, contentious political contests, as well as the potential threat of violent extremism. The project aimed at promoting inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding in the region by supporting the participation of marginalized groups – women, youth, non-Moro Indigenous Peoples (IPs) - in the implementation of the peace agreement as well as the broader peacebuilding processes required to address the evolving conflict dynamics.

Description of the Project

The Joint Project Promoting conflict prevention, social cohesion and community resilience in BARMM in the time of COVID-19 is the result of a collaborative effort of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women in the Philippines under the auspices of the UN Resident Coordinator and other co-chairs, and with IOM as lead implementing agency. The project focused on: 1) Empowering women to engage in and support peacebuilding in communities in the process of reintegration; 2) Promoting gender-responsive, locally inclusive and culturally sensitive approaches to conflict prevention in BARMM legislation, policies and

programs and 3) Increasing resilience in BARMM communities in conflict hotspots considering the internal and external drivers of violent conflict.

The Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) funded the JP under the Immediate Response Facility (IRF) modality. The project's total budget was US\$ 3.0 million (IOM was the primary recipient with US\$ 1.6 million, followed by UNFPA with US\$ 750,000 and UN Women with US\$ 650,000). Implementation framework was between 15 December 2020 to 15 June 2021, and it received a no-cost extension up to 15 December 2022. This is the project's final evaluation, mandatory in PBF-funded projects.

Methodology

The methodology responded to the indicators proposed for each evaluation question. It used a Theory-based Approach and Outcome Harvesting to identify both expected and unexpected high-level results in a participatory manner. The evaluation used a qualitative approach focusing on outcome/impact level results. Data collection included Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews and the promotion of two Outcome Harvest Workshops in the country at the start and end of field visit. A total of 175 stakeholders (136 F, 40 M) were consulted.

Conclusions

Relevance

1. The JP's objectives and design were responsive to the peacebuilding needs of the BARMM both at an institutional and grass-roots level with a special focus on the communities which were more excluded from the normalization process. It was able to voice the concerns of the local organizations (Civil Society Organizations-

CSOs, women-led cooperatives, youth groups, non-Moro Indigenous Peoples) to the national government in relation to the continuation of the peace process after the national elections. The JP was also aligned with the UN's Partnership framework for the country.

Coherence

2. Partnership was a strong component of the JP with the creation of constructive collaboration among implementing agencies, the BARMM Government and CSOs in joint action and policy support. The collaboration worked well from a thematic and political point of view, where different agencies brought their expertise and added efforts to target the same vulnerable groups. Coherence among implementing agencies was facilitated by project design and regular coordination meetings. There were challenges in convening the JP Steering Committee including the national Office of the Presidential Advisor on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU) in the context of COVID-19 and national leadership changes with the 2022 national elections. Synergy within the UN and with the Regional Government was supported by the engagement of the RC and the Peace and Development Advisor (PDA) based in the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO).

Effectiveness and Impact

3. The JP helped to promote inclusive peacebuilding which involved strengthening fifteen Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade (BIWAB) cooperatives and supporting their process of integration within their communities (80% of engaged BIWAB members reported an improvement in their reintegration into society). They are now more empowered to speak for themselves, sustain and expand their business and connect with government and civil society institutions and community members. There was a

strong component of capacity building in the JP which helped to promote the role of women as mediators (105 BIWAB members from the 15 BIWAB Community Based Associations - CBAs and cooperatives were trained on localized mediation and peace promotion curriculum). In addition, the JP promoted women's empowerment through advocacy, policy advice and training for CSOs and government institutions, although women's empowerment faces cultural and institutional barriers in the BARMM. BIWAB members became Women Peace Facilitators and raised awareness on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and peacebuilding through involving a total of 10,155 community members. The work with Women Peace Facilitators (WPF) helped empower BIWAB members who now feel more confident about themselves and their future, improving their leadership skills. WPF were also recruited as parasocial workers of the Ministry of Social Services and Development as a result of the JP. The JP produced nine policy briefs to BARMM, focusing on securing BIWAB's representation in peace process implementation mechanisms and access to public policies and opportunities (in employment, education, housing and transportation).

4. The JP helped the BARMM government establish the new Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office to support the normalization process. The PSRO will support key peacekeeping mechanisms and increase the collaboration among peace actors, government leaders and communities to achieve a more secure, inclusive and stable BARMM during the critical transition period. This institutional gap was identified due to the effective participatory research implemented by the JP which engaged 12 BARMM institutions and was followed by advocacy and technical support to the BARMM government. In

addition, the JP helped to strengthen Barangay Peacekeeping Action Teams (BPATs) and Barangay Peace and Order Committees (BPOCs) in their roles of providing security and mediating conflict in the community through training and needed equipment. A total of 387 BPAT members in 15 barangays and 253 community leaders from target communities were trained in community safeguarding. Trained BPAT members have increased their skills to make their work more effective in preventing escalation of conflict and are now better equipped to fulfill their mission. The JP assisted with the creation of dialogue spaces among community members and the government, bringing rights holders and duty bearers together, and helped inform communities which often have limited access to information about the peace process (a total of 666 duty bearers and rights holders were engaged as the main resource speakers for the Intergenerational Dialogues – IGD).

5. Organizations of non-Moro IPs are now better equipped to promote community support, engage with the government and support the peacebuilding process (the JP helped with formal registration of non-Moro IP organizations, training and policy dialogue). Through the JP, non-Moro IPs were able to give inputs to the consultations on a new Indigenous People (IP) code for the Region which is now under debate in the Regional Parliament.

6. The JP helped to empower young people in their ability to do advocacy in the BARMM and dialogue with religious and ethnic groups different of their own. In this context, the JP helped to strengthen the Bangsamoro Youth Commission (BYC) with a Manual for Policy Proposals to institutionalize youth engagement. Fifteen draft policy recommendations from youth

groups engaged throughout the project were submitted to the BYC.

7. The advocacy promoted by women-led CSOs supported by the JP contributed to the allocation of financial resources by the South Upi Local Government Unit (LGU) towards the organization of a Community Quick Response Team (CQRT) with engagement of non-Moro IP leaders. This was an unexpected result of the Project demonstrating local ownership and sustainability. Civil Society Organizations of Women and non-Moro IPs, Youth and at-risk individuals received relevant and effective support to enhance dialogue with the government, increase resilience and cope with immediate needs.

Efficiency

6. The project faced operational challenges with delays and difficulties in reaching the most distant communities in the face of COVID-19. There was a loss in efficiency due to different administrative systems and processes of implementing agencies and no appropriate planning for joint M&E activities. COVID-19 protocols highly impacted M&E as there were restrictions for data collection. The project had limited staff for its operational needs and experienced staff turnover which brought implementation challenges. However, even with all these challenges the project was able to deliver and benefited from a degree of flexibility in budget management and the collaboration of implementing partners.

Sustainability

7. The JP had a strong component of sustainability. It built capacity in women as entrepreneurs and facilitators (15 BIWAB cooperatives and 8 IP Cooperatives), trained 71 mediators and 25 CSO leaders and provided technical support for Government institutions such as the Bangsamoro Women's Commission and Bangsamoro Youth Commission to promote and advocate for policies and programs on

gender-responsive and youth-inclusive peacebuilding. In, addition it helped establish a new institution within BARMM – the Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office (PSRO) and supported the development and approval of 6 Resolutions on the inclusion of women in public policy. These are key achievements of the JP which speak for its sustainability. However, despite of relevant and effective JP's support, some key institutional stakeholders are still not able to sustain the support received after the end of the JP. This is valid for the Ministry of Public Order and Safety, the Bangsamoro Youth Commission, and the Bangsamoro Women's Commission, BPAT and BPOC.

Gender Mainstreaming

8. The JP helped raise the profile of gender related issues within the Region. It provided technical support to Local Governments Units (LGUs) in implementing Gender and Development (GAD) budgets, in developing local Women, Peace and Security action plans and preventing Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) and Gender Based Violence (GBV). Twelve BARMM ministries and 18 LGUs were engaged in the promotion of gender-responsive and inclusive conflict prevention/resolution. As a result, 6 policy instruments were drafted as gender-responsive approaches to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. In the same context, 43 CSOs were engaged in platforms to mainstream WPS in government institutions at local and regional levels. The project was inclusive in terms of minority groups – non-Moro IPs and women ex-combatants (BIWAB). Although the project was empowering for women who felt more confidence to speak in public and voice their concerns, their inclusion in broader decision-making bodies is still a long-term process.

Lessons Learned and good practices

1. A good integration path in the context of peacebuilding is turning former combatants into community facilitators and providers of social assistance.

A result of the project was the inclusion of MSSD for BIWAB members as parasocial workers. They went from women who community members would look at with distrust to women who would be talking about peace and social benefits. This was very empowering for the women who felt included and valued in their mission which was indeed helpful for the government. The alliance of excluded groups with the government where they are given a role as provider of benefits to the community quickens their integration and makes it very effective.

2. Training women and men willing to assume leadership roles has an incrementing effect.

BIWAB members were exposed to life threatening risks, they had to go through training and lived under uncertain circumstances. This speaks for the type of resilience and capacity which was created by these women to cope with difficult circumstances. They are champions in their own way. Their strength and resilience in times of war and conflict can be directed to create a drive for entrepreneurship, leadership and community care. Many BIWAB members had a profile of leadership which was well channeled through the project and helped to create increased results and effects (e.g. BIWAB members creating new projects to increase community cohesion such as a Madrasa for example).

3. Adapting key messages to the religious context makes a narrative which is understandable and accepted by the target audience.

Women Peace Facilitators reported how they adapted their messages to the Quran. Other target groups also reported how messages had to be adapted to their religious context. The training materials

discussed women's role in a Muslim context. Staff from the agencies were culturally sensitive in discussing gender with the government. The respect for people and the promotion of human dignity are universal messages through different religions and philosophy systems, including Islam. Reaching out to the people must include a genuine respect for their religion and worldview.

4. The role of the Resident Coordinator supported by the Peace Development Advisor helps to give UN initiatives a more strategic and politically sensitive perspective.

The JP benefited from the strategic oversight of the RC from its inception. The RCO's Peace and Development Advisor (not from any of the implementing agencies) played an important advisory and coordination role. The context is complex and sensitive and the UN's added value in addition to project implementation, lies in the high-level advice, advocacy, and direction. The UN is highly influential and having a senior UN PDA add inputs to the dialogue with the government was helpful in building relationships and creating linkages among project initiatives.

5. The efforts in partnership building pay off in terms of increased results and buy in.

An important feature of the JP was the promotion of dialogue among different stakeholders. This is a traditional role the UN has of convening partners to reach consensus. This requires effort and time, but it pays off in terms of promoting results which make sense to everyone. This was the case with the localization of the WPS agenda in BARMM, establishment of the PSRO and in the partnership with MSSD. There was a good sense of opportunity in the JP and a good relationship with government partners which helped to generate synergy and promote unexpected results.

6. There is great value in aligning local knowledge and context to solid UN training

The materials provided for training of women and government officers in general was of high quality and adapted to the context. It also built on international expertise. Finding and cultivating good local partners is crucial for developing capacity at a local level which can be sustained over time. Local partners are the ones who have the greatest knowledge on the actual needs of the ground and are able to reach far flung locations.

7. Development is a result of continuing and long-lasting efforts.

It is not realistic to think that 1.5 year JP can completely change the context. However, it is feasible to think of various initiatives which build over time and help to create more solid institutions and help change culture. The results and work of this JP build on previous efforts of the international community, including PBF support in the Region. This has helped to capitalize results and partnerships which can generate long term impact.

8. It is strategic to strengthen nascent and existing government institutions with a culture of support to the most excluded groups.

This JP helped to strengthen several regional government institutions (MPOS, MSSD, BPAT/BPOC, BWC, BYC and LGUs, just to name a few). This was done via technical assistance, dialogue, training, social mobilization and equipment. Doing it with a participatory approach from the beginning helps to build a government culture which is inclusive.

9. There is great value of investing in people's capacity, motivation and drive for change

This JP was very centred on people, especially minority groups. If focused on strengthening their capacity to speak, raise their income, become knowledgeable about their rights and act as drivers of change as

mediators and through various community initiatives. Investment on developing people's capacity to grow brings unexpected and long-term results which lead to sustainable development.

10. Adaptative budget management tends to increase results if well managed.

The JP was able to deliver creatively and beyond what was expected due to some flexibility in the allocation of funds (e.g., consultancies). Although control is crucial and pre-set budget lines is needed, some flexibility within the limits of UN rules allows for creativity and adaptation to the context, thus leading to more results.

11. The JP resulted in complementation of expertise and resources of the participating UN Agencies – clearly demonstrating the value of partnership among the three agencies as opposed to adhoc, single agency projects.

Collaboration worked well from a thematic and political point of view, where different agencies brought their expertise and added efforts to target the same vulnerable groups. The different agencies delivered shared, related outputs to reach the same outcome, and this facilitated collaboration which also speaks for efficiency.

Recommendations

N.	Type	Recommendation	Recipient	Action points
1	Strategic and operational Based on Conclusions 1-5, 7 and 8	Continue key interventions of the JP considering other neglected areas which are isolated (e.g. the Islands as suggested by some stakeholders) and review its scope based on lessons learned from this initiative and the evolving context, looking for a design that matches resources and outputs (not being overly ambitious)	PBF, RCO, IOM, UN Women and UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft new interventions based on the accumulated experience of the PUNOs (3 agencies) - Present the projects to donors working in the Region (3 agencies) - Increase engagement of national government in the new initiatives (3 agencies). - Consider in the new projects the inclusion or attention to the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o JP management arrangements adherence to the new UNSDG Guidance on new Generation of Joint Programmes, with the RC/O providing strategic oversight and leadership and the lead PUNO providing coordination and programmatic leadership to the JP team during implementation. o Follow up on the legislation/advocacy for ending child marriage (UNFPA, UN Women) o Continue advocacy for inclusion of women in decision-making bodies of the BARMM and local governments (UN Women). o Review partnership framework to include engagement of the Office of the Chief Minister to increase profile of inclusion in the Region.
2	Strategic Based on Conclusions 3, 5 and 8	Follow-up on the implementation of WPS at Regional and Local level and recommendations on gender related issues and the	UN Women and UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue technical support to the BWC and Local Government Units - Monitor the implementation of gender sensitive policies and identify challenges and viable solutions for the generation of results at a Regional and Local Level - Continue support to the dialogue between IP and the Regional Parliament in relation to the IP Code

		approval of the IP Code		
3	Strategic and operational Based on Conclusions 1-8	Inform future PBF projects about successes and failures of Joint Projects based on this and other evaluations	PBF, RCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a document of lessons learned in PBF projects for future project design with other guidance given to UN agencies on writing PBF proposals
4	Strategic and operational Based on Conclusion 8	Increase engagement of male leaders in future UN Interventions in the Region targeted for the inclusion of women and minorities in general	IOM, UN Women and UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase approach to prominent male leaders not only to have their approval for future project interventions, but most of all, to include them in dialogues and capacity building activities where they can be informed and sensitized around the inclusion of minority groups and the empowerment of women.
5	Strategic Based on Conclusion 3	Share the experience of engaging BIWAB members and the WPF training and MSSD engagement with other UN Agencies	IOM and UNFPA, RCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote a learning seminar with the other UN Agencies in the country and send the invitation to the Regional Offices, HQ, PBSO and other stakeholders to discuss lessons learned in the intervention. - Promote South-South and triangular cooperation

6	Operational Based on Conclusions 3 and 5	Engage the youth in future mediation training opportunities and sustain support to women mediators	IOM, UNFPA and UN Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include youth in mediation trainings and explore venues for them to help mediate conflict and professionally engage with it (IOM) - Explore the possibility of establishing a mediation center where women and men can help settle the disputes (UN Women, UNFPA)
7	Strategic Based on Conclusion 2	Reinforce engagement of National Government in Regional Projects and increase provision of information for all parties of the Steering Committee during project implementation	All agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep all parties of the Steering Committee informed of key steps of JPs despite of their inability to attend meetings.

1. Evaluation background

The ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law in 2019 led to the creation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). This heralded a potential era for peace in the region after decades of armed conflict and chronic insecurity. The Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) assumed its role as the interim governing body and is currently leading the BARMM through a transition period. The adoption of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) was meant to address underlying causes of the Moro conflict. However, there are still other horizontal and vertical conflicts¹ affecting non-Moro ethnic groups that go beyond the peace agreement's initial scope. The region's nascent steps towards stability continue to suffer by conflict between various identity groups, disputes between clans and factions, contentious political contests, as well as the potential threat of violent extremism.

Against the backdrop of the peace agreement, the COVID-19 pandemic intensified the tensions.² Although, in the period of strict lockdowns the number of violence occurrences decreased, there was an uprise of 5% in cases of violence between 2019 and 2020 as the local population resisted the call of authorities for social distancing. In addition, there was an increase in domestic violence as families were in small spaces with economic pressures. While the CAB primarily addresses the vertical conflict between the national government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the implementation of the agreement is expected to reduce conflict in the region beyond the agreement's scope by transforming the MILF into a major political force, and by addressing key drivers of conflict through political representation, increased revenue transfers and government services to the underserved communities in BARMM.

The CAB has two tracks: the political track and the normalization one. The political track includes the administrative establishment of the BARMM. In contrast, the normalization track committed to the decommissioning of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) of the MILF, including its all-female supplemental force, the Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade (BIWAB), as well as the transformation of the MILF base commands into peaceful and resilient communities. Delays in implementation of the complete process brought on by COVID-19, including the repurposing of government funds to address the pandemic, raised the odds against a successful transition period.

The Peacebuilding Fund Joint Project (PBF JP) sought to address gaps in the decommissioning process – exclusion of women former combatants – as well as in the security component of the normalization track, such as the establishment of the Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office (PSRO), the evaluation of the Joint Peace and Security Teams (JPST) and the support to often

¹ In this context, horizontal conflicts refer to conflicts between community individuals and groups from the same or different ethnic and religious backgrounds motivated by land disputes, gender-based violence or other types of disputes. *Rido* is the typical kind of horizontal conflict where a continuous cycle of violence takes place between clans/families. Vertical conflicts refer to those between national and regional authorities and local armed forces or other groups. Despite of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) and the process of decommissioning combatants of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), there are still other armed groups which conflict with the regional and national authorities.

² International Alert (2021). *COVID and Conflict Dynamics in the Bangsamoro*. Cotabato City. Available at: <https://www.international-alert.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Philippines-COVID19-Conflict-Bangsamoro-EN-2021.pdf>.

excluded groups such as non-Moro Indigenous Peoples (IPs). The JP has supported the political track by strengthening the new BARMM regional government-mandated ministries, agencies and offices to deliver on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda. On WPS, the PBF JP localized the WPS Regional Action Plans of multiple LGUs. Further, it supported work on intergenerational-multi-stakeholder dialogues, with communities at risk in conflict hotspots, on protection, on capacitating women peacebuilders/mediators from BIWAB, non-Moro Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and non-BIWAB Moros, in addition to addressing Gender-based Violence (GBV), horizontal conflict and its impact on communities.

The decommissioning process involves the provision of financial and in-kind assistance to combatants as they hand over arms and reintegrate into civilian life. However, the volume of BIAF combatants, estimated at over 40,000, coupled with budgetary constraints, will leave combatants without reintegration support. The lack of inclusion is also an issue—only 311 BIWAB members had been decommissioned amongst Phase 1 and 2's 13,060 recipients³.

While the number of BIWAB members varies from 10,000 to 21,900, depending on the source of information, the majority have not received the same reintegration support⁴ as male former combatants, undermining their sustainable transition into civilian life. The lack of accurate data on the actual number of female combatants demonstrates why this tend to be a less visible problem. The BIWABs have organized their 32 battalions into community-based associations and cooperatives, all operating under the guidance of one umbrella organization – the League of Moro Women's Organization, Inc. (LMWOI). However, BIWAB's influence as community leaders is constrained by rigid subordinate gender roles in their communities. Given their potential for influence, considering the training they received and the network they developed as BIWAB, they are uniquely positioned to help drive peace and security from within – achievable if they are empowered, organized and engaged.

In addition, as per Project Document, women and children constitute a majority of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Mindanao and are vulnerable to violence and human rights abuses, economic distress and marginalization, and deep-rooted social uncertainty. They also need to be included in the peace building process. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought additional challenges with hostilities amongst clans and between different ethnic groups, such as between Moro and non-Moro IPs, resuming or intensifying throughout BARMM and neighboring regions. The peace process needs to be inclusive and consider the needs of often exclude groups such as women, youth and non-Moro IPs.

³ The first phase of decommissioning took place in 2015 with 145 MILF combatants and 75 weapons. The second phase was in 2019 with 12,000 combatants decommissioned and 2,100 weapons withdrawn. The third phase started in November 2021 and 14,000 MILF combatants were expected to be involved. The final phase was expected to take place on Sept. 28, 2022, and involve the remaining 5,500 combatants. However, there is limited updated official data on this progress (Sources: <https://pia.gov.ph/news/2022/09/21/final-decommissioning-of-milf-combatants-set-on-sept-28>; <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/09/29/2212933/decommissioning-milf-fighters-resumes>)

⁴ Reintegration support includes PhP 100,000.00 and diverse vocational trainings.

2. Object of the evaluation

The Joint Project Promoting conflict prevention, social cohesion and community resilience in BARMM in the time of COVID-19 is the result of a collaborative effort of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women in the Philippines under the auspices of the UN Resident Coordinator and other co-chairs with IOM as the lead PUNO. The project focused on: 1) Empowering women to engage in and support peacebuilding in communities in the process of reintegration; 2) Promoting gender-responsive, locally inclusive and culturally sensitive approaches to conflict prevention in BARMM legislation, policies and programs and 3) Increasing resilience in BARMM communities in conflict hotspots considering the internal and external drivers of violent conflict.

The Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) funded the JP under the Immediate Response Facility (IRF) modality. The project's total budget is US\$ 3.0 million (IOM is the primary recipient with US\$ 1.6 million, followed by UNFPA with US\$ 750,000 and UN Women with US\$ 650,000). Implementation framework was between 15 December 2020 to 15 June 2021, and it received a no-cost extension up to 15 December 2022. This is the project's final evaluation, mandatory in PBF-funded projects.

The BARMM is an autonomous region composed of the following provinces: Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao del Norte, Maguindanao del Sur and the 63 barangays in North Cotabato that chose to join the BARMM via a plebiscite in 2019 referred to as the Special Geographic Area of BARMM. The project focused more specifically on the following areas:

- Special Geographic Area of BARMM (North Cotabato) – Municipalities of Aleosan, Carmen, Kabacan, Midsayap and Pikit;
- Province of Maguindanao – Municipalities of Datu Hoffer, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Datu Salibo, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Datu Unsay, Mamasapano, Shariff Aguak, Shariff Saydona Mustapha and South Upi;
- Province of Lanao del Sur – Marawi City, Municipalities of Balindong, Butig, Lumbatan, Lumbayanague, Maguing, Masiu and Pagayawan.

The three agencies worked across the three outcomes of the project. The project aimed at supporting the peace process in BARMM at various levels: the peace agreement implementation level (Outcome 1); at the regional peacebuilding governance level (Outcome 2); and at the community level (Outcome 3).

Outcome 1 aimed at supporting the Normalization Track of the Peace Agreement. The United Nations addressed a gap in the decommissioning component of the Normalization track by providing reintegration and transitioning support to women combatants who were excluded by the decommissioning process. By extension, through supporting the BIWAB, the project was also providing peacebuilding and socioeconomic support to MILF communities. This choice also

reflected the UN’s commitment to WPS and the key contribution of women, let alone women ex-combatants, to peace and security.

Outcome 2 looked to support the new BARMM regional government (new ministries and offices) in developing relevant inclusive peace and security capacities in response to a range of challenges facing the new government given the rapidly evolving conflict dynamics in BARMM. This is the most complex outcome with distinct categories of engagement with different government ministries/offices/sectors. It included identifying the gap and need for the new Peace Security and Reconciliation Office because the peace agreement’s security mechanisms developed a decade ago were no longer fit for purpose in a new politico-security regime. Similarly, it supported the Bangsamoro Women’s Commission (BWC) in localizing WPS action plans in conflict hotspot municipalities and developed the Bangsamoro Youth Commission’s capacity to benefit youth from different sectors and regions.

Outcome 3 was designed to strengthen the capacities of communities and the institutions closest to them to respond, recover and prevent conflict. The project selected conflict hotspots with marginalized communities (e.g., with non-Moro IPs) or communities in the 63 barangays that chose to join BARMM and are “detached” from their original municipalities, thus lacking in the usual service provision.

The project builds on previous work of the United Nations in the BARMM, which also involved the United National Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Moreover, this is the third project on the Bangsamoro Peace process supported by PBF in the Region. Previous donors for UN Projects in BARMM include: the Governments of Japan, New Zealand, Australia, and Norway. The support of the UN in the BARMM has mobilized various stakeholders - the level of engagement in the closing meeting of the project convened in December 2022 is a good example of this mobilization. Table 1 shows the Results Chain of the Project.

Table 1. Results Chain of the Project

Result level	Results statement	
Goal	Conflict is prevented, and social cohesion and community resilience are increased in BARMM in the time of COVID-19 <i>(This was not clearly stated but suggested by the project title and phrased here by the evaluation team)</i>	
Outcome 1	Women former combatants are empowered to engage in and support peacebuilding in communities in the process of reintegration	Output 1.1. BIWAB representatives are empowered to become local Gender and Peace Champions in conflict-affected areas. Output 1.2 BIWAB cooperatives have increased their capacity to transition to civilian life through sustainable economic activities. Output 1.3 BIWAB CSOs have technical capacity to support gender-responsive conflict prevention, mediation, and peace advocacy within MILF base commands
Outcome 2	Gender-responsive, locally inclusive and culturally sensitive	Output 2.1 BARMM institutions and CSOs have access to participatory action research, local conflict analysis and peacebuilding modelling.

	approaches to conflict prevention are mainstreamed into BARMM legislation, policies and programs	<p>Output 2.2 Members of different identity groups are provided with spaces and mechanisms for policy dialogue on conflict prevention.</p> <p>Output 2.3 Women-led CSOs, including the BIWAB CBAs, are empowered to roll-out policy advocacy campaigns to strengthen local protection and peacebuilding mechanisms.</p> <p>Output 2.4 BARMM institutions and CSOs have improved understanding of local dynamics and technical capacity to develop gender-responsive policy</p>
Outcome 3	BARMM communities that are beset by horizontal conflict are more resilient to the internal and external drivers of violence	<p>Output 3.1 Fragile communities have skills and community-based mechanisms to enable dialogue on conflict prevention and mediation.</p> <p>Output 3.2 At-risk groups, including women, youth and older people in vulnerable situations, have increased skills and resources to prevent conflict and violent extremism community-driven processes.</p> <p>Output 3.3 Fragile communities have improved community-based safety and security mechanisms through enhanced Barangay Peacekeeping Action Teams (BPAT) and increased IDP's (Internally Displaced Persons) participation.</p>

There is an estimate of over 10,000 beneficiaries of the project, considering the reach of its capacity-building activities (source: PBF Final Report).

3. Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope

The evaluation examined the overall performance, achievement of results and impact of the JP. According to the Terms of Reference (ToR), its key objectives were:

- Generate evidence on the impact of the JP, including documentation of lessons learned, effective strategies and best practices.
- Determine the significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects of the JP intervention.
- Assess the JP's effectiveness in encouraging greater coherence and collaboration of the broader United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and UN reform agenda.

The evaluation covered the whole period of project implementation, from 15 December 2020 to 15 December 2022. The evaluation looked at the implementation of the full geographical scope of the project, namely the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao and communities in the Special Geographic Area (SGA). Consultation took place with the full range of stakeholders: members of the joint program team, beneficiaries, and local and national actors.

The key expected users of the evaluation are UN Agencies involved in project implementation, resource partners, RCO, Peacebuilding Fund, national government, BARMM government

stakeholders (at regional and local levels), rightsholder groups such as women, youth, non-Moro Indigenous People (IP) groups, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and BIWABs involved. The evaluation will also inform the learning on strengthening intra-UN synergy and partnerships with non-UN agencies. The UN Agencies and RCO will use the evaluation results to rethink their initiatives and plan future interventions that will benefit from incorporating lessons learned for future project funding and guidance. In contrast, national government and BARMM government stakeholders will benefit from the evaluation in helping to improve their policies. CSOs and BIWABs will have input to plan for future projects.

The evaluation used the standard criteria of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which are: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, (immediate) impact and sustainability of the Joint Project (JP) interventions, especially those related to the normalization process. The evaluation was in accordance with the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards. See Table 2 for the complete list of evaluation questions.

Table 2. Evaluation Questions

Dimension	Evaluation Questions (EQ)
<p>Relevance: The extent to which the project has contributed to addressing the needs identified in its design.</p>	<p>1. To what extent did the JP intervention's objectives and design respond to the peacebuilding needs, policies, and priorities of the communities, BIWABs and local and national stakeholders?</p> <p>Evaluation Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of needs assessment prior to the project - Existence of a clear targeting strategy - Alignment of the project with BARMM's policy priorities - Alignment of JP interventions to the overall UN Cooperation framework and peace pillar objectives - Coherence of activities and outputs with the intended outcomes and objective - Alignment of the project with national priorities for peacebuilding <p>2. Do the intervention's expected outcomes and outputs remain valid and pertinent as initially planned or subsequently modified?</p> <p>Evaluation Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevance of the project in relation to the current scenario - Capacity of the project to adapt and remain relevant in the face of changing circumstances
<p>Coherence: The extent to which the project addresses synergies and interlinkages with implementing partners within the</p>	<p>3. Do synergies exist with other interventions carried out by the implementing agencies, UNCT members or other stakeholders in BARMM?</p> <p>Evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Synergies identified among implementing agencies within the JP - Synergies identified between JP and other UNCT members

UN System and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Synergies identified between other stakeholders in BARMM
<p>Effectiveness:</p> <p>The extent to which the project has contributed towards its outputs to achieve the outcomes targeting the beneficiaries to reach output and outcome-level results</p>	<p>4. To what extent was the JP able to deliver against its outputs and outcomes initially planned?</p> <p>Evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance of indicators in the project’s framework - Capacity of the project to deliver in the face of contextual changes (COVID-19, elections etc.) - Evidence of JP mitigating any unplanned negative impacts - Consistency of the Theory of Change - Existence of Do No Harm Strategy <p>Questions answered by the outcome harvesting exercise:</p> <p>5. To which extent was the project able to strengthen the BIWABs and other women’s organizations and promote women’s empowerment (economic, political, and social) as a pathway to promote peace in the communities?</p> <p>6. To what extent was the project able to strengthen BARMM’s institutions and agencies, and promote gender-responsive, locally inclusive policies and culturally sensitive to conflict prevention?</p> <p>7. To what extent are project stakeholders (BPAT, Barangay Peace and Order Committee – BPOC, youth, community members, elders, regional and local governments and others) better prepared to manage conflict and promote peacebuilding?</p> <p>8. What major factors influence the achievement of the intervention’s desired objectives and outcomes? (Success pathways identified)</p>
<p>Efficiency:</p> <p>The extent to which the project was efficiently managed, implemented and has delivered quality outputs against what was planned (including official amendment)</p>	<p>9. Did the JP achieve its targets according to JP timeline and budget? Had there been any significant delays in implementation and achievement of results, and if so, what caused these?</p> <p>Evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery of targets according to original timeline <p>10. Have the JP arrangement and UN agencies working together increased the efficiency of implementation, maximizing impact of pooled resources etc., coherence and coordination? If yes, to what extent?</p> <p>Evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of savings due to JP’s arrangement - Evidence of increased results and synergy due to collaboration - Evidence of JP leveraging partners’ resources (staff expertise, partnership arrangements, M&E mechanisms)

	<p>11. What lessons can be learnt to improve timeliness and efficiency for future peace building programs, especially joint programs? (No specific evaluation criteria, open question)</p>
Impact	<p><i>Questions answered by the outcome harvesting exercise:</i></p> <p>12. What are the positive and/or negative and intended and/or unintended higher-level effects produced by the JP?</p> <p>13. Are identified impact attributable to JP activities, external factors, or both?</p> <p>14. To what degree has the JP influenced the policies and programs of the BARMM ministries and other agencies?</p>
Sustainability: The extent to which the project has potential for sustainability	<p>15. Are structures, resources, and processes in place to ensure that benefits generated by the JP continue once the JP period ends?</p> <p>Evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of allocation of resources from partner institutions to continue actions triggered by the project. - Evidence of incorporation of project processes and inputs into partner institutions - Evidence of partners' capacity to continue benefits in the long term (technical, financial, and managerial capacities) <p>16. Is the JP supported by local institutions and well-integrated into local social and cultural structures as well as local governance processes? To what extent will BARMM and local government be able to support the JP interventions?</p> <p>Evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of incorporation of project's inputs into cultural structures - Evidence of ownership of project's results in local structures
Gender Mainstreaming: The extent to which the project has integrated gender into the program design and implementation	<p>17. How did the JP address the different needs and capacities of the beneficiaries, target communities, and local stakeholders?</p> <p>Evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of inclusion of minority groups in project implementation - Evidence of measures taken to increase access of beneficiaries to the project activities (e.g., care for children during project activities, transportation, interpretation, trainers with similar backgrounds, etc.) <p>18. Did the intervention capture gender perspectives that measure gender-specific changes, such as perceptions of gender norms, roles, and relations within the context of women, peace, and security?</p>

	<p>Evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of inputs given by both males and females in relation to gender norms and roles during project implementation - Evidence of inclusion of women as community mediators - Evidence of participation of women in political activities with the purpose of promoting peacebuilding
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3. Evaluation Methodology

a. Overall methodological approach and design

The methodology responded to the indicators proposed for each evaluation question (See Appendix B for the evaluation matrix). It used a Theory-based Approach and Outcome Harvesting to identify both expected and unexpected high-level results in a participatory manner. The Theory-based Approach in evaluation is an approach to evaluating interventions that focuses on understanding and testing the underlying theories and assumptions that explain how and why a program should produce certain outcomes. In this evaluation, the evaluation team reconstructed the Theory of Change of the project and main assumptions were identified to see whether the project's rationale held true.

Annex A presents the Theory of Change and lists various assumptions assessed during the evaluation. The project was meant to promote capacity building, technical assistance, livelihoods packages and social cohesion activities to help foster peacebuilding in the nascent BARMM Region. One major assumption was on the capacity of the different stakeholders to come together and be able to dialogue. This was analyzed during the evaluation and is in section 5.3. on Effectiveness.

Outcome Harvesting is a qualitative evaluation approach focusing on outcome/impact level results. Instead of analyzing what has been achieved against a set of targets, Outcome Harvesting goes beyond that to help identify what the results have been in terms of "a change in the behavior, relationships, actions, activities, policies, or practices of an individual, group, community, organization, or institution" (Wilson-Grau and Britt, 2013).

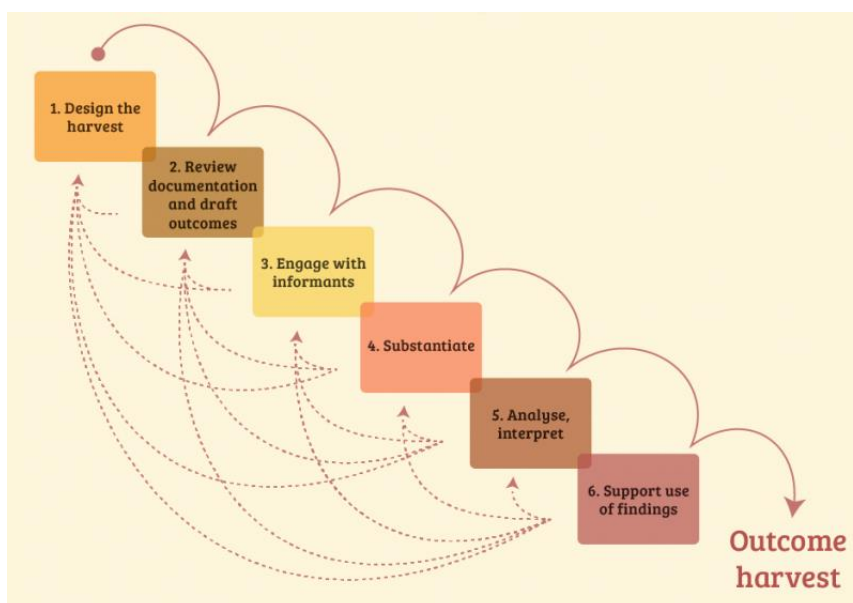
The evaluation questions which guided the outcome harvesting were:

1. To what extent was the project able to strengthen the BIWAB's knowledge, attitudes and practices towards women's protection issues, including GBV prevention, mitigation and response, and promote women's empowerment (economic, political and social) to promote peace in the communities?
2. To which extent was the project able to strengthen BARMM's institutions and promote policies to foster gender equality?
3. To which extent are project stakeholders (BIWAB, BPAT, BPOC, youth, community members, elders, others) better prepared to manage conflict and promote peacebuilding?

4. What are the major factors influencing the achievement of the intervention's desired objectives and outcomes? (Success pathways)
5. What are the positive and/or negative and intended and/or unintended higher-level effects produced by the JP?
6. Are identified impact attributable to JP activities, external factors, or both?
7. To what degree has the JP influenced the policies and programs of the BARMM ministries and other agencies?

The Outcome Harvesting Methodology is very participatory as the stakeholders help 'harvest'/identify the key project achievements. The classical steps for the Outcome Harvest approach are in Figure 1. The first step – Design the Harvest, is about identifying the key questions to guide the exercise. This was done during the inception phase. Step 2 is Review Documentation and draft outcomes. This was done during the inception phase and field visit. This entailed defining 'outcome descriptions' as per project documentation. Step 3 – Engage with informants was conducted at an Outcome Harvesting Workshop in Day 2 of the field visit. During the workshop, the initial outcomes identified were discussed, and additional outcomes were mapped/harvested by stakeholders. Step 4 – 'Substantiate' - occurred during the field visit as more stakeholders were consulted. The evaluation team sought further evidence to back up/improve/review outcomes identified in Step 3. Step 5 – Analyze and interpret was conducted at the end of the Field Visit, when the preliminary results of the data collection were presented by the evaluation team at a Second Outcome Harvest Workshop and the outcomes identified were further discussed. Step 5 continued during the elaboration of the evaluation report and Step 6 – Support use of findings occurred in the revision of the draft evaluation report when recommendations were refined. Figure 2 shows a diagram for the steps in Outcome Harvesting.

Figure 1. Steps in Outcome Harvesting



Source: Better evaluation.org from Ricardo Wilson-Grau, 2021.

A non-experimental qualitative approach was used for this evaluation, and triangulation was key to contrast various sources and reach a common ground based on evidence. Triangulation occurred using various information sources: official project documents, informants from the government, UN agencies, Civil Society Organizations, and beneficiaries. Triangulation means checking diverse sources and views to identify a broader understanding of what has occurred.

As far as gender is concerned, the evaluation team included this analytical lens throughout the whole evaluation process, from the inception phase (including gender as a dimension to be analyzed), through data collection (mapping results which helped to empower women and consultation with women beneficiaries and decision makers) and report writing and revision (highlighting results relevant for women and incorporating related feedback from Participating United Nations Organizations (PUNOs).

b. Data Collection

The methodology of the proposed evaluation included:

- ⇒ **Desk review of relevant documents:** The desk review has considered key documents provided in the design and management of the project (project document, results framework, Annual Project Progress Reports, baseline data, and results of focus group discussions). For the list of main documents reviewed, please refer to Appendix C.
- ⇒ **Review of endline survey and Focus Group Discussions conducted by project team:** The project carried out an endline survey with 278 (230 F, 48 M) beneficiaries and 17 focus group discussions with 85 (42 F, 43 M) BIWAB leaders, BPOC and BPAT members. Key data from these surveys and FGD were used to answer the evaluation questions. Baseline data was used as an illustration for the context. However, the baseline questionnaire/data was different from the endline survey data provided, so no direct comparisons between the two datasets could be made.
- ⇒ **Semi-structured interviews:** During the inception phase and desk review, a list of interviewees was drafted to include the key stakeholders that should go through in-person or remote semi-structured interviews (See Stakeholder Analysis in Appendix E). These included project staff from IOM, UNFPA and UN Women, RCO, Peacebuilding Support Office, stakeholders from the BARMM Government and National Government. A total of 31 (22 F, 9 MF) key informant interviews were conducted with stakeholders from these groups. The semi-structured interviews were conducted by the international team leader with the assistance of the national consultant.
- ⇒ **Focus Group Discussions (FGD):** Considering the data already available, the evaluation carried out Focus Group Discussions with the following stakeholders for which less information was available or considering their high level of engagement in the project: 1) traditional and religious leaders; 2) women peace facilitators; 3) cooperative members; 4) Civil Society Organizations; 5) Youth; 6) BPAT members; and 7) BIWAB leadership. A total of 13 FGDs were conducted involving 103

individuals (81 F, 22 M). Focus Group Discussions in Cotabato City and surroundings were led by the team leader with the assistance of the national consultant. The national consultant led the FGD in Shariff Aguak, Camp Darapanan and Sultan Kudarat in Maguindanao, Kabacan, Brgy. Olandang and Midsayap in North Cotabato and Marawi City.

c. Sampling and stakeholder participation

During the inception process, a stakeholder analysis was conducted, considering who the major actors were and their role in the project to identify the list of people to participate in the semi-structured interviews. In addition, during the semi-structured interviews, actors were asked to refer to other relevant stakeholders who should be considered (snowball and purposive sampling).

The table below presents a list of interviewees consulted by type.

Table 3. Categories of Stakeholders consulted

Category	Number of people	Data collection methodology
Rightsholders Youth, Indigenous People, CSOs, BIWAB BPAT, BPOC, other community members and leaders	138 (111 F, 27 M)	FGDs (Focus Group Discussions) and Outcome Harvesting Workshop
Local Government staff Officials from Local Government Units (Datu Saudi Ampatuan LGU, MSWOs of Lanao del Sur, Provincial Planning and Development Officer of Maguindanao)	7 (3 F, 4 M)	FGDs, KIIs (Key Informant Interviews), Outcome Harvesting Workshop
Regional Government BPDA (Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority), MPOS (Ministry of Public Order and Safety), MSSD (Ministry of Social Services and Development), PSRO, BWC and BYC, BTA (Bangsamoro Transition Authority)	10 (7 F, 3 M)	- FGD, KII Outcome Harvesting Workshop
Representatives of UN Agencies/Donors IOM, UNFPA, UN Women, RCO and PBF	20 (15 F, 5 M)	KIIs, FGDs Outcome Harvesting Workshop
Total	175 (136 F, 40 M)	

The first outcome harvesting workshop had 33 participants (27 F, 6 M), while the second outcome harvesting workshop had 27 participants (18 F, 9 M). Most participants in the second harvesting workshop were also present during the first workshop.

A total of 13 FGDs were conducted, with respondents totaling 103 participants (81 F, 22 M).

d. Methods of Analysis

The evaluation combined several methods of analysis: 1) Identification of key themes, challenges, and contents in the desk review through individual notes by both consultants which helped facilitate dialogue with project staff; 2) Review of quantitative data in the project documents; 3) Systematization of qualitative data and quotes organized by evaluation questions and indicators/criteria.

The team leader carried out the interviews in English and data collection in Tagalog was carried out by the National Consultant. It is important to emphasize that the evaluation team did not identify the participants of the evaluation in the report and any situation which may link the quote with the respondent. Contrasting views were considered to give a more accurate picture of what was found in the process. Along with the qualitative analysis of indicators/criteria, there was also a quantitative analysis to complement the arguments around the key findings identified. The quantitative analysis involved simple frequency and descriptive statistics related to project surveys.

a. Cross-cutting themes

The cross-cutting themes of Gender, Youth and Peacebuilding were in all the evaluation criteria, namely: a) Relevance; b) Coherence; c) Effectiveness; d) Efficiency; d) Impact; Sustainability; e) Gender and Human Rights.

b. Limitations of the evaluation

During the inception phase, five risks were identified: 1) Delays in scheduling the interviews and FGDs prior to the field visit; 2) Problems with internet connection; 3) Lack of participation from key stakeholders in the outcome mapping workshop; 4) Security issues in benefited locations and 5) Lack of engagement from local government representatives in responding to request for FGDs. Fortunately, none of these potential risks came into reality. The data collection process went smoothly, and there was an overall strong engagement from stakeholders. It would have been helpful to consult additional key MILF leaders to have a better understanding of the context and their view of the project. However, this does not pose a limit to the evaluation findings but speaks of the characteristics of the institutional/political environment in which the project was placed, where key stakeholders within the government were mostly related to youth, women and other minority groups.

e. Ethics of the evaluation

The evaluation was based on the principles set by the United Nations Evaluation Group in the document 'Norms and Standards for Evaluation,' which has served as a landmark document for the United Nations and beyond. All the participants were briefed about the confidentiality of the information at the start of every interview and focus group discussion by the evaluation team as part of the evaluation protocol. Stakeholders were told that the evaluation team was independent and that no specific quote or information would be directly attributed to them and that their anonymity was ensured during the evaluation process. The consultants are fully

independent from any organization involved in designing, executing, or advising on any aspect of the project being evaluated.

Moreover, the evaluation considered the principle of 'Do No Harm,' which consists of careful and deep respect towards beneficiaries and special caution about not increasing conflict.

The UNEG principles used for this evaluation are below. They are as follows:

1. *Utility*: the evaluation is meant to serve the different stakeholders involved with the purpose of helping with decision making and answering the questions posed by the commissioning organizations.
2. *Necessity*: the evaluation was conducted bearing in mind learning and accountability. It was not arbitrary, and respected the time and resources devoted to it.
3. *Independence*: the evaluation attempted to be free of bias. The evaluation team exercised its Independence, attributing value to the Project based on evidence and not on any personal interest.
4. *Impartiality*: every initiative has its merit and setbacks. The evaluation aimed to be balanced in showing both sides of what occurred during project implementation. To ensure this, different perspectives were heard and incorporated into the report. The evaluators were mindful of their cultural and social background to avoid bias based on their profile.
5. *Credibility*: the evaluation was based on rigor design, data collection, observation, and analysis to be credible and of high quality.
6. *Conflicts of Interest*: the evaluation team had no conflict of interest in the evaluation.
7. *Honesty and Integrity*: the evaluation team openly pointed out the limitations of the evaluation in the report and was honest about the results it found.
8. *Accountability*: the evaluation team was committed to completing the evaluation within the timeframe and budget agreed upon as signed in the contract.
9. *Information protection*: this evaluation informed everyone about data management and protected the confidentiality of the information provided by stakeholders and other actors involved in the evaluation.
10. *Respect for Dignity and Diversity*: the evaluation team considered and respected the differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs and practices, disability, age, and ethnicity, respecting all the individuals in the evaluation process.
11. *Respect for individual will and sensitivity towards vulnerability*: individuals were respected in their right to participate in the evaluation. The evaluation sought to hear the ones who are more vulnerable and ensured their inputs are included in the evaluation report.
12. *Redress*: the evaluation team informed participants it would be available in case of any questions or issues from stakeholders.
13. *Confidentiality*: participants were briefed about their right to provide Information in confidence. Information in the report was disclosed in a way not to reveal the identity of the informants.
14. *Avoidance of Harm*: the evaluation sought to minimize risks and burdens on the participants of the evaluation through scheduling interviews and focus group discussions in the most appropriate location and considering convenience of timing for identified stakeholders.

15. *Accuracy, Completeness and Reliability*: the evaluation team sought to present the most accurate, complete, and reliable report it could, according to its capacity and in its best will and faith.
16. *Transparency*: the evaluation informed the commissioners of the evaluation of all the evaluation procedures and steps during the evaluation.
17. *Reporting*: the evaluation team made the evaluation report available for the commissioning organizations and encouraged them to share with the other stakeholders.
18. *Omissions and wrongdoing*: the evaluation did not find evidence of wrong-doing or unethical conduct.

In addition, the evaluation team was fully aware that the evaluation occurred in a context of conflict and followed the advice given by the United Nations Security Staff in the field. Furthermore, the evaluation team was careful to adapt to local customs, which included, but not limited to, the appropriate dress code expected in the Region.

Lastly, it is important to note that the data from this evaluation was stored in the evaluators' Personal Computers, and this raw data will not be shared to any parties outside the commissioning organizations.

Pictures of individuals were taken upon the consent of the participants with the purpose of illustrating the report.

f. Quality assurance and Evaluation Management

According to the Terms of Reference for this evaluation, an Evaluation Management (EMG) group was established to oversee and facilitate the evaluation process. The EMG was composed of evaluation focal points from IOM, UNFPA, UN Women, RCO and PBSO, who are not part of the day-to-day implementation of the project. The EMG was responsible for overseeing the day-to-day oversight and management of the evaluation, making key decisions, and reviewing evaluation products.

5
سَلَامٌ

⁵ Arabic word for Peace (Salam) used to end each Report Section.

4. Evaluation Findings

5.1. Evaluation Criteria: Relevance

Evaluation Questions:

1. To what extent did the JP intervention's objectives and design respond to the peacebuilding needs, policies, and priorities of the communities, BIWABs and local and national stakeholders?

2. Do the intervention's expected outcomes and outputs remain valid and pertinent either as originally planned or as subsequently modified?

Finding 1. The JP's objectives and design were very responsive to the peacebuilding needs of the BARMM both at an institutional and grass-roots level. It addressed identified needs for institutional strengthening of the nascent government and civil society organizations from both Moro and non-Moro groups (paragraph 1).

Finding 2. The JP was able to promote dialogue between CSOs in the Region, listen to their views and help them express their concerns to the national government after the presidential elections 2022, thus reaffirming implementing partners' capacity to respond to changing circumstances (paragraph 4).

Finding 3. The JP responded to the needs of the region as posed by the UN's Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development and the policies which established the BARMM and the normalization process. However, the kind and scope of interventions were negotiated and designed according to the various individual demands, as the Regional Government has still not developed the capacity to clearly integrate and formulate demands for support with a holistic view. Dialogue with the national government was limited on project implementation (paragraph 6).

Finding 4. There is overall coherence of activities and outputs with intended outcomes and the implicit objective of preventing conflict. However, most violent conflicts – where ridos (hostilities between families and kinship groups) are the most prevalent – are not led by the project partner communities, which still have a limited say in them (paragraph 5).

Alignment with the context

1. **The JP based its foundation on previous initiatives and the experience of IOM, UNFPA and UN Women in the Region (Project Document, 2020 and interviews). It engaged multiple stakeholders during implementation and promoted participatory research. This combined experience helped make the JP sensitive to the context in replacement of a needs assessment prior to the intervention.** With the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, there were significant constraints in conducting a conventional needs assessment. Through the support and guidance of the RC Office, the three agencies designed the project based on previous experiences and consultation with partners. The project expanded on previous work with the BIWABs, the non-Moro Indigenous Peoples (IPs), analysis conducted by the Senior Peace and Development Advisor, and the political dialogue with the Regional Administration. The rationale was to support the peace process by leveraging the UN's strong presence in the BARMM during a critical period marked by great uncertainty, namely how the unprecedented COVID-19 would impact the newly established BARMM, the peace process and the prospect of the transition's extension. Given that uncertainty rapidly translates into greater volatility and violence on the ground, the focus of the JP was to promote inclusion through peacebuilding and support communities to preventing and preparing for an anticipated escalation in horizontal conflict through social cohesion activities. The JP helped fill in the gaps of the normalization process in the BARMM, through the support given to often non-included groups such as BIWAB members and non-Moro IPs. The participatory research promoted by the project also helped tailor the interventions to the new uncertainties in the political and conflict dynamics context during this critical period and identify emerging needs (e.g., readjusting support to the SPMS Box due to the escalation in conflict and displacement in 2021 and identifying the need for the Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office in 2022 due to the increase in rido - see paragraph 43).



2. **The JP was aligned with the Organic Law of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and PBF's focus on the engagement of Women and Youth in Peacebuilding.** The project was aligned with Article V, Section 9 on the Rights of Indigenous Populations and Article IX Sec. 12 on the Protection of Women and Sec. 13 on the Rights of Youth of the Organic Law of the BARMM. This converged with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security⁶ and PBF's strategic planning of inclusion of Women and Youth

"The PBF STEP joint program was catalytic and proved to be an effective complement to the efforts of BARMM, especially as a conduit for bringing peace-building initiatives to the grassroots and empowering local stakeholders. Most importantly, the project has played a key role in fostering synergies and partnerships that will be beneficial for the creation of broader platforms for peacebuilding in the region."

BARMM Government Officer

⁶ The four pillars of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda are: participation, protection, prevention, relief and recovery of women in conflict affected areas.

in Peacebuilding. The project engaged with the Regional Government, with Local Government Units in conflict hotspots especially in localizing the Women, Peace and Security agenda and the participation of youth and it promoted very local activities at the level of the Barangays with a focus on North Cotabato, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur. It was responsive to the needs of various stakeholders.

Alignment with United Nations Frameworks

3. **The JP fits within the Peace Pillar of the Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development (PFSD) which has a comprehensive approach do peacebuilding and it addresses an overall focus of the PFSD of protecting the most vulnerable. It is also aligned with the UN Socioeconomic and Peacebuilding Framework for COVID-19 Recovery in the Philippines 2020-2023 (SEPF) which was the revised PFSD for the country in the context of COVID-19.**



According to the PFSD (2019-2023), the former ARMM region and now BARMM is below national average by about 19 per cent in life expectancy, by 27 per cent in years of schooling and by 40 per cent in per capita income. The choice of work in the BARMM fits within the broader strategy of the UN in the Philippines of seeking to reach the most vulnerable in the country and partnering with civil society 'to play a critical and diverse set of roles' in the context of COVID-19.⁷ In addition, within the most vulnerable region, the most vulnerable groups were targeted. The JP approached policy at a regional level and community work in vulnerable areas within the main island of the BARMM where most of the conflict hotspots were located. The UN's strong focus on Leaving No One Behind is mainstreamed in PFSD and the JP is a direct reflection of this strategic priority at a global and national level. The UN is also in a unique position to help leverage resources and political support to help promote the peace process in the BARMM. The international community plays a crucial role of mediator and development inductor in the Region. Although, the Philippines is a middle-income country which tends to benefit more from policy support at a national level, UN agencies do work at a ground level in the BARMM, being able to access far flung locations via CSOs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs).

4. **The project remained relevant despite changing political circumstances and contributed to the national peacebuilding dialogue in alignment with the SEPF, although with limited engagement with the national government.** During project implementation, there were national elections in the Philippines (2022). After the election period, the JP promoted a meeting with CSOs who were engaged in the project. In this occasion participating partners were able to reflect upon changes in the national policy towards the BARMM. The JP captured these concerns in writing and presented them in a document to the national government through an influential stakeholder who spoke directly to the president. Although

⁷ UN Socioeconomic and Peacebuilding Framework for COVID-19 Recovery in the Philippines 2020-2023.

the evaluation does not have evidence of the direct influence of these inputs into the national policy, this was a relevant way found by the project to help promote cohesion and dialogue between grassroots movements in the BARMM and the new upcoming government. The incoming government chose to continue the peacebuilding process with the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, helping to bring stability to the peace process. However, beyond specific interactions, there was limited dialogue between the JP and the national government, especially due to the context of the COVID-19, where the national government officers were very engaged in dealing with the health crisis and the socioeconomic struggles aggravated by the pandemic and the project was implemented at a Regional Level. In addition, there was a change in national government administration due to elections. There were limited follow-up contacts with OPAPRU, thus little synergy was promoted with other projects related to the national office.

Relevance of project design

- 5. There is overall coherence of activities and outputs with intended outcomes and the overall implicit objective of preventing conflict. However, project partner communities have limited influence over the occurrence of ridos, which remain prevalent.** The project had an ambitious but coherent design in linking up capacity building of local organizations, individuals and government to policy making at a local and regional level with a view of strengthening institutions and preventing conflict with an inclusive approach. However, the most common types of conflicts are the ridos, as reported from various stakeholders and highlighted in the conflict analysis made (Guidance Framework Gender-Sensitive Local Conflict Analysis and Peacebuilding Modeling in the Bangsamoro, 2020). Considering that women still have limited agency and participation in mediating conflicts in the Region (as reported by them during data collection), the linkages between key male protagonists in the rido conflicts, the Regional Government and project interventions were found to be limited which weakens the ability of this type of project design to reach higher level types of impact and cultural change within a shorter time frame. There were key results at a policy level such as influence over IP's debate, youth policy and institutional architecture of the government – PSRO. It is important to emphasize that the JP was very relevant in reaching the most excluded groups from the peace process, see under Effectiveness the extent of results achieved. The reflection posed by the evaluation is only to help link the project design with the overall broader power relations within the BARMM. A project is always limited by its resources available, and the project design was relevant and focused on UN's mission in the country and the agenda of Leaving No One Behind.

Limits of the Regional Government in coherently articulating its demands

- 6. The JP heard demands and concerns from various stakeholders, but there is still limited capacity from the Regional Government to coherently pose its demands and needs.** The JP engaged in dialogue with the national, regional, and local governments, with Community Based Organizations (CBOs), women leaders from distinct groups, youth and non-Moro IPs listening to their demands and incorporating their feedback. However, the BARMM government still have limited capacity to integrate its demands into a coherent demand. This was clear in the interviews with government officers. Thus, there is an important recognition from all the key stakeholders on the importance of the international community and the UN in filling in the gaps of development work in the BARMM.

“One the ingredients in the great success of the peace process in the Philippines is the very strong support of the international community who plays a very active role in ensuring that the parties to the peace agreement, including civil society organizations, are not only willing but also able to comply and implement the deliverables during the extended transition period.

Civil Society Leading member

5.2. Evaluation Criteria: Coherence

Evaluation Question:

3. Do synergies exist with other interventions carried out by the implementing agencies, UNCT members or other stakeholders in BARMM?

Finding 7. There were relevant and fruitful synergies between the JP and BARMM government agencies in which the different partners added value based on their commitment and own resources. These synergies include the Ministry of Social Services and Development, the Ministry of Public Order and Safety, the Bangsamoro Youth Commission and the Bangsamoro Women’s Commission. Project implementation benefited from continuous learning and dialogue and an accumulation of experiences of other international development actors working in the Region (Paragraphs 10, 11 and 12).

Building on previous efforts of the international community in the Region

- 7. The results achieved by the JP are based on previous efforts of not only the UN, but other bilateral donors and agencies.** The intervention of the international community in the BARMM region is crucial. There was previous support in the BARMM coming from many development actors in related areas. The support came from Japan, Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, Norway, European Union, New Zealand and Asian Development Bank, among others. In fact, Japan, Norway and New Zealand were some of the donors for a project run by UNFPA in the benefit of the BIWAB and this initiative was the seed of UNFPA’s collaboration under the JP. Since 2019, UNFPA had already been working with the BIWAB. This type of continuation and synergy helps to create solid interventions with more lasting results. Along the same line, Nonviolent Peaceforce helped UNFPA implement its work with

the government of Japan and with the support of the JP. This JP build on this previous partnership which helped develop capacity in the country and create an environment of collaboration (e.g. Nonviolent Peaceforce contributed to the monthly meetings of the implementing agencies) which are beneficial for the development scenario in the region.

Collaboration with other stakeholders of the BARMM

8. **Participatory research and the Policy Forum helped to promote learning and synergy among different agencies and other stakeholders in the BARMM. Learning was a critical component of the project.** The JP involved two Participatory Action Research (PAR)-Supporting Conflict Transformation towards Effective Peacebuilding in the Bangsamoro Peacebuilding Region (Project STEP) and Continuing Strife in a Land of Jagged Peace – which were two regional dialogues for the peace process. Their results supported the development of a Gender-Sensitive Guidance Framework for Local Conflict Analysis and Peacebuilding Modelling (LCAPM). The participatory research mobilized different stakeholders to help foster policy and dialogue among agencies and the government. This type of mobilization was frequent in the project and created synergies among stakeholders (such as between different youth groups which collectively ran projects, CSOs which exchanged information on policies for non-Moro IPs, mediation and opportunities, implementing partners and the government which have engaged BIWAB in local community social services etc.). During the field visit, the evaluation team did not experience difficulties in mobilizing stakeholders for data collection and the Outcome Harvest Workshop, which speaks for the continuing mobilization of stakeholders during project implementation.

9. **The project helped to build on previous work and needs of the Ministry of Social Services and Development, the Ministry of Public Order and Safety, the Bangsamoro Youth Commission and the Bangsamoro Women’s Commission.** The project’s intervention helped with creating capacity of women mediators which was a need and work already under way by the Ministry of Public Order and Safety as they were already running trainings for women mediators and engaging them in conflict resolution. The JP added value to the work of the Ministry of Social Services and Development in their demand for further support on the ground as their staff was limited and it was flexible to attend to the demands of the Bangsamoro Youth Commission in producing a policy manual. In addition, the JP helped in assisting with the actual implementation of the Gender and Development Budget which was supported by the Bangsamoro Women’s Commission. All these initiatives were synergetic, based on actual demand and counted with the commitment and resources of government partners in the country.

5.3. Evaluation Criteria: Effectiveness

Evaluation questions:

4. To what extent was the JP able to deliver against its outputs and outcomes initially planned?
5. To which extent was the project able to strengthen the BIWABs and other women's organizations and promote women's empowerment (economic, political, and social) as a pathway to promote peace in the communities?
6. To which extent was the project able to strengthen BARMM's institutions and agencies, and promote policies which are gender-responsive, locally inclusive, and culturally sensitive to conflict prevention?
7. To which extent are project stakeholders (BPAT, BPOC, youth, community members, elders, regional and local governments, others) better prepared to manage conflict and promote peacebuilding?
8. What are the major factors influencing the achievement of the intervention's desired objectives and outcomes? (Success identified)

Finding 8. Fifteen BIWAB cooperatives were strengthened by IOM, UNFPA and UN Women. The JP helped integrate BIWAB members in their communities (80% of engaged BIWAB members reported an improvement in their reintegration into society). UNFPA assisted 200 BIWAB members to become women peace facilitators. The work with Women Peace Facilitators helped empower BIWAB members who now feel more confident about themselves and their future, improving their leadership skills. The WPF were able to promote peacebuilding awareness sessions to a total of 10,155 community members. (Paragraph 14-17).

Finding 9. The project promoted two participatory research (Supporting Conflict Transformation towards Effective Peacebuilding in the Bangsamoro Peacebuilding Region and Continuing Strife in a Land of Jagged Peace) which led to the development of nine policy briefs advocating integration and strengthened participation of women and girls in BARMM (with the leadership of UNFPA), led to the establishment of the new Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office (led by IOM) and included the localization of WPS action plans by 11 LGUs and the activation of Gender focal points. The government is now engaged in funding the new office which helps the process of decommissioning and inclusion of former MILF combatants. (Paragraph 18 and 41).

Finding 10. IOM helped strengthen BPATs and BPOCs capacity. Their roles are now clearer, and they are better prepared with skills and equipment. As their role is to settle conflicts and avoid their escalation, their contribution to peace becomes relevant. There is demand for continuing training and further support for BPAT and BPOC members who are volunteers. A total of 387 BPAT members in 15 barangays and 253 community leaders from target communities were trained in community safeguarding. (Paragraph 19).

Finding 11. The three agencies provided a space of dialogue which helped to promote social cohesion and bring more clarity of the peacebuilding process to community members in a context of limited media and information (a total of 666 duty bearers and rights holders were engaged as the main resource speakers for the Intergenerational Dialogues – IGD). Social cohesion was promoted between CSOs and local governments, among youth from distinct backgrounds and among community members in training and information sessions.

Organizations from non-Moro IPs were strengthened because of the project in their capacity to organize themselves (being formally registered and trained) and propose new policies for the regional government with an engagement in the debate for the IP Code for the Region (Paragraphs 20 and 22).

Finding 12. Different youth identity groups came together, and this helped to foster tolerance and cooperation. IOM helped develop new skills in the youth to do advocacy in the BARMM, and facilitated the development of a Policy for the Youth Commission which might facilitate social cohesion and participation in the future, having the potential of preventing conflict as more stakeholders are engaged in policy making. Fifteen draft policy recommendations were turned over to the BYC drafted by the youth groups engaged throughout the project. This support within the JP and its implementation would have benefited from more interaction with the government during project implementation as implementation relied more on staff of JP and less on the government. (Paragraph 21).

Finding 13. The engagement of women in mediation happened through training and policy advocacy. The Regional and Local Governments Units were engaged in mobilizing women, facilitating trainings and drafting Gender sensitive Budgets However, the inclusion of women in mediation and other conflict resolution processes and structures is still a work in progress given the patriarchal cultural context (Paragraphs 23 and 24)

Finding 14. Training and public policy support took place on the rights of women for CSOs, the Regional Government and Local Government units which helped raise the profile of gender related issues within the Region (Paragraphs 25-27).

Implementation in a context of multiple crisis

10. The project was able to deliver despite contextual challenges in the Region (COVID-19, 2022 elections, Typhoon Paeng) and some implementation delays (see section on Efficiency for more details). There were some challenges in reporting results due to a lack of clarity in the results matrix and the lack of comparable data sets between baseline and endline available for the evaluation team. However, there is evidence of results achieved through other sources of information (KII, FGD and open questions of the endline survey). Table 4 presents the list of outcome indicators with their performance as reported in the last report delivered to PBF and an analysis of the evaluation which is in the following paragraphs of this section.

The strengthening of the BIWAB Cooperatives and the role of Women Peace Facilitators

11. Fifteen BIWAB Cooperatives and CBOs received a welcome and needed support from IOM and UNFPA to help them improve their institutions, raise their income and act as community leaders. According to the final project report, 8 out of the 9 of the BIWAB cooperatives engaged are fully operational, generating income from PHP1,000 to PHP109,000 per month. The cooperatives also completed their business and operational plans with the support of the IOM. This is relevant in the context of helping reintegrate these women into civilian life and include them as active citizens, in a context where before they had to hide. According to the project's endline survey, 80% of engaged BIWAB members reported an improvement in their reintegration into society. The project helped BIWAB cooperatives with business trainings and a coaching and mentoring program. The

cooperatives were created prior to the project in 2020 and were not very stable, meaning they did not have much clarity and experience on how to operate their businesses. They also had operational challenges during the pandemic. The project helped them make their business more viable and productive. They were provided with livelihood kits (such as for bakery, t-shirt printing etc.). In addition, this support helped with social cohesion. In one case, a Cooperative in Cotabato City which deals with scrap metal-built trash cans to the Local Government Unit with the support of IOM in a cash for work initiative. These trash cans were distributed throughout the city and the initiative helped bring community members together in a project meant to benefit the municipality. This cash for work initiative was aimed at promoting livelihoods and increasing social cohesion within the project. In addition, the League of Moro Women Organization Incorporated was registered with the support of the JP. This organization works as an association of various women cooperatives and different types of organizations and helps give them with mutual support and networking.

Table 4. List of outcome indicators with baseline data, target, progress reported by the project and analysis of the evaluation

Outcome Indicators	Indicator Baseline	End of project Indicator Target	Indicator progress reported by the project	Analysis of the evaluation ⁸
Indicator 1.1 - % of engaged BIWAB representatives in conflict affected areas participating in GBV and peacebuilding awareness activities	35%	60%	100%	There is evidence that BIWAB representatives gained knowledge in GBV and mediation and that this was useful in building community awareness (see work of WPF - data collected during Focus Group Discussions) and in solving petty conflicts (source: endline survey).
Indicator 1.2a - % of engaged BIWAB members that perceive an improvement in their reintegration into society	55% of BIWAB indicated fully reintegrated n/a	75%	80%	There is evidence from the FGD and survey open questions on the relevance of the project interventions for helping with BIWABs' reintegration. For Indicator 1.2b, there is no clarity on the criteria for establishing community members (total population x certain groups, which geographical areas) and sampling used.
Indicator 1.2b - % of targeted community members (m/f) that perceive an improvement in the BIWAB members'		50%	92%	

⁸ The comments on this section are related to the project indicators defined by PUNOs during project design. The full analysis of the achievement of project results are in the following paragraphs in which analysis was presented based on the indicators identified by the evaluation team to answer the evaluation questions. See further details in the evaluation matrix in Appendix B.

Outcome Indicators	Indicator Baseline	End of project Indicator Target	Indicator progress reported by the project	Analysis of the evaluation ⁸
reintegration in their communities				
Indicator 1.3 - % of League of Moro Women's Organization, Inc. (LMWOI) - identified, relevant conflicts in which BIWAB CBAs engage in mediation processes	0%	20%	40%	Description of indicator and its source of information was not available for the evaluation team to verify its reliability.
Indicator 2.1 - % of BARMM ministries, bodies, and CSOs representatives that report an enhanced understanding of the conflict and capacity on conflict prevention	0	75%	100%	No data available to verify, although there is qualitative evidence that understanding on conflict and capacity to prevent conflict were enhanced.
Indicator 2.2 - % of new legislations, policies, or programs include gender-responsive, locally and culturally inclusive approaches in consultation with different identity groups	0	50%	120%	Indicator not clear and unable to be verified. However, there is evidence of six policy instruments being drafted with the criteria posed by the project. This indicator suggests an analysis of all the new legislation, policies and programs of the BARMM during project implementation to see whether they were gender-responsive, which the evaluation team did not

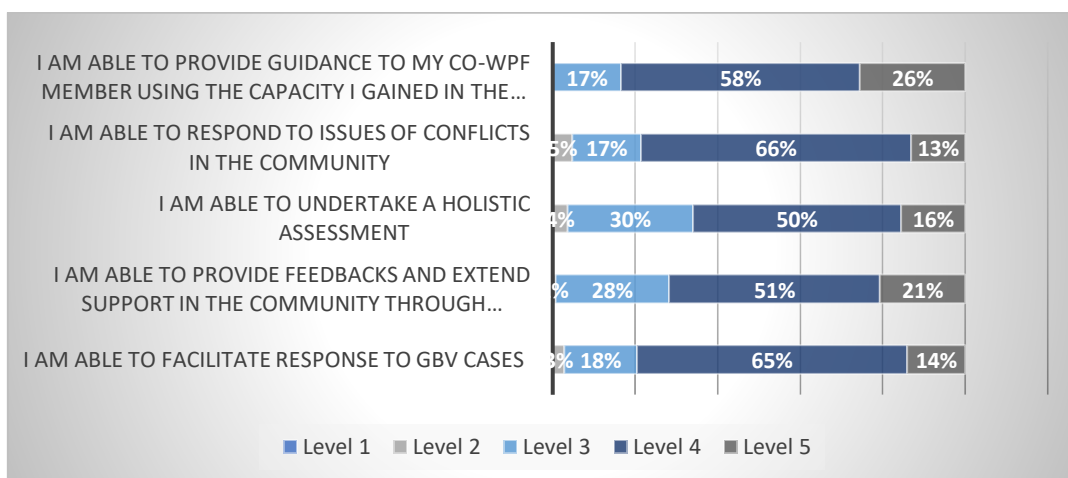
Outcome Indicators	Indicator Baseline	End of project Indicator Target	Indicator progress reported by the project	Analysis of the evaluation ⁸
				receive information about. Legislation, Policies and programs are broad categories, a comprehensive study would need to have been done to address this indicator.
Indicator 2.3 - # of women-led CSOs that participate in policy submissions on protection and gender-responsive conflict prevention and peacebuilding presented to government	20	32	43	There was ample participation of CSOs in the project. There is evidence of participation around the IP code and public debate in general.
Indicator 3.1 - % of community members that identify local conflict mediation and peaceful dialogue as primary mechanism for conflict resolution	0% (baseline)	20% increase	67%	Indicator is not clear, however, there is data from endline survey in an open question on the appreciation towards mediation and peaceful dialogue. Community members are a broad category – it could be the whole population of the locality or specific groups, The evaluation team did not have access to the criteria used to identify this data (definition

Outcome Indicators	Indicator Baseline	End of project Indicator Target	Indicator progress reported by the project	Analysis of the evaluation ⁸
				of community members, sampling etc).
Indicator 3.2 - % of community conflicts in targeted localities which result in violence	1.4 cases of conflicts per community that result in violence per year	~21 cases of violent conflict annually across the target areas	1.5 cases of conflicts per community that result in violence per year	Indicator is not clear. The data set and criteria used for identifying community conflicts and the percentage that led to violence was not available for analysis by the evaluation team.
Indicator 3.3 - % of community members (m/f) with perception of having safer and more secured communities through enhanced BPAT and increased IDP participation	0	70%	100%	There is ample evidence from BPAT/BPOC members on the relevance of the interventions of the project to strengthen their work, however there is no indication on who was considered to be community members (geographical level chosen and socioeconomic profile) and also the sampling methodology used to present this result.

12. **Two hundred (200) BIWAB members trained as Gender Peace Facilitators are now more knowledgeable about their rights and able to transfer their knowledge to other women and men on Gender Based Violence and Peace promotion. However, there are still cultural and institutional barriers they face in their communities to the proper settling of conflicts.** A subset of BIWAB members was selected to work as Women Peace Facilitators, based on set criteria, such as age, residence and their level of education. They received training, facilitated workshops, and distributed benefits in the communities where they worked. Thanks to their work, the JP was able to reach far flung regions to do trainings, sensitization, data collection and distribution of goods. They promoted peacebuilding awareness sessions to a total of 10,155 community members. Their contribution is highlighted by the government. Even with the limited stipend provided to cover travel and basic needs, the women trained were able to share their knowledge and were told about cases of violence where they went and guided women to report their experiences to the local authorities. However, one Women Peace Facilitator reported how she informed about a rape case by a MILF member to a government official and was told she should not take this forward as an amicable agreement had taken place. This speaks of the sensitivities of the context in which a not fully functional legal structure is in place. The evaluation team heard another government officer report how powerful the ‘shadow government’ is and how it works in settling the disputes in the community. This is illustrated by the level of self-reported ability Women Peace Facilitators said they had at the end of the project. While 26 per cent of total WPF reported being very able to provide guidance to their co-WPF member based on the training received (peer to peer training), only 13 per cent of them report having high ability in responding to issues of conflict in the community (see Graph 1).



Graph 1. Level of ability reported by Women Peace Facilitators at the end of the project



Source: Project Endline assessment.

13. BIWAB members were empowered through their work as parasocial workers with the support of UNFPA. They helped with the mapping of beneficiaries during emergencies, awareness raising through campaigns, intergenerational dialogues, text blasting and training and distribution of social benefits, helping to strengthen the work of the Ministry of Social Services and Development. The Ministry of Social Services and Development (MSSD) is faced with high demands of services and community mobilization and a limited budget to hire new staff members as reported during the data collection process. In this

‘I talked about GBV with a Quran perspective that everyone has a right.’

Woman Peace Facilitator, FGD, North Cotabato



context, they decided to recruit parasocial workers in the community. Through the support and influence of UNFPA, 29 BIWAB members were trained and hired by the MSSD. UNFPA under the JP helped to raise standards of the required skills set of the parasocial workers with the provision of quality training. BIWAB members felt empowered by this engagement, they felt valued in their work. It helped in their self-esteem and social inclusion and in improving the delivery of services of the Ministry. They reported learning discipline, respect, confidence, public speaking and learning about human rights, the rights of women and children. They also reported how they shared knowledge with their family and how they felt motivated to finish school. The Lingkod Pamayanan para sa Kapayapaan program of MSSD was piloted in 2022 in delivering social services, monitoring, reporting and referring protection issues. The said program prioritized UNFPA trained BIWABs under the JP who also applied to MSSD. This contribution was significant for women and MSSD, although this was in a limited scale (29 women were hired by MSSD in 2022/2023 out of 200 eligible from the JP).

14. Fathers and husbands were supportive of BIWAB member’s activities as community leaders, peacebuilders and entrepreneurs, despite the traditional roles played by men and women in the Region. The evaluation team found in the FGD with BIWAB members how supportive their fathers and husbands were of their participation in project activities, be as Peace Facilitators or through the cooperatives. One of the participants whose father is a MILF commander reported how proud her father was of her participation in the project. Another BIWAB member of a cooperative reported how her husband had been supportive of her work. This illustrates entry points of going deeper and involving MILF members and commanders in the work for women and other more vulnerable communities.

*The strengthening of BARMM Institutions***15. The project promoted Participatory Research which led to the establishment of the new Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office (PSRO).**

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) promoted by the project was relevant and able to mobilize various actors. It was able to give insightful inputs to the



BARMM government which led to the establishment of the PSRO. As part of the normalization process, the JP identified the need of having a specific BARMM office to institutionalize and support security agreements and joint GPH-MILF peace mechanisms during the transition because the lack of operational and institutional support was constraining the effectiveness of the peace mechanisms to respond to the rise in horizontal conflicts. The project not only helped identify the need of the new office, but also gave support to its set up with technical and financial assistance. The new PSRO plays a relevant role in the peacebuilding process and has the function of assisting the 12 program priority areas of BARMM which includes the transition of MILF combatants and the promotion of their livelihoods and health benefits among other types of assistance. The new office receives funding and technical support from other development partners in addition to the budget allocated by the BARMM Administration. The project had a strong research/analytical component which also included peace modeling exercises and conflict analysis involving the government and other stakeholders. This research and advocacy effort included the localization of WPS action plans by 11 LGUs, the activation of Gender focal points supported by the JP to ensure that Gender and Development budget (GAD) is allocated to support priority gender issues such as WPS.

16. BPATs and BPOCs capacity was strengthened because of JP's interventions. Their roles are now clearer, and they are better prepared with skills and equipment. There is demand for continuing training and further support for BPAT and BPOC members who are volunteers.

BPAT and BPOC are security brigades made up of volunteers and they are part of a national policy in the Philippines which aims at the

prevention of conflict at a local level. Although, they formally existed prior to the JP, they were not fully functional. The JP assisted both brigades with communication equipment/flashlights/uniform and with training on their roles and responsibilities and on community-based conflict prevention and mediation, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, Camp Coordination and Camp Management and COVID-19 infection and prevention control. As per data collected in the FGDs carried out by the project and during the Outcome Harvest Workshops, BPAT and BPOC members reported how unprepared they were before and how they are now more aware of their roles. They emphasized how useful the communication equipment was for saving people in difficult conditions. They also

'Resolving family conflicts is a huge success for us without bringing it in court.'

Female BPAT, Endline FGD

reported how they are now better able to settle conflicts locally without having to take them to the Barangay or to the court. Their demand is for more training and for assistance with their livelihoods. BPAT and BPOC members receive a stipend which is small. It is important to note that there are limited job opportunities in a Region which has been struck with conflict for so long. There are structural economic development challenges which impact public revenues, job market and opportunities for social inclusion, making the component of economic support crucial for the context. Inclusion of women in BPAT or BPOC is limited. In this context, the JP leveraged entry points in ministries/JPSC peace mechanisms/LGUs to promote/advocate for the inclusion of more women in the BPAT/BPOC/JPST via project activities as well as policy recommendations and lobbying under Outcomes 2 and 3.

The promotion of inter-community and vertical dialogue

17. The three agencies provided a space of dialogue which helped to promote social cohesion and bring more clarity of the peacebuilding process to community members in a context of limited media and information. The JP was intense with the promotion of intergenerational and multistakeholder dialogue with the purpose of capacity building and the promotion of social cohesion – dealing with expectations and promoting bonds among diverse groups of stakeholders. There were 109 Intergenerational Dialogues with the engagement of communities and BARMM representatives. These dialogues were useful in helping to inform the community members about the peace process and other emerging community issues as it was identified during data collection in consultation with stakeholders. Only twenty per cent of the BARMM population has access to the internet (DICT, 2020)⁹ and even when it exists, it is unstable. This limited access to information gives way to misinformation and miscommunication. In addition, the government's capacity has limits in its reach to the overall population, making this type of dialogue useful to promote linkages and unity among different ethnic and religious groups. The project helped to pose new themes and provoke issues in the communities related to peace, social cohesion, and women's empowerment (evidence coming from Focus Group Discussion and interviews with stakeholders). In addition, the intergenerational dialogues brought up topics from the participatory research. However, there is no data about follow-up results of the intergenerational dialogues, but rather anecdotal evidence of road building after demands of the community and how community members, especially girls and women learned to speak up and interact after some time of engagement. Results were mapped in terms of information raising, awareness and skills developed, but they had more ambition in terms of impact in policy making.

⁹ <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/11/20/only-20-pct-of-bangsamoro-has-internet-access-official-says-as-deped-gears-for-online-classes>

The support for youth participation in peacebuilding and the strengthening of the BARMM

18. Youth from different ethnic and religious backgrounds worked together, helping foster tolerance and cooperation as reported by the youth themselves and observed during the field visit. IOM helped the youth develop new skills and do advocacy in the BARMM, and to develop a Policy Manual for the Bangsamoro Youth Commission. The initiative would have benefited from more interaction with the government for youth-led projects. Youth

participation was a strong component of the JP. The youth mobilized, both male and female, were Moro and non-Moro IPs. They participated in trainings on project proposal writing and advocacy work. They proposed policies and implemented small community projects which were mostly training sessions and dialogues for raising awareness on the BARMM peace process. The Youth Commission of the BARMM Government

“Most of the issues they (youth) raised are issues of peace and security; youth political participation on matters that affect peace and security condition, with emphasis on vulnerable groups as target groups (combatants, women, children) and participation of marginalized groups (settler groups, IP communities) to be on board on peacebuilding. Clan feuds were also a very enduring issue.”

Government officer, BARMM Government

partnered with the JP to help promote youth participation. This diversity of background was key to help promote unity and social cohesion. They were able to engage with, raise awareness in community members about the peace process and propose policies¹⁰ for the BARMM based on position papers on several issues (environment, conflict resolution etc.). The youth wrote fifteen policy recommendations during project implementation. In addition, a Policy Manual was developed with the support of the project to help the Youth Commission deal with the youth policy proposals internally up to Cabinet’s or Parliament’s approval.¹¹ Although government agencies were involved during the phase of project design, there were challenges identified in the communication between the JP and the Regional Government during the implementation of Youth projects in which the government was not involved. A more structured mentoring framework for the youth would have been useful during project implementation as stakeholders reported it. There is no further information on the status of the proposals elaborated by the youth. The Manual was being reviewed when this evaluation was being conducted, so there is no further information about its actual use.

¹⁰ Policy recommendations included issues such as: 1) Provision of mental health and psychosocial support services for the youth; 2) Integration of Bangsamoro History on basic and higher education curriculum; 3) Promotion of social entrepreneurship as a youth peacebuilding tool and 4) Integration of Teduray and Lambangian Indigenous crafting and weaving in competencies or skills training of Ministry of Basic and Technical Education, among other policy areas in sectors such as public management and environment.

¹¹ Aside from the lobbying to the parliament, since BYC is not an implementing office, the policy manual aims to link specific policy recommendations/proposals to the relevant ministries to inform their programs and make it responsive to the needs and situation of the youth in the region.

Strengthening the work and increasing the participation of non-Moro Indigenous Peoples

19. **UN Women gave significant contribution to the policy debate on non-Moro IPs and helped create Community Quick Response Teams led by IP women.** The JP helped draft a research/policy paper on the needs of the non-Moro IPs in the Region. This Policy Paper helped to give arguments and substance to the debate and gave the foundation for the proposal of the IP Code. It gave substance to the debate. The JP helped provide a platform



for the participation of IP groups. The project also trained 40 members of the Community

“Knowing the criticality of our response to displaced families who come from the poorest and most isolated areas, we make sure we act quickly... We are ready to journey together to develop Quick Community Response Teams that blend humanitarian action with peacebuilding and development. While displacements caused by violent conflict and exacerbated by poverty persist in the communities we serve, we hope that with the [response teams] initiative through PBF STEP, we will be able to develop a holistic model and practices that quickly respond to humanitarian needs, build peace, and eventually lead to development, especially for the poorest among our tribe.”

IP CSO leader

Quick Response Teams (QRTs) from 11 barangays of South Upi. These trainings included LGU, PNP, and the Mayors Council- a tri-people (Christian, Lumad, Moro) on conflict resolution mechanism. The QRTs were trained in early warning and early response (EWER) for conflicts and emergencies. The project also helped to support trainings on how to integrate gender and WPS perspectives on the quick response efforts and

processes of the QRT. The QRT, with capacity building from the JP, has pioneered Humanitarian-Development-Peacebuilding responses incorporating the triple nexus in their work with the conflict-affected internally displaced communities.

The contribution to gender equality in the Region and the inclusion of women in peacebuilding

20. **BIWAB members and CBOs have both started to work in mediation and in other cases increased their existing capacity to mediate conflicts.** The project interventions included training on mediation run by UNFPA and UN Women for both BIWAB members and CBOs. However, the inclusion of women in mediation is still an ongoing process of inclusion, easier for those families who traditionally work as mediators or for more senior women.

‘We mediate petty family issues and concerns.’

BIWAB Officer, Endline assessment, Sultan Kudarat Municipality

There is a lack of appropriate places for mediation for women (safe places they can take people involved in conflicts to help settle them). There is evidence that the trainings provided by the project on mediation were useful for them and encouraging in their work as mediators. This support was relevant for the Ministry of Public Order and Safety, due to their scarcity of resources and the good technical quality of trainings provided by the Project. The trainings for women helped them feel more

empowered and able to participate, for example as CBOs engaged in the public debate and provided inputs to the electoral code. Along with the mediation, UNFPA and UN Women promoted awareness of GBV leading to empowerment not only of mediators, but also of the community, as knowledge was transferred. This was reported by WPF in the FGD and by BIWAB members in the endline survey of the project. In the FGD with Women in Lupong Tagapamayapa, they reported they are now able to manage sensitive conflicts involving women and children. In the FGD with CSOs, they reported how women leaders are sometimes consulted in cases of conflict, but how this is still uncommon. One key stakeholder reported how before women would only serve food, now they sit at the discussion table, but still with a minor role. The usual practice is to include women coming from royal and influential families in conflict resolution process, but not other women (Unyphil Report, 2021). Inclusion of women in mediation is increasing, but is still slow, as male from larger clans traditionally promote mediation. In addition, there are not adequate places for mediation by women (neutral places where they can take disputing parties for mediation). The JP trained 75 women and contributed to raise their profile as mediators¹². There is an alternative dispute resolution bill which is including gender issues. It might institutionalize the use of people's alternative system in addressing disputes in the BARMM. This inclusion agenda was followed up and supported by the JP. There has been progress in this from which can be attested by influential community stakeholders consulted engaged in mediation processes.

- 21. The project helped 75 women take the role of investigator, mediator, and documenter in local conflict resolution.** The JP organized trainings for CSOs on capacity development and financial management and helped them register their work and join the Community of Practice of Mediators. When assessing its work on training women in mediation, UNIPHYL (see UNIPHYL Mediation Report) recommended further training on leadership, public speaking, and other relevant laws on women, including the Code of Muslim Personal Laws (CMPL) which covers persons and family relations and succession, as well general law on land ownership which should also be learned by men mediators. It also suggested the creation of a website to feature the profile of mediators and lobby with the Ministry of Interior and Local Government (MILG) and the Bangsamoro Women Commission (BWC) to issue a policy institutionalizing membership of the women mediators in the POCs. Women still need to be more included both from a training and policy perspective. With added support from UNDP, the project helped form WIMRAMP (women insider mediators rapid action mobilization platform), the members of which mediate petty quarrels in communities. However, participants in FGD voiced the need for a visible office where they could conduct confidential mediation sessions and where psychosocial support could be rendered, and the need to involve the base Commanders in mediation practice. The project facilitated sessions to build a community agenda where women would identify issues and solutions and present to LGUs position papers on several issues that affect them.

¹² Women mediators were trained in CSOs and the CSOs also helped train other women in the communities while the Women Peace Facilitators were a subset of beneficiaries from the BIWAB members who received training to help facilitate sessions on prevention of conflict in the communities.

22. **IOM, UN Women and UNFPA promoted awareness on VAWC (RA 11596), Early Marriage (RA 11596), and Gender-based Violence. The project helped raise the profile of gender related issues.** Capacity building was a strong component of the project for CSOs, women as individuals and government agencies. In addition, the three agencies promoted advocacy materials and campaigns around gender related issues. Participants in various FGD reported how their knowledge and transmission on VAWC, Early Marriage and Gender-based Violence had increased. In one of the FGDs, women reported how they provided inputs to the Bangsamoro Local Government to include women in the Lupong Tagapamayapa and strengthen the VAWC desk (BLGUs document GAD projects only on paper which do not exist in reality). The JP helped to foster the participation of women and strengthen the support given by the local administration to specific services benefiting women. They also said that upon receiving the invitation from the BARMM to participate in consultations, they gathered the women exclusively in the masjid and talked about women's issues. They reported they were not scared anymore of going out of the house without incurring the ire of their husbands and that even their husbands are now aware of the rights of the women to participate. The independent declarations of women in various FGD helped identify the level of awareness raised.
23. **UN Women and UNFPA helped strengthen Local Government Units and Joint Security Teams in their capacity to promote Gender and Development (GAD), Women, Peace and Security action plans, the prevention of VAWC and Gender Based Violence.** The JP helped draft local plans on WPS for SPMS Box, Upi Complex, and Iranun areas. There is recognition from the government at a Regional and Local level on the value of the JP assistance in promoting gender related policies. There were relevant trainings for the Bangsamoro Women's Commission which received support to the implementation of the legal budget provision for GAD which had a history of low implementation. According to the Project Final Report, the training of GAD focal points from the participating BARMM ministries was extended across all BARMM ministries/offices, state institutions such as the police and LGUs to help ensure the utilization of the GAD budget allocated to government offices for WPS-related priorities including the integration of BIWAB in security mechanisms and of women mediators in the Lupon and BPOCs. JPST have also committed to include GBV monitoring mechanisms, but in this case, triangulation was not possible to check on actual implementation. It is important to mention that many clan conflicts arise from Violence against Women. In these cases, the family of the victim would address the problem themselves if they have felt disrespected. This would then lead to ridos. The work of the JP has helped to strengthen local governments in their policies for women and women who have been trained are now acting as a referral for violation of rights and are counseling peers to take their cases to the local government.
24. **UNFPA supported the production of a Guidance Note on Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence and VAWC to the Philippines National Police (PNP), which was a non-expected result of the project, even though there is limited information about its use.** The project helped produce a Guidance Note covering guiding principles, disclosure and referral procedures, investigation, timely response, coordination, apprehension of the perpetrators, referrals to the council of elders, access to legal services and monitoring mechanisms. The PNP Guidance Note helped the PNPs in Maguindanao particularly Women and Children Protection Desk provide survivor centered services to GBV cases in

Maguindanao. For example, prior to the guidance note, the incident of VAWC reported in PNP was not immediately filed but the family/victim-survivor was asked to file the complaint at the barangay level which oftentimes led to amicable settlement.

Reflections on the Theory of Change

25. Most assumptions of the Theory of Change proved to be true (10 out of 11) which means that the design of the project was coherent and that most expectations were met in the pathway to achieve planned results. Table 4 shows the assumptions made in the reconstruction of the Theory of Change. Two assumptions (5 and 8) on the implementation of frameworks and recommendations are still to be seen by the government's ability to give life what has been proposed through the various policies which have been approved with the support of the JP. Assumption 7 relates to the engagement of public servants, which was seen at a technical level, but the evaluation was not able to assess to which extent high level government officials were engaged in policies for the promotion of women's empowerment.

Table 5. Assumptions of the Theory of Change

Assumptions	Nature of the assumptions
1. Livelihood packages are well used	True
2. Trainings are relevant	True
3. Governments are engaged	True
4. Research is of high quality	True
5. Frameworks are used	Partially True
6. Target groups want to participate	True
7. Public servants are engaged	Partially true
8. Recommendations are implemented	True
9. Women's Commission is engaged	True
10. Equipment is useful	True
11. BPOC is engaged	True

5.4. Evaluation Criteria: Efficiency

Evaluation Questions:

10. Was the JP able to achieve its targets according to JP timeline and budget? Had there been any significant delays in implementation and achievement of results, and if so, what caused these?

11. Have the JP arrangement and UN agencies working together increased the efficiency of implementation, maximizing impact of pooled resources, coherence and coordination? If yes, to what extent?

12. What lessons can be learnt to improve timeliness and efficiency for future peace building programs, especially those that are joint programs?

Finding 15. The project started with delay, experienced delays in some of its activities and had operational challenges in reaching the most distant communities due to the context in the country. Implementation lost efficiency due to different administrative systems and processes. There was limited planning for joint M&E activities (Paragraphs 29-33).

Finding 16. Even in face of operational challenges, collaboration during project implementation was strong, within the UN and with other stakeholders. Synergy among agencies was facilitated by regular meetings coordinated by IOM and the support of the RCO. This highly contributed to the results of the project along with a flexibility in budget management. There is no evidence of savings due to JP arrangement, but rather of synergy due to collaboration (Paragraphs 35, 36, 37, 38 and 39).

Finding 17. The project was complex and required more staff than it had budgeted for. Staff turnover affected project implementation. The governance structure of the project was not followed, but this did not impact implementation, although more engagement with the national government would have been preferred (Paragraphs 34 and 37).

Delays and challenges in implementation

26. The project started with a delay, experienced delays in some activities and had operational challenges in reaching the most distant communities due to the context in the country. The project design was complex and the JP experienced difficulties in hiring staff and getting ready for implementation. Delays happened due to several reasons: staff turnover, limitations imposed by COVID-19 which imposed restrictions in movement and operations, the 2022 national election period, staff coming in late in implementation timeline and limited number of staff dealing with the project. There were delays with the training for Women Peace Facilitators, with the promotion of interventions with Indigenous Organizations (grants and trainings) and with the evaluation process. These delays and the complexity of the project (its wide reach in different localities and involving many different organizations) led to increased pressure over staff to deliver in less time. In addition, Typhon Paeng and COVID-19 meant that some far-flung communities could not be reached, and they also impacted project's staff mobility. There were also challenges due to security issues (as the project was being implemented in high-risk areas, in certain cases, trainings could not be carried out due to

violence close to the sites), and the election period which meant that project activities were not a priority for the LGUs which led to people not being available for trainings. There were also challenges in delivering online trainings during the pandemic (BCMP Overall Documentation Report, 2020). In the context of COVID-19, some trainings were delivered online, but this limited the engagement and connection of participants. Internet connectivity overall remains a challenge in the Region, especially for the target groups.

27. Implementation lost efficiency due to different administrative systems and processes.

There was no clear central operational center to take on board demands from stakeholders although there was an important engagement and collaboration among the different agencies. The three agencies had different processes and financial requirements which made implementation more difficult, which is a known and recurrent challenge of joint programs within UN agencies and other related organizations. UN Women and UNFPA share the same system while IOM has another system. Although this is beyond the direct capacity of the JP to deal with, this remains a challenge within UN and partners' joint programs.

28. M&E activities were run separately leading to inefficiency.

There was limited planning for joint M&E activities. Reporting was very demanding for the agencies due to the amount and complexity of indicators used and at times, data collected was not used. In fact, M&E was demanding, and not sufficient resources were allocated to meet its needs. An example of inefficiency and overlap of procedures and systems was the contract for the Evaluation Consultancy in which three contracts were planned to be issued and halfway through the consultancy, the last of the three contracts had not been issued. The three agencies mobilized staff and managed paperwork to hire the same team of experts. Each agency allocated the Evaluation separately in their budget and that was the rationale for issuing three contracts and increasing paperwork threefold. There was no clear procedure or focal point for troubleshooting in case of administrative challenges towards the end of the JP as it could be identified and experienced by the evaluation team. The M&E Framework involved various perception surveys targeting beneficiaries and community members. This demanded continuous field work for data collection. If on one side it provided the project with rich quality information used in the context of this evaluation, it was difficult to manage collaboration on M&E within the project. The major tasks of data collection were on each PUNO and their implementing partners (e.g. Nonviolent Peaceforce). In the case of UN Women and IOM, the PUNOs conducted most data collection, while for UNFPA, its implementing partner went to the field. Data collected was not always fully utilized, making monitoring effort inefficient, although there were cases in each data collection was particularly useful. In one example, for UNFPA, data gathered from the quarterly reporting and baseline on capacity assessment of BIWABs was utilized to further improve the approaches for project interventions (e.g. focus awareness raising activities and intergenerational dialogues on peace process, GBV prevention and mitigation topics). There was limited synergy in this respect despite regular management meetings among the three agencies.

29. More collaboration would have been useful in terms of delivery mechanisms and a single face for beneficiaries to talk to.

Although there was collaboration among the three agencies, there were small operational challenges in terms of fine-tuning implementation and informing beneficiaries about who they should be talking to. There were difficulties in

managing new partners which did not have enough administrative/operational capacity, and this posed challenges to project implementation. Training at a large scale in the context of crisis took longer than expected and this also impacted timeline. It can be difficult to find the appropriate partner and set of skills and capacity in the context of BARMM where much is still being structured. On the other hand, it is important to engage local partners, help them develop capacity and deliver contextualized knowledge in a conflict-sensitive manner following do no harm principles.

- 30. There were implementation challenges in the promotion of dialogues on conflict prevention and mediation, provision of economic support to cooperatives composed of vulnerable groups, and provision of in-kind contributions.** These activities were only implemented towards the end of the project (according to PBF October Report 2022) due to various challenges in limited staff number, processes having to be approved by the Regional Office, COVID-19, the transition to the Quantum system and difficulties in finding the appropriate implementing partner.
- 31. The project was complex and required more staff than it had budgeted for. Staff turnover affected project implementation.** While IOM and UN Women had direct implementation, UNFPA used an implementing partner, thus not being affected by staff turnover. Staff was not appropriately planned according to project's size and needs. This led to staff being tense and overstressed. There were not enough project assistants to be able to manage the demands of the project, leaving the operational work to technical staff who did not always have complete knowledge and training on UN's complex procedures. There were delays in procurement. In one of the PUNOs, there was a project officer hired to take over the project which left in the beginning of the project. Staff turnover affected implementation, knowledge transfer and reporting.

Collaboration among the various parties and governance structure

- 32. Even in face of operational challenges, collaboration during project implementation was strong, within the UN and with other stakeholders. It highly contributed to the results of the project.** There was a satisfactory level of communication and collaboration among partners, within and outside the UN. According to one of the stakeholders 'It was easy to talk to the partners. They assisted us in all areas, from identifying participants to accommodation, transportation and checking on the participants after the events.'
- 33. There is no evidence of savings due to the JP arrangement, but rather of increased results and synergy due to collaboration.** One of the evaluation criteria was on savings due to JP arrangements, but this was not identified during the evaluation process. Collaboration worked well from a thematic and political point of view, where different agencies brought their expertise and added efforts to target the same vulnerable groups. There were two regional dialogues – one in March and the other in December 2022 which made clear the value of the partnership among the three agencies.

34. In this project, different agencies had to deliver related outputs in the same outcome, and this facilitated collaboration which also speaks for efficiency.

In outcome 1, IOM and UNFPA delivered training and benefits to BIWAB members and came together to identify beneficiaries and avoid overlap. IOM helped the BIWABs with entrepreneurship training and guidance while UNFPA capacitated BIWAB to become Women Peace Facilitators and they promoted joint businesses conferences. In outcome 2, the agencies took part in participatory research processes and provided a platform for the BIWAB Leaders to raise policy recommendations to the BARMM. UN Women and UNFPA collaborated on Gender related issues as they were both promoting capacity building activities. In outcome 3, UN Women and IOM worked with community members to enhance community security and safety in all cycles of displacement.

“All of us are members of BIWAB, and before, we were not empowered on livelihood, our living was sustained by the men. STEP BARMM taught us on how to run a business, and provided us capital: sewing machine, equipment plus cash, and as women peace facilitators, we were provided a little subsidy/honorarium which provided us additional income.”

Women Peace Facilitator, Special Geographic Area

35. Synergy among agencies was facilitated by regular meetings coordinated by IOM and the support of the RCO.

Agencies came together once a month to coordinate their efforts. Beyond talking about implementation, agencies also engaged in substantive discussion which was facilitated by the lead agency IOM and supported by the RCO’s Senior Peace and Development Advisor who assisted with coordination, analysis and engagement with senior stakeholders. These discussions helped to create a better informed and more strategic type of intervention. The monthly meetings helped to integrate most activities, creating convergency and generating efficiency. IOM was both the lead agency of the JP as well as the convenor of the UN Peace Pillar which ensured alignment between the JP and the UN’s peacebuilding programming in the SEPF and enabled IOM and the other 2 agencies to share important information, challenges and lessons learned from implementing the JP with the rest of the UN agencies working in BARMM.

36. The governance structure of the project was not followed, but this did not impact implementation, although more engagement with the national government would have been preferred.

The design of the project was meant to have a Steering Committee with a tripartite approach: the UN, the National Government and the BARMM. However, there was limited engagement from the national government. The project was run through bilateral meetings and updates with each agency. It was only at the policy forum at the end of the project that the first meeting of the Steering Committee occurred. However, this did not affect project implementation and it helped to speed up some processes, although more engagement with the national government would have been preferred to promote greater alignment with other OPAPRU’s initiatives. It is important to take into account the context in which the project was implemented where multiple demands and challenges (e.g., COVID-19, national elections) tended to capture regional and central government’s agenda which might have impacted their capacity to further engage with the project. In addition, the JP sought alignment with national policies through engagement with the decommissioning process and evaluation of the JPSTs, just to name a few examples of Project’s efforts to make the JP aligned with national policies.

Project's communication and adaptive management

37. Communication pieces were of high quality but were restricted in their reach of different means (were focused on social media). There were mixed perceptions among stakeholders on the 'STEP' brand as a single project. In most interviews, stakeholders had some difficulties in separating what was the support of the STEP and other projects. There were relevant and quality communication materials produced by the project, but there is data of communication only for social media. Communication remains a challenge in the BARMM. With beneficiaries, they used mostly text blasting. There is no evidence of adaptive Communication for Development to raise awareness on specific issues for the community. There is evidence of radio use only in the case of Women Peace Facilitators activities.

38. The project was very adaptive to the contextual changes, and this was due to a flexibility in budget management. A lot that was not planned and that represented key results of the project (e.g., establishment of the Peace and Security Office, support for the elaboration of the Policy Manual for the Bangsamoro Youth Commission) was only possible because the budget had open rubrics for consultancy which were reallocated for emerging work. PBF allowed budget flexibility which helped to increase results and efficiency, especially in face of a very unstable context. This internal reallocation of rubrics was relevant and fit within the context and project framework.

5.5. Evaluation Criteria: Impact

Evaluation Questions:

12. What are the positive and/or negative and intended and/or unintended higher-level effects produced by the JP?

13. Are identified impact attributable to JP activities, external factors, or both?

14. To what degree has the JP influenced the policies and programs of the BARMM ministries and other agencies?

Finding 18. The escalation of conflict was prevented and social cohesion and integration was promoted through economic empowerment, cash for work and numerous opportunities of dialogue and social interaction. Women former combatants are now more empowered and knowledgeable about their rights. However, more leadership can still be developed to help sustain peacebuilding dialogues and efforts over time. Social cohesion was promoted through the links made between BIWAB members, their communities, and the government (Paragraph 40).

Finding 19. The JP gave substantive contribution to the policy framework and debate on Gender and Indigenous Populations and the institutional framework for the youth in the Region. It has helped to lay the ground for future work within the Region (Paragraph 41).

Finding 20. CSOs have been strengthened because of the JP which indicates a creation of resilience at a community level to deal with drivers of violence. There is no data available to fully assess the level of resilience created (Paragraph 43).

Finding 21. Some of the pathways/pillars identified which helped to generate results by the JP were: 1) Solid training partners and content provided by implementing agencies; 2) Continuation of efforts overtime; 3) Sense of opportunity and good relationship with government partners; 4) Strengthening of existing government institutions; 5) Capacity building/training for making people promoters of change in their lives and the community and 6) Capacity to adapt discourse and work closely in partnership with the government (Paragraph 45).

Prevention of Conflict

39. Conflict was prevented to escalate through community awareness in dialogues and through capacity building for government security forces. Social cohesion and integration were promoted through economic empowerment and cash for work which helped beneficiaries be better integrated in society and thus more respected. The project helped elevate the

‘My reintegration in the community really helps me today compared with before because now, I can say that I am empowered to voice out my thoughts and our cooperative business really helps me in terms of livelihood.’

BIWAB Member, Datu Odin Sinsuat
Municipality

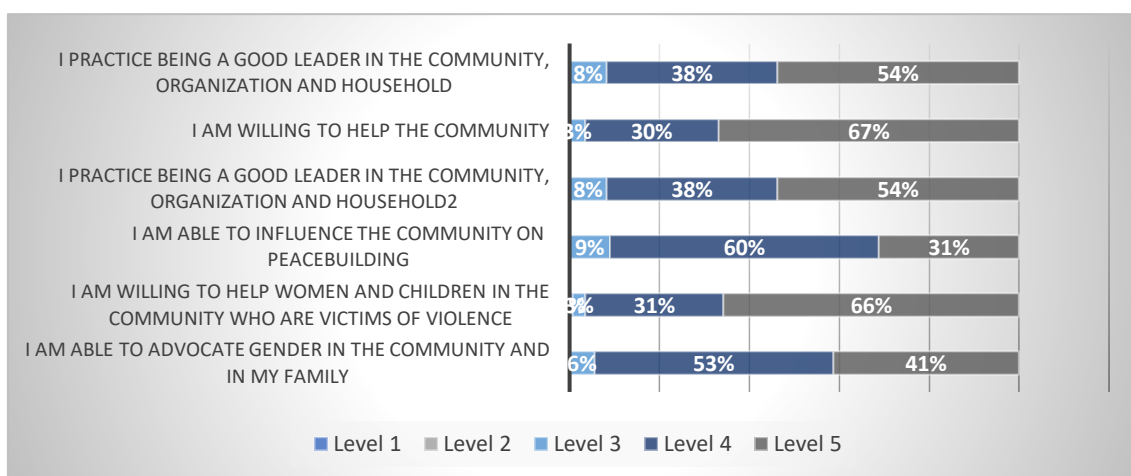
status of BIWAB and other women in a context where they were earlier stigmatized. There is evidence from the FGD conducted at the end of the project with BPAT/BPOC that the trainings and support received by the project helped them deal with conflict on site and prevented the conflict to escalate to the Barangay or LGU administration. In addition, the FGD conducted with the BIWAB also showed that they are now better able to deal with and settle household/petty family conflicts. Furthermore, the project was able to help with the integration of 200 benefited BIWAB members in their communities and link them with the local administration. The work of BIWAB as parasocial workers was helpful in integrating them in the community as various stakeholders widely reported it. In the JP endline survey, when community members were asked whether BIWABs were active in community affairs compared to two years ago, 87 per cent responded that they were more active, while 86 per cent responded that the level of trust in the community had improved. Although this is part of a larger institutional context, where BIWABs are no longer seen as fugitives, the JP has given a contribution to this scenario, which can be verified by data of the target groups who saw the value added of the interventions in their integration process.

Empowering women as entrepreneurs and peace promoters

40. Women former combatants are now more empowered to run their own businesses and have more confidence and self-esteem. They are more knowledgeable about their rights and able to engage with the community. However, more advocacy on gender leadership can still be developed to help sustain peacebuilding dialogues and efforts over time. When asked about their prospects for their business, women from the BIWAB cooperatives mostly talked about their business expansion. When Women Peace Facilitators were asked about their work, they reported how confident they became, how they had more motivation to finish school and how they can now talk in public and organize events and network with the community. They showed their concern for Early Marriage and other issues involving women and they also reported how they became more able to voice their concerns. However, given

the social structure in BARMM, although women are more confident and willing to help (see Graph 2 where 60 per cent of WPF report having level 5 willingness to help), only 31 per cent report level 5 of ability to influence the community on peacebuilding. As it has been discussed, most horizontal conflicts in BARMM are based on clan conflicts involving land and other issues and they are mostly under the responsibility of male heads of households. The project report from the Nonviolent Peaceforce mentioned that some barangays had no existing and functional VAWC desk, as well as trained officers in handling reports, concerns, and cases, especially GBV cases and that there was a lack of proper documentation and reporting of cases, and no established reporting mechanisms. Although women are now more empowered, more support is still needed to help with advocacy, the strengthening of the local governments and the empowerment of women.

Graph 2. Abilities reported by Women Peace Facilitators at the end of the JP



Source: Endline survey conducted by the Joint Project.

Strengthening of the BARMM Government and its policy framework

41. **The JP gave substantive contribution to the strengthening of the BARMM Government and its policy framework. It helped create a new BARMM institution – the Peace Security and Reconciliation Office, it supported the development of the policy framework and debate on Gender and Indigenous Populations and the institutional framework for the youth in the Region. It has helped to lay the ground for future work for the regional and local governments.** The PSRO was created based on the recommendation from the Participatory Action Research (PAR) implemented by the project and the JP helped with the setup of the office after the recommendation was accepted and prioritized by the Chief Minister of BARMM. In the area of Gender, 17 LGUs were supported to revisit and update GAD plans, nine policy briefs were submitted to BARMM on securing BIWAB's representation in the Bangsamoro parliament and on social benefits for them, a Resolution was approved adopting the Regional Action Plan-WPS, action plans on WPS were approved for the Municipalities in SPMS Box, Upi Complex, and Iranun areas and a Resolution was approved on enjoining all ministries and agencies of the Bangsamoro Government to adopt gender-based data collection and management. As far as non-moro IPs, the JP supported the drafting of a policy paper to articulate the interests, needs, and issues of non-Moro IPs on the proposed IP Code. As far as Youth Policy, the JP contributed to the design of a Policy Manual containing a road

map of a policy proposal based on their profile (with a classification of origin, nature, possible legal status etc).

Strengthening of Civil Society Organizations

42. CSOs have been strengthened because of the JP which speaks for the likely resilience created at a community level to deal with drivers of violence. However, there is limited data available, and metrics set to fully assess the level of resilience created.

The evaluation did not have ground data on the interventions aiming to create resilience and is limited in its capacity to verify whether actual resilience was created, apart from the strengthening of the CSOs. As the resilience component of the project, it was delivered towards the end (covering Livelihood support to 32 women-led cooperatives, eight non-Moro IP cooperatives and 300 at-risk individuals of these communities)¹³, there is limited information available to the evaluation team. There is evidence however, of the increase in skills, capacity and networking opportunities provided to the CSOs in addition to the legal registration of some of them. It is important to consider that institutional strengthening of CSOs is a complex process and given the evaluation scope, it was not possible for the evaluation team to go into detail on the actual strengthening of the CSOs benefited.

“We have gained confidence in doing mediation on the ground from the series of trainings that we have received because we now know how to mediate properly and effectively. Women leadership is very important not only in mediation, but in the broader peacebuilding work, as women possess in their nature the value of peace.”

CSO leader and mediator, Senior member of the community

Key results of the Outcome Harvest Workshops based on consultation with key stakeholders and verified via desk review, focus groups discussions and key informant interviews

43. The evaluation promoted two Outcome Harvest Workshops where the evaluation team asked participants to identify key outcomes of the JP. The first workshop identified five outcomes and gave inputs for the field work. At the end of the field visit, the evaluation team and stakeholders reviewed the initial outcomes and were asked to validate/review the outcomes identified. The outcomes identified are presented in Table 6. The key outcomes identified were:

- ⇒ BIWAB are better **organized**, and Women Peace Facilitators are now able to **facilitate learnings** in the community on **Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC), Gender Based Violence (GBV)** and on referral pathways, having increased the knowledge on these concepts.
- ⇒ Benefited BIWABs are now more **respected and included** by their communities, providing better goods to the local market and public institutions, and working as partners in community initiatives with more resources to make a living, more

¹³ Under Outcome 3, resilience included livelihoods to households vulnerable to radicalization; strengthening local institutions to make them more inclusive e.g. BPOCs, Lupon; capacitating BPATs; capacitating communities themselves and grassroots organizations like the CQRTs.

- knowledge on women protection issues and they have built linkages and coordination with other organizations, including the Local Government Units.
- ⇒ The project helped **organize, register, and expand** the membership of the Lakas ng Kabataan (Youth Power) and other youth organizations in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao in BARMM. The project empowered out-of-school youths to participate in peacebuilding in Lanao del Sur. Through this project, pressing issues in the communities were voiced and discussion was facilitated by the youth.
 - ⇒ **BPAT/BPOC** have increased functionality as they know better now about their tasks and responsibilities to fulfill their mission, have started having regular meetings, revisiting tasks and functions and have communication equipment to operate in the field. Their ability to operate increase the overall feeling of community security.
 - ⇒ Civil Society Organizations from different organized groups (Moro women, non-Moro women etc.) have developed capacity to **train women as mediators and entrepreneurs** and are now more committed and engaged in peacebuilding.
 - ⇒ Women participants became **more active as mediators** and became an instrument of empowerment of women and youth in the community.
 - ⇒ The Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office (**PSRO**) **was created** under the Office of the Chief Minister to help support the implementation of the priority programs of BARMM, promote conflict prevention activities, assist the transition of MILF combatants with livelihoods and health programs (Executive-Order-No.-0008-s.-2022 – BARMM)
 - ⇒ **Local Action Plans** have been drafted for Local Governments on Women, Peace, and Security to help empower women in the context of conflict, although this work must be continued to have more impact on the ground. Institutional shifts in the mindsets of decision makers will take more time to come to effect.

The overall contribution of the project to the Bangsamoro Peace process lies in the institutional strengthening of the BARMM Administration through the support for the establishment of new structures (PSRO) and the capacity building of local security institutions (PBAT/BPOC) created by national legislation. In addition, the support to new policies and regulations which are more inclusive (e.g., IP Code, Gender budgeting, Local Action Plans for women) and capacity building/empowering activities for those groups which are often left behind (BIWAB, women, youth, and non-Moro IPs). The combination of a functional government, inclusive legislation and an active civil society has the potential of creating a powerful pact for social change.

The project was successful in including groups often left behind. However, given the history of conflict in the region, basic structures of development need to be in place, with strong economic investments to promote growth, improve infrastructure and generate jobs in addition to high investments in quality education to create substantive structural change.

44. By analyzing the key outcomes identified by stakeholders, success pathways could be identified, such as:

- a) *Solid training partners and content provided by implementing agencies:* the trainings provided were substantive and based on the joined expertise of CSOs and UN Agencies which came together to improve the capacity of target groups. They were extensively

reiterated during the project cycle, and this helped to create capacity especially in the agenda of conflict resolution and Gender and Development.

- b) *Continuation of efforts*: all the agencies had previous experience in the region. This meant that the JP built on a ground that was prepared already in the case of the close relationship with the government and the BIWABs.
- c) *Sense of opportunity and good relationship with government partners*: the partnership between the JP and the MSSD in including the BIWAB members as parasocial workers was particularly successful. This was possible due to a productive relationship between the UN agencies and the Regional Government and a good sense of opportunity from both parties who were committed to the inclusion of the target group.
- d) *Strengthening existing government institutions*: the project built on existing national policies (BPAT/BPOC) and helped them become more operational through guidance, training, and supplies. This is in positive contrast to many interventions which create new structures with international resources which are not sustainable overtime.
- e) *Capacity building/training as key for making people promoters of change in their lives and the community*: the JP was very centered on people, in giving them the skills to be entrepreneurs and peacebuilders and more sensitive and able policymakers. Investment in education pays off when it is well targeted and based on actual needs, of high quality and continuous.
- f) *Capacity to adapt discourse and work closely in partnership with the government*: gender is not an easy topic to highlight in the BARMM Region given the cultural context. The JP was sensitive enough to adapt the discourse and dialogue with the Regional and Local Governments to help them to promote women's empowerment. An example of this is the promotion of policies to protect women against violence as opposed to advocating for equal levels of opportunity, power and income between men and women which are overly ambitious to the context.

Table 6. Outcomes identified by Stakeholder in the two Outcome Harvest Workshops

Description	Significance	Contribution
<p>BIWAB are better organized, and Women Peace Facilitators are now able to facilitate learnings in the community on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC), Gender Based Violence (GBV) and on referral pathways, having increased the knowledge on these concepts.</p> <p>They can mediate conflicts in the community and the level of their confidence has increased. Due to allowances received as parasocial workers, BIWAB members were able to finish their studies and augment their sources of income by investing in other livelihood activities (motor bikes, engage in goat raising etc.).</p>	<p>BIWAB parasocial workers went to the most remote communities for the MSSD; and were able to reach and assist other vulnerable beneficiaries such as senior citizens. They are now monitoring cases of GBV in barangays and in SPMS box, the problems on inclusion and exclusion of beneficiaries for social services. Linkages were built and now there are women texting BIWAB and asking for advice (example, cases for GBV; rape of a child etc.).</p> <p>The inclusion of BIWAB as Peace Facilitators has helped to promote awareness which is fit to the local culture (peer to peer education). An Islamic perspective was brought to the issue of GBV, helping the community to better understand the problem (e.g., citing the Koran as a source for sensitizing participants on the importance of protecting women) which makes it a more effective way of delivering the message. A Program in radio station (DXMS and Sobrigada, 95.5 FM) helped parasocial workers educate the women on their rights; this is live in Facebook and has expanded their reach.</p> <p>Even if the project is finished, BIWAB parasocial workers are active facilitators, because they</p>	<p>The project helped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings on women’s rights, VAWC and GBV. • Stipend given to women to work as facilitators and supporter of MSSD programs.

Description	Significance	Contribution
<p>Two hundred benefited BIWABs are now more respected and socially and economically included by their communities, providing better goods to the local market and public institutions, and working as partners in community initiatives with more resources to make a living, more knowledge on women protection issues, Women Peace and security and they have built linkages and coordination with other organizations, including the Local Government Units.</p>	<p>already know the programs and services of the MSSD.</p> <p>BIWABs are in the process of promoting/improving livelihoods to their members and reintegrating into society in a different role. They have the skills to help with security and they are going to have more skills to promote social cohesion and economic development in the BARMM region. They have the potential to promote actual and effective engagement of women in their role as peacebuilders.</p> <p>Cooperative work addressed economic resilience for social cohesion and preventing violent extremism. Members of cooperatives developed a women’s agenda on preventing violent extremism. Women’s confidence was boosted and their strength and power to organize developed.</p>	<p>The project helped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of trainings on Cooperative organizing, marketing, and other livelihood skills. • Provision of capital for cooperative ventures, sewing machines, tablets, and mobile phones. • Trainings on capacity development and financial management.
<p>The project helped organize, register, and expand the membership of the Lakas ng Kabataan (Youth Power) and other youth organizations in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao in BARMM. The project empowered out-of-school youths to participate in peacebuilding in Lanao del Sur. Through this project, pressing issues in the communities were heard.</p>	<p>Youth developed skills on policy lobbying, networking, and project management with a view of tolerance and collaboration and work in the community. There is now a clearer guidance and entry point for dialogue between the BYC and the youth in the BARMM Region.</p> <p>The JP in partnership with the Youth Commission provided the venue/platform for the youth to exchange learnings, their issues,</p>	<p>The project helped through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistical support and fund support for the implementation of youth projects • Funds for a policy writeshop • Engaging different stakeholders (regional, local governments and CSOs)

Description	Significance	Contribution
<p>Youth from different ethnic and religious groups came together to develop and implement community projects, formulate, and lobby policy, and increase project management skills. They proposed 15 policy recommendations for the Youth Commission.</p> <p>Due to this process, the Youth Commission was encouraged to formulate their Process Operations Manual with procedures to define the process of managing policy proposals to the Legislative branch of the Government.</p>	<p>and experiences on their project priorities. Communications and connections among the youth in the mainland will continue.</p> <p>Policies that the youth crafted are now in the process of lobbying by the different agencies in BARMM; policies might be integrated in the Peace Order and Security Plans (POPs) of provinces.</p>	
<p>BPAT/BPOC have increased functionality as they know better now about their tasks and responsibilities to fulfill their mission, have started having regular meetings, revisiting tasks and functions and have communication equipment to operate in the field. BPAT in BARMM became the partner of the Philippine National Police and Armed Forces of the Philippines in disaster risk management (including human-caused (conflict) and natural disasters). BPAT now has knowledge and skills on disaster rescue operations. They are now able to augment Barangay forces in rescue and disaster management operations.</p>	<p>The Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) is the implementor of Barangay Peacekeeping Operations (BPO) of the Philippines National Police (PNP). It should assist in tasks such as: law enforcement, community organization, disaster management (including human-caused and natural disasters), environmental protection, and Barangay conflict resolution. It existed formally but not effectively. The BARMM Region is both a conflict and flood-prone area. BPATs were able to assist in relief operations and in Internally Displaced People camp management in the BARMM Region. Equipment and skills gained were very instrumental in rescuing 30 individuals during a flooding incident and four victims of motoring accidents in recent months.</p> <p>The Barangay Community Peace and Order Council (BPOC) serves as a primary government</p>	<p>The project helped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of training for BPAT/BPOC on their tasks and responsibilities. • Provision of kits and equipment for BPAT (two-way radios, flashlights, combat boots and raincoats). • Training on disaster management and rescue.

Description	Significance	Contribution
	<p>institution that prevents and suppresses criminality and maintains public order and safety at the community level.</p> <p>Farmers and out of school youth (OSY) became BPAT members which helped with the process of social inclusion in the region.</p>	
<p>Civil Society Organizations from different organized groups (Moro and non-Moro women, non-Moro IPs) have developed capacity to train women as mediators and entrepreneurs and are now more committed and engaged in peacebuilding. Thirty cooperatives are now registered and getting certification. CSOs have been able to build bridges with Local Government Units through the promotion of trainings for women and other tasks performed within the project.</p> <p>As part of the rescue team, women also respond in emergencies. They provide psychosocial support, counselling, and emotional healing for victims. They facilitate the provision of safe spaces for women to prevent violence by thorough assessment of evacuation centers.</p>	<p>Many organizations operated informally. Mediation is still a male predominant role in the Region. The trainings for women helped to include women in negotiation tables. Organizations have increased their capacity and opportunities to dialogue and promote joined activities with Local Government Units.</p> <p>Intervention focused on IDPs caused by emergencies and violent conflict.</p>	<p>The project helped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of trainings on mediation, mental health, and psychosocial interventions. • Weekly and monthly field visits; constant communication with beneficiaries and barangay LGUs. • Registering organization through the efforts of the Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society (CBCS) and the project. • Inclusion of organizations in Community of Practice of mediators.
<p>Women participants became more active as mediators and became an instrument of empowerment of women and youth in the community. They gave inputs to proposals on the Electoral Code and the Local Government Code (women were included in the Lupong Tagapamayapa and helped strengthen the VAWC desk).</p>	<p>This mobilization process of women around being mediators helped to make both women and men more aware of the rights of women.</p> <p>Further, women mediators have been empowered to articulate their interests through community dialogues, e.g., Electoral Code etc.</p>	<p>The project contributed with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Seminars on Mediation • Training for women as mediators.

Description	Significance	Contribution
<p>Seventy-Five women participants have been capacitated as mediators and actively participate in conflict resolution in their communities. Advocacy dialogues by women mediators enabled them to engage in a discourse with formal structures (e.g. Lupong Tagapamayapa, BPOC) to discuss how women can be represented in these structures.</p> <p>A rape case in Shariff Saydona was assisted in reporting to authorities.</p>	<p>Women initiated their own advocacy work on VAWC and CEFAM (Child Early and Forced Marriages)</p> <p>The capacity built for women as mediators helped them to be better included in the mediation processes, even if not as the lead mediator.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of orientation on child early marriage (RA 11596) and VAWC (RA 9262). • Ethical standards for women mediators
<p>The Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office (PSRO) was created under the Office of the Chief Minister to be the primary agency to support and serve transitioning combatants and existing peace mechanisms, such as the MILF Joint Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities, Ad Hoc Joint Action Group (AHJAG), special committees and task force to enable these to carry out their peace and security mandates (Executive-Order-No.-0008-s.-2022 – BARMM)</p>	<p>The new office is helping former combatants with technical educational skills and assisting them financially. There are beyond 40,000 combatants to be integrated.</p>	<p>The project helped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of research and debate which identified the gap in the region. • Promotion of workshop to set up the office. • Hiring of the Technical Expert to draft the Executive Order and function of the PSRO in consultation with the MILF leadership and peace mechanisms it would support. • Technical Support for the establishment of the new office. • Financial Support for the new office.
<p>Local Action Plans were drafted for Local Governments for women’s empowerment Women trained by the project started engaging in the work of Women, Peace, and Security.</p>	<p>The Bangsamoro Women’s Commission approves the Gender and Development Budget, and before, few BARMM local administrations used the provision of G&D budget. While there</p>	<p>The project helped with:</p>

Description	Significance	Contribution
<p>Action Plans were drafted, and local managers inserted the Action Plans into the Municipal Plans drafted with the support of the JP.</p> <p>This project integrated WPS in GAD planning. UNFPA also started this at the Provincial level in Lanao del Sur. There was constant advocacy support and negotiation with LGUs to accompany/amplify action plans.</p>	<p>is still a gap for this budget to be fully utilized, the project helped with the budget allocation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance for the allocation of Gender and Development Budget. • Training and assistance for developing Local Action Plans on Women, Peace, and Security. • Promotion of a series of workshops on Gender and Conflict analysis and advocacies. They were included in the next round of the Regional Action Plan on WPS to help localize WPS through the help of the Ministry of Interior and Local Government.

5.6. Evaluation Criteria: Sustainability

Evaluation questions:

15. Are structures, resources, and processes in place to ensure that benefits generated by the JP continue once the JP period ends?

16. Is the JP supported by local institutions and well-integrated into local social and cultural structures as well as local governance processes? To what extent will BARMM and local government be able to support the JP interventions?

Finding 22. The JP has a strong component of sustainability. It has built capacity in women as entrepreneurs, facilitators, and mediators. BIWAB businesses now have a life of its own and Women Peace Facilitators were incorporated by the Ministry of Social Services and Development which has replicated part of the training given to the BIWAB Women Peace Facilitators on their own. The JP built on previous UN efforts which help to create more solid and lasting results (Paragraphs 45, 46 and 51).

Finding 23. The JP has supported the establishment of a new institution within BARMM – the Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office and supported the approval of Resolutions on the inclusion of women in public policy, namely Women, Peace and Security Plans which still must be fully implemented (Paragraph 47).

Finding 24. Capacity was built, but some key stakeholders are still not able to cope on their own. This is valid for the Ministry of Public Order and Safety, the Bangsamoro Youth Commission and the Bangsamoro Women’s Commission, BPAT and BPOC (Paragraph 49 and 50).

Capacity built which will stay as a legacy of the Joint Project

45. The JP has a strong component of sustainability. It has built capacity in women as entrepreneurs, facilitators, and mediators. BIWAB businesses now have a life of its own and Women Peace Facilitators were incorporated by the Ministry of Social Services and Development. BIWAB members were already being supported by the different agencies prior to the JP. This JP continued a long support for these organizations such as previous support provided by UNFPA and the Government of Japan and helped consolidate the work that was already in place, which shows the importance of continuing long-term support to build lasting and more solid capacity. In addition, there was a very timely match between the demands of the MSSD for parasocial workers and the work of the project in training Women Peace Facilitators. The MSSD provided sustainability by allocating budget in 2023 for hiring parasocial workers and BIWAB members have been included. The inclusion of BIWAB members in this position helped with their income, empowerment and inclusion and was important for the Ministry to deliver services in distant communities.

46. The Ministry of Social Services and Development replicated part of the training given to the BIWAB Women Peace Facilitators which shows the incorporation of the knowledge on Women Peace Facilitators. The JP helped in running the trainings with the MSSD and knowledge was absorbed by the Ministry. The new parasocial workers hired, beyond the

BIWAB members, were trained using part of the methodology of the JP. This shows that capacity was created in a level which was able to provide for continuation of the initiative over time.

New institution and policies being incorporated with some challenges ahead

47. **The JP has supported the establishment of a new institution within BARMM – the Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office and supported the approval of various Resolutions on the inclusion of women in public policy, namely Women, Peace and Security Plans which still must be fully implemented.** With the new BARMM institution, budget was allocated by the government, helping to ensure sustainability. A new policy framework was also created and strengthened for the rights of women, however, the continuity of policies for women at a local level is still to be seen. The legislation on Gender and Development (GAD) already existed and budget was expected to be allocated for women, however this was often not the case. Without project support, it is uncertain to which extent budget would have been allocated for women as foreseen by regional legislation.
48. **The JP raised the profile of women’s participation, helping to bring about the acceptance of husbands and fathers of the leadership and a larger role of women in society.** The JP promoted awareness campaigns and extensive training on gender along with advocacy and capacity building for gender sensitive policies. This has helped to create a more favorable environment for the inclusion of women in a broader social and economic spectrum, although this is still work in progress.

Some institutions still need more support to keep moving

49. **Capacity was built, but stakeholders are still not able to cope on their own. This is valid for the Ministry of Public Order and Safety, the Bangsamoro Youth Commission and the Bangsamoro Women’s Commission.** The budget for local mediators was cut in MPOS and they will have challenges to continue the training for women on mediation. The Bangsamoro Youth Commission still does not have recognition from other institutions in the government and the Bangsamoro Women’s Commission has not been able to fully incorporate the knowledge of the trainings given at the level of being able to deliver them in future occasions. Important progress has been made but continuity is still uncertain with those partners as reported during Data Collection in consultation with stakeholders.
50. **BPAT and BPOC are better prepared to assume their roles, but training must be continuous, and equipment maintained. There is no clear commitment of additional resources from the government to keep investing on BPAT and BPOC.** The project was effective in helping to strengthen BPAT/BPOC. However, for these institutions to be able to meet their demand, training must be a continuous effort and there is no evidence of additional resources allocated or a new strategy of the government to keep up with the effort which was made by the project as it was verified through consultation with stakeholders.

Development work overtime

51. **PBF and the UN in the Philippines are building on their previous work and helping to create sustainability.** One of the government officers interviewed told the evaluation team she had been trained in a previous project funded by PBF and when the position on Peacebuilding was created in the Ministry she applied, got the job, and used the expertise gained through a PBF initiative. PBF and the UN as a whole have an important and recognized history of work in the Region. The presence of the international community has been crucial to help with peacebuilding in the BARMM and this has been built overtime.

5.7. Evaluation Criteria: Gender Equality and Human Rights

Evaluation Question:

17. How did the JP address different needs and capacities of the beneficiaries, target communities, and local stakeholders?

18. Did the intervention capture gender perspectives that measure gender-specific changes, such as perceptions of gender norms, roles, and relations within the context of women, peace, and security?

Finding 26. The project was inclusive in terms of minority groups – mainly IPs, including non-Moro IPs, and BIWAB members. There was inclusion of people with disabilities under Outcome 3, but its extent could not be verified. (Paragraph 52).

Finding 27. Target groups were encouraged to take part in project activities through stipends provided for the various meetings and trainings. This was helpful to encourage their participation in a context of limited economic resources (Paragraph 55).

Finding 28. The project had a strong component of encouraging political participation and dialogue. This was empowering for women who felt more confidence to speak in public and voice their concerns, but their inclusion in mediation and broader decision-making bodies is still a long-term process. Youth was highly engaged (Paragraphs 56-58).

Inclusion of Minority Groups

52. The project was inclusive in terms of minority groups – mainly non-Moro IPs and BIWAB members. There was inclusion of people with disabilities under Outcome 3, but its extent could not be verified. The project had a strong focus on ‘Leaving no one behind.’ It targeted groups which had been excluded from the normalization process and it was successful in mobilizing BIWAB, non-Moro IPs, youth and CSOs. Although there is no specific data on People with Disabilities, they were a target group of the project under Outcome 3.

*The use of cash incentives*

53. Target groups were encouraged to take part in project activities through stipends provided for the various meetings and trainings. This was helpful to encourage their participation in a context of limited economic resources. The stipend provided in various occasions and the cash for work initiatives were important to increase participation of target groups. Resources are limited and levels of poverty are high. Small resources can be very meaningful for communities with low income. This helped with the inclusion and participation of target groups in the project.

The empowerment of women

54. The project had a strong component of encouraging political participation and dialogue. This was empowering for women who felt more confidence to speak in public and voice their concerns. The project had a very participatory approach and encouraged women and men to speak up and engage in dialogues. Public speaking and dialogue are powerful tools for transformation. In the FGD, participants reported how they felt more empowered due to their participation in the JP.

55. Various BARMM institutions received training on Gender, and this has helped raise the issue and commitment of increasing the participation of women in the institutions. BPOC for example, received training to consider the inclusion of widows and people with disabilities, but there is still room for increasing the agenda of women’s empowerment in other institutions. One of the stakeholders from the BARMM administration reported how traditional leaders are getting old, and this poses an opportunity to further raise the profile of women mediators and leaders in the Region.

6. Lessons Learned and good practices

1. *A good integration path in the context of peacebuilding is turning former combatants into community facilitators and providers of social assistance.*

A result of the project was the inclusion of MSSD for BIWAB members as parasocial workers. They went from women who community members would look at with distrust to women who would be talking about peace and social benefits. This was very empowering for the women who felt included and valued in their mission which was indeed helpful for the government. The alliance of excluded groups with the government where they are given a role as provider of benefits to the community quickens their integration and makes it very effective. They change from the status of being feared to a status where they are able to assist community members.

2. *Training women and men willing to assume leadership roles has an incrementing effect.*

BIWAB members were exposed to life threatening risks, they had to go through training and lived under uncertain circumstances. This speaks for the type of resilience and capacity which was created by these women to cope with difficult circumstances. They are champions in their own way. Their strength and resilience in times of war and conflict can be directed to create a drive for entrepreneurship, leadership and community care. Many BIWAB members had a profile of leadership which was well channeled through the project and helped to create increased results and effects (e.g., BIWAB members creating new projects to increase community cohesion such as a Madrasa for example).

3. *Adapting key messages to the religious context makes a narrative which is understandable and accepted by the target audience.*

Women Peace Facilitators reported how they adapted their messages to the Quran. Other target groups also reported how messages had to be adapted to their religious context. The training materials (e.g., Understanding Our Inner Peace and Relationships, Taking our lead to creating peaceful spaces – A basic conflict, mediation, prevention and peace advocacy learning journey) discussed women's role in a Muslim context. Staff from the agencies were culturally sensitive in discussing gender with the government. The respect for people and the promotion of human dignity are universal messages through different religions and philosophy systems, including Islam. Reaching out to the people must include a genuine respect for their religion and worldview.

4. *The role of the Resident Coordinator supported by the Peace Development Advisor helps to give UN initiatives a more strategic and politically sensitive perspective.*

The JP benefited from the strategic oversight of the RC from its inception. The RCO's Peace and Development Advisor (not from any of the implementing agencies) played an important advisory and coordination role. The context is complex and sensitive and the UN's added value in addition to project implementation, lies in the high-level advice, advocacy, and direction. The UN is highly influential and having a senior UN PDA add inputs to the dialogue with the government was helpful in building relationships and creating linkages among project initiatives.

5. *The efforts in partnership building pay off in terms of increased results and buy in.*

An important feature of the JP was the promotion of dialogue among different stakeholders. This is a traditional role the UN has of convening partners to reach consensus. This requires effort and time, but it pays off in terms of promoting results which make sense to everyone. This was the case with the localization of the WPS agenda in BARMM, establishment of the PSRO and in the partnership with the Ministry of Social Services and Development. There was a good sense of opportunity in the JP and a good relationship with government partners which helped to generate synergy and promote unexpected results.
6. *There is great value in aligning local knowledge and context to solid UN training*

The materials provided for training of women and government officers in general was of high quality and adapted to the context. It also built on international expertise. Finding and cultivating good local partners is crucial for developing capacity at a local level which can be sustained over time. Local partners are the ones who have the greatest knowledge on the actual needs of the ground and are able to reach far flung locations.
7. *Development is a result of continuing and long lasting efforts*

It is not realistic to think that one 1.5 year JP can completely change the context. However, it is feasible to think of various initiatives which build over time and help to create more solid institutions and help change culture. The results and work of this JP build on previous efforts of the international community, including PBF support in the Region. This has helped to capitalize results and partnerships which can generate long term impact.
8. *It is strategic to strengthen nascent and existing government institutions with a culture of support to the most excluded groups*

This JP helped to strengthen several regional government institutions (MPOS, MSSD, BPAT/BPOC, Bangsamoro Women’s Commission, Bangsamoro Youth Commission and LGUs, just to name a few). This was done via technical assistance, dialogue, training, social mobilization and equipment. This is one of the primary roles of the UN which is to help member countries serve their people more effectively. In addition, BARMM was a nascent government where institutional strengthening was one of its major priorities and needs. Doing it with a participatory approach from the beginning helps to build a government culture which is inclusive.
9. *There is great value of investing in people’s capacity, motivation and drive for change*

This JP was very centred on people, especially minority groups. It focused on strengthening their capacity to speak, raise their income, become knowledgeable about their rights and act as drivers of change as mediators and through various community initiatives. Investment on developing people’s capacity to grow brings unexpected and long-term results which lead to sustainable development.

10. *Adaptative budget management tends to increase results if well managed*

The JP was able to deliver creatively and beyond what was expected due to some flexibility in the allocation of funds (e.g. consultancies). Although control is crucial and pre-set budget lines is needed, some flexibility within the limits of UN rules allows for creativity and adaptation to the context, thus leading to more results.

11. *The JP resulted in complementation of expertise and resources of the participating UN Agencies – clearly demonstrating the value of partnership among the three agencies as opposed to adhoc, single agency projects.*

Collaboration worked well from a thematic and political point of view, where different agencies brought their expertise and added efforts to target the same vulnerable groups. The different agencies delivered shared, related outputs to reach the same outcome, and this facilitated collaboration which also speaks for efficiency.



7. Conclusions

Relevance

1. The JP's objectives and design were responsive to the peacebuilding needs of the BARMM both at an institutional and grass-roots level with a special focus on the communities which were more excluded from the normalization process. It was able to voice the concerns of the local organizations (CSOs, women-led cooperatives, youth groups, non-Moro IPs) to the national government in relation to the continuation of the peace process. The JP was also aligned with the UN's Partnership framework for the country.

Based on findings 1-3

Coherence and Efficiency

2. Partnership was a strong component of the JP with the creation of constructive collaboration among implementing agencies, the BARMM Government and CSOs in joint action and policy support. Coherence among implementing agencies was facilitated by project design and regular coordination meetings. There were challenges in convening the JP Steering Committee including the national Office of the Presidential Advisor on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU) in the context of COVID-19 and national leadership changes with the 2022 national elections. Synergy within the UN and with the Regional Government was supported by the engagement of the RC and the Peace and Development Advisor (PDA) based in the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO).

Based on findings 7, 15, 16 and 17

Effectiveness and Impact

3. The JP helped to promote inclusive peacebuilding which involved strengthening fifteen Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade (BIWAB) cooperatives and supporting their process of integration within their communities (80% of engaged BIWAB members reported an improvement in their reintegration into society). They are now more empowered to speak for themselves, sustain and expand their business and connect with government and civil society institutions and community members. There was a strong component of capacity building in the JP which helped to promote the role of women as mediators (105 BIWAB members from the 15 BIWAB Community Based Associations - CBAs and cooperatives were trained on localized mediation and peace promotion curriculum). In addition, the JP promoted women's empowerment through advocacy, policy advice and training for CSOs and government institutions, although women's empowerment faces cultural and institutional barriers in the BARMM. BIWAB members became Women Peace Facilitators and raised awareness on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and peacebuilding through involving a total of 10,155 community members. The work with Women Peace Facilitators (WPF) helped empower BIWAB members who now feel more confident about themselves and their future, improving their leadership skills. WPF were also recruited as parasocial workers of the Ministry of Social Services and Development because of the JP. The JP produced nine policy briefs to BARMM, focusing on securing BIWAB's representation in peace process implementation mechanisms and access to public policies and opportunities (in employment, education, housing and transportation).

Based on findings 8, 11 and 13.

4. The JP helped the BARMM government establish the new Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office to support the normalization process. The PSRO will support key peacekeeping mechanisms and increase the collaboration among peace actors, government leaders and communities to achieve a more secure, inclusive and stable BARMM during the critical transition period. This institutional gap was identified due to the effective participatory research implemented by the JP which engaged 12 BARMM institutions and was followed by advocacy and technical support to the BARMM government. In addition, the JP helped to strengthen Barangay Peacekeeping Action Teams (BPATs) and Barangay Peace and Order Committees (BPOCs) in their roles of providing security and mediating conflict in the community through training and needed equipment. A total of 387 BPAT members in 15 barangays and 253 community leaders from target communities were trained in community safeguarding. Trained BPAT members have increased their skills to make their work more effective in preventing escalation of conflict and are now better equipped to fulfill their mission. The JP assisted with the creation of dialogue spaces among community members and the government, bringing rights holders and duty bearers together, and helped inform communities which often have limited access to information about the peace process (a total of 666 duty bearers and rights holders were engaged as the main resource speakers for the Intergenerational Dialogues – IGD).

Based on findings 9 and 11

5. Organizations of non-Moro IPs are now better equipped to promote community support, engage with the government and support the peacebuilding process (the JP helped with formal registration of non-Moro IP organizations, training and policy dialogue). Through the JP, non-Moro IPs were able to give inputs to the consultations on a new Indigenous People (IP) code for the Region which is now under debate in the Regional Parliament.

Based on findings 11 and 20

5. The JP helped to empower young people in their ability to do advocacy in the BARMM and dialogue with religious and ethnic groups different of their own. In this context, the JP helped to strengthen the Bangsamoro Youth Commission (BYC) with a Manual for Policy Proposals to institutionalize youth engagement. Fifteen draft policy recommendations from youth groups engaged throughout the project were submitted to the BYC.

Based on findings 12 and 19

6. The advocacy promoted by women-led CSOs supported by the JP contributed to the allocation of financial resources by the South Upi Local Government Unit (LGU) towards the organization of a Community Quick Response Team (CQRT) with engagement of non-Moro IP leaders. This was an unexpected result of the Project demonstrating local ownership and sustainability. Civil Society Organizations of Women and non-Moro IPs, Youth and at-risk individuals received relevant and effective support to enhance dialogue with the government, increase resilience and cope with immediate needs.

Based on finding 20

Efficiency

7. The project faced operational challenges with delays and difficulties in reaching the most distant communities in the face of COVID-19. There was a loss in efficiency due to different administrative systems and processes of implementing agencies and no appropriate planning for joint M&E activities (indicators lacked clarity, comparison between baseline and endline surveys was not possible, data was collected but not always used). The project had limited staff for its operational needs and experienced staff turnover which brought implementation challenges. However, even with all these challenges the project was able to deliver and benefited from a degree of flexibility in budget management and the collaboration of implementing partners.

Based on findings 15, 16 and 17

Sustainability

8. The JP had a strong component of sustainability. It built capacity in women as entrepreneurs and facilitators (15 BIWAB cooperatives and 8 IP Cooperatives), trained 71 mediators and 25 CSO leaders and provided technical support for Government institutions such as the Bangsamoro Women's Commission to promote and advocate

for policies and programs on gender-responsive peacebuilding. In addition it helped establish a new institution within BARMM – the Peace, Security and Reconciliation Office – PSRO and supported the development and approval of 6 Resolutions on the inclusion of women in public policy. These are key achievements of the JP which speak for its sustainability. However, despite of relevant and effective JP’s support, some key institutional stakeholders are still not able to sustain the support received after the end of the JP. This is valid for the Ministry of Public Order and Safety, the Bangsamoro Youth Commission, and the Bangsamoro Women’s Commission, BPAT and BPOC.

Based on findings 22-24

Gender Mainstreaming

9. The JP helped raise the profile of gender related issues within the Region. It provided technical support to Local Governments Units (LGUs) in implementing Gender and Development (GAD) budgets, in developing local Women, Peace and Security action plans and preventing Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) and Gender Based Violence (GBV). Twelve BARMM ministries and 18 Local Government Units were engaged in the promotion of gender-responsive and inclusive conflict prevention/resolution. As a result, 6 policy instruments were drafted as gender-responsive approaches to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. In the same context, 43 CSOs were engaged in platforms to mainstream WPS in government institutions at local and regional levels. The project was inclusive in terms of minority groups – non-Moro IPs and women ex-combatants (BIWAB). Although the project was empowering for women who felt more confidence to speak in public and voice their concerns, their inclusion in broader decision-making bodies is still a long-term process.

Based on findings 4, 26 and 28.

10. Recommendations

These recommendations were based on the conclusion and analysis made by the evaluation team, consultations made to the stakeholders during data collection where stakeholders were asked to suggest improvements for the project and other UN future initiatives and dialogue with project staff during report revision.

Table 7. List of recommendations by type, recipient with action points and rationale

N.	Type	Recommendation	Recipient	Action points	Rationale
1	Strategic and operational Based on Conclusions 1-9	Continue key interventions of the JP considering other neglected areas which are isolated (e.g. the Islands as suggested by some stakeholders) and review its scope based on lessons learned from this initiative and the evolving context, looking for a design that matches resources and outputs (not being overly ambitious)	PBF, RCO, IOM, UN Women and UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft new interventions based on the accumulated experience of the PUNOs (3 agencies) - Present the projects to donors working in the Region (3 agencies) - Increase engagement of national government in the new initiatives (3 agencies). - Consider in the new projects the inclusion or attention to the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o JP management arrangements adherence to the new UNSDG Guidance on new Generation of Joint Programmes, with the RC/O providing strategic oversight and leadership and the lead PUNO providing coordination and programmatic leadership to the JP team during implementation. o Follow up on the legislation/advocacy for ending child marriage (UNFPA, UN Women) o Continue advocacy for inclusion of women in decision-making bodies of the BARMM and local governments (UN Women). o Review partnership framework to include engagement of the Office of the Chief Minister to increase profile of inclusion in the Region 	The project delivered well, there is lack of sustainability in some of the initiatives (e.g. BPAT/BPOC, Mediation trainings, implementation of Gender and Development Budget etc.) and a demand from various stakeholders to benefit communities outside the main BARMM islands. They

N.	Type	Recommendation	Recipient	Action points	Rationale
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Find linkages between the training and the Quran and other spiritual belief systems, e.g. the religious beliefs of the non-Moro IPs which can facilitate absorption of new knowledge (3 agencies) ○ Allow WPF to receive relief packages when they are the one who distribute them (they are also in need of assistance) - UNFPA ○ Continue capacity building activities and technical assistance to LGUs (UN Women) ○ Review value of payments made to WPF (UNFPA) ○ Ensure continuing support to MPOS, BWC, BYC and BPAT/BPOC (IOM and UN Women) ○ Continue work with Joint Peace Security Teams (UN Women) ○ Review the section on operational challenges to improve the management arrangements of the new initiatives (3 agencies) ○ Continue dialogue with organized non-Moro IPs and follow-up on approval and implementation of IP Code 	<p>are the ones who receive the least benefits and have great needs.</p> <p>The number of beneficiaries is still small if compared to the needs of the Region.</p>
2	Strategic Based on Conclusions 3 and 9	Follow-up on the implementation of WPS at Regional and Local level and recommendations on gender related issues and the approval of the IP Code	UN Women and UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue technical support to the BWC and Local Government Units - Monitor the implementation of gender sensitive policies and identify challenges and viable solutions for the generation of results at a Regional and Local Level - Continue support to the dialogue between IP and the Regional Parliament in relation to the IP Code 	The JP helped approve Important gender sensitive legislation, but women's empowerment is an agenda that has little political space in the Region, there is not enough government capacity in

N.	Type	Recommendation	Recipient	Action points	Rationale
					place to deal with VAWG, GBD and other gender related issues.
3	Strategic and operational Based on Conclusions 1-9	Inform future PBF projects about successes and failures of Joint Projects based on this and other evaluations	PBF, RCO	- Create a document of lessons learned in PBF projects for future project design with other guidance given to UN agencies on writing PBF proposals	This JP was complex and had several lessons learned, including on UN collaboration which could be useful for future projects.
4	Strategic and operational Based on Conclusion 9	Increase engagement of male leaders in future UN Interventions in the Region targeted for the inclusion of women and minorities in general	IOM, UN Women and UNFPA	- Increase approach to prominent male leaders not only to have their approval for future project interventions, but most of all, to include them in dialogues and capacity building activities where they can be informed and sensitized around the inclusion of minority groups and the empowerment of women.	Considering the context of a traditional society where men have the decision-making power, they must be further involved to help increase results and sustainability of project interventions.

N.	Type	Recommendation	Recipient	Action points	Rationale
5	Strategic Based on Conclusion 3	Share the experience of engaging BIWAB members and the WPF training and MSSD engagement with other UN Agencies	IOM and UNFPA, RCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote a learning seminar with the other UN Agencies in the country and send the invitation to the Regional Offices, HQ, PBSO and other stakeholders to discuss lessons learned in the intervention. - Promote South-South and triangular cooperation 	The project had many lessons learned which might be useful for other UN agencies in the country and in the Region.
6	Operational Based on Conclusions 3 and 6	Engage the youth in future mediation training opportunities and sustain support to women mediators	IOM, UNFPA and UN Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include youth in mediation trainings and explore venues for them to help mediate conflict and professionally engage with it (IOM) - Explore the possibility of establishing a mediation center where women and men can help settle the disputes (UN Women, UNFPA) 	These were demands posed by stakeholders consulted.
7	Strategic Based on Conclusion 2	Reinforce engagement of National Government in Regional Projects and increase provision of information for all parties of the Steering Committee during project implementation	All agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep all parties of the Steering Committee informed of key steps of JPs despite of their inability to attend meetings. 	The Steering Committee only met at the end of the project. Although this did not compromise implementation and the JP tried to convene the meetings in face of a difficult context (COVID-19, elections etc), the evaluation identified a

N.	Type	Recommendation	Recipient	Action points	Rationale
					demand from members of the Steering Committee for further engagement. There was no government stakeholder involved in the Evaluation Management Committee.