

## Joint IOM-World Bank Study on Land Dispute in Conflict Affected Areas of Mindanao

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Competing claims over land have been at the center of much of the violence in Mindanao. Although the October Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB, 2012) and final Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro (CAB, 2014) represent important steps towards peace in Mindanao, achieving sustainable peace and security requires the just and efficient resolution of land conflict.

At the request of the Philippines' Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), IOM in partnership with the World Bank conducted a joint scoping mission. The team interviewed national and local government officials involved in land titling as well as key stakeholders and informants directly affected by competing land claims in Mindanao.

The resulting publication, entitled "Land Dispute in Conflict Affected Areas of Mindanao", was released in May 2013 and can be found on the LPR webpage.

The report begins by highlighting the concrete commitments of the FAB with respect to land dispute management. These commitments include the recognition of vested property rights as well as rights of those unjustly dispossessed in the past as well as adequate reparations where rights of those unjustly dispossessed cannot be restored, and recognition for

indigenous peoples' rights to property.

However, the research findings revealed that the signing of the FAB created new dynamics that are bringing latent land claims to the fore. Moreover, uncertainty about how the FAB land provisions will be applied adds to an already complex situation.

The report puts forward concrete short- and medium term programmatic and policy recommendations. These include the systematic collection of empirical data on land claims, disputes and conflict prevalence, an assessment of the resilience and capacity of existing land dispute resolution mechanisms, and the establishment of an inventory of current land-related laws.

Further, the report makes a strong case for accompanying the resolution of land conflicts with the design and implementation of robust community stabilization programmes, as well as building the mediation capacity of relevant local actors in areas considered to have a high conflict potential.

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