The Asia Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
RIDO: Clan Feuding and Conflict Management in Mindanao

About the Book

> **Title**: *Rido*: Clan Feuding and Conflict Management in Mindanao
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What is rido?

- *Rido: Clan Feuding and Conflict Management in Mindanao* addresses clan feuding that takes place in Mindanao (southern Philippines). *Rido*, or feuding between families and clans, is a type of conflict characterized by sporadic outbursts of retaliatory violence between families and kinship groups as well as between communities. It can occur in areas where government or a central authority is weak and in areas where there is a perceived lack of justice and security.

- *Rido* is considered one of the major problems in Mindanao. *Rido* has wider implications for conflict in Mindanao primarily because of the tendency for it to interact in unfortunate ways with separatist conflict and other forms of armed violence. The studies in this volume investigated the dynamics of *rido* with the intention of helping design strategic interventions to address such conflicts.

- *Rido* is only one aspect in the complex web of violence in Mindanao which includes separatism, communist insurgency, and banditry.

Rationale for book about rido:
In 2002, The Asia Foundation conceptualized a survey to identify citizens' perception of conflict. Between October 23 and November 13, 2002, the Foundation conducted a face-to-face household survey in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and adjacent areas of 800 (500 in ARMM and 300 in adjacent areas). Using findings from the survey, the Foundation commenced a set of diagnostic activities to help design strategic interventions that enable communities and government agencies to prevent the escalation of conflicts. Extensive research was then conducted to better understand the issues and promote resolution between groups.

Rido: Clan Feuding and Conflict Management in Mindanao is the most comprehensive and informative resource on *rido* in Mindanao. The book provides readers with findings from the survey and research, as well as *rido* case studies, personal accounts, and recommendations to government, communities, and conflict resolution advocates.

Examples of Key Findings from the book:

- The coordinated studies on *rido* documented a total of 1,266 *rido* cases that occurred between 1930s to 2005, killing over 5,500 people and displacing thousands. Out of the total number of *rido* cases documented, 64 percent remain unresolved. The top four provinces with the highest number of *rido* incidences are: Lanao del Sur (377), Maguindanao (218), Lanao del Norte (164), and Sulu (145). The *rido* incidences in these four provinces account for 71% of the total cases documented. The findings also show a steady rise in *rido* conflicts in the 11 provinces surveyed from the 1980s to 2004. Fifty percent (637 cases) of the total *rido* incidences recorded by the studies occurred in the last five years (2000-2004), which is about 127 new cases per year.

- *Rido* has caused untold suffering and its effects are often subsumed under the larger separatist conflicts. Aside from numerous casualties, *rido*-related armed confrontations have caused the destruction of property, crippled the local economy, displaced communities, and caused fear.

- The causes of *rido* are contextually varied and may be further complicated by a society's sense and concept of honor and shame. While the triggers of the conflicts can range from petty offenses like theft and jesting to more serious crimes like homicide, the studies show that land disputes and political rivalries are the most common causes of *rido*.

- Factors that aggravate a *rido* include the formation of alliances by the principals with other families and armed groups, or the interaction of *rido* with state-level conflicts (i.e. the conflict between the Moro liberation fronts and the State) and other armed conflicts (i.e. banditry).

- The proliferation of firearms, lack of law enforcers and credible mediators in conflict prone areas, and an inefficient justice system all contribute to *rido*.

- Resolution of *Rido* Conflicts in Mindanao. The studies in this volume document several conflict resolution bodies and mechanisms that address *rido* and other community-based conflicts (mechanisms which sometimes compete with each other). Such conflict resolution bodies and mechanisms may utilize the more formal legal framework of government, or the various indigenous systems, or a combination of both systems in resolving conflicts.

Case Studies and Best Practices from the book:

- The variety of innovative or hybrid mechanisms that combine the mainstream or formal government framework with the traditional ways of resolving conflicts include the following examples: Joint Ulama Municipal Peace and Order Council in Barira, Maguindanao, the *Walay na Bitiara* in Sultan Kudarat municipality in Maguindanao and the Mayor's Council "tri-people" conflict resolution body in North Upi, Maguindanao.

- In Sulu, local government units have integrated traditional conflict resolution processes and customary laws into municipal and provincial executive policies such as the Tausug Customary Law Ordinance. Government, religious, and traditional Moro leaders have also collaborated in resolving conflicts under the auspices of the Reconciliation and Unification Council of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

- The other conflict resolution mechanisms documented include the various "spaces for peace" such as the one found in Pikit, North Cotabato; the revolutionary courts patterned after the Shariah concept of justice in areas occupied by the MNLF and MILF; the mobilization of ceasefire monitoring mechanisms such as Local Monitoring Teams, Bantay Ceasefire, and the Joint Government-MILF CCCH and IMTs which stood out in effectively responding to armed tensions between government and Moro liberation forces.

Recommendations from the book:

- To Government and Military Leaders: Recognizing, enhancing, and supporting the development of mixed or hybrid institutions or systems composed of formal and informal structures utilized by communities in managing and resolving conflicts.

- To Community Leaders: Building the capacities of recognized and potential leaders and mediators in managing conflicts.

- To Community Leaders and Conflict Resolution Groups: Establishing networks of community-based, community-initiated conflict monitoring and rapid response mechanisms that will help in the resolution of ongoing *rido* and other communal conflicts, and prevent the interaction and escalation of smaller conflicts.