

## **REFLECTION ON 2018 PEACE TRAINING PROGRAM AT MINDANAO PEACEBUILDING INSTITUTE IN THE PHILIPPINES from 7 to 25 May 2018**

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I had the opportunity to participate in the MPI 2018 Annual Peacebuilding Training in Davao City, Philippines from 7<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. I took three courses: Fundamentals of Peacebuilding (FPB) for the first week, Understanding Culture and Identity as a Resource for Peacebuilding (UCIRP) for the second week, and Interreligious Peacebuilding: Approaches for Cooperation, Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (IRPB) for the third week.

What I have gained from the three courses are not only some practical frameworks for conflict analysis and peacebuilding but also lively and effective teaching methods. From FPB class, the most interesting part for me was the different models of conflict analysis such as the conflict tree, conflict mapping, stages of conflict and the onion model. These models are practical and easy to apply to analyze any conflict. I liked it most when I worked in groups with my friends and used these models to analyze a conflict in my own context, which helped me understand the lesson deeper. Concerning the UCIRP class, I had a lot of fun and interesting class activities. We played several study games which were not only amusing but also stimulating our brains. We also did a lot of self-reflection and each of us contributed our own understandings and experiences from our own cultures and contexts to build up the lessons. When we finished the games, the lessons were also completed. I think this is really a fascinating teaching method. For IRPB class, what inspired me the most was the practical peacebuilding experiences presented by different Filipino religious NGOs and gendered groups. We also had two field visits to a mosque and a Catholic Church. These presentations and visits gave me good insights into inter-religious peacebuilding in the Philippines and helped me reflect back on my interfaith peacebuilding theories and work at Payap University.

Beside the classroom knowledge and skills, I also learned about peace training program at MPI as a whole through my participant observation. I was impressed that MPI has done this training program for almost twenty years and the number of participants was considerable (140 people from all continents for this year). This showed that MPI program has its prestige. Overall, the program was well-organized with impressive opening ceremony each week. The facilitators and MPI staff were energetic, professional, and friendly. The courses were various, up-to-date, interesting, and essential for peacebuilding. Courses were co-taught by at least two facilitators (with gender-balance) and there was always a teaching assistant. I find the idea of co-teaching very good. The lesson plans were better developed and difficult questions from participants were better addressed. Participants' needs were also better taken care of.

With the insights and skills gained from MPI program, I am going to incorporate some of the content and teaching methods into my teaching at the PhD program in Peacebuilding. Normally my lectures were highly theoretical and philosophical. We had students' sharing of their reflections on the assigned readings and class discussion. It was sometimes boring. I think it will be more interesting and stimulating if I sometimes use some of the teaching activities I learned such as conflict mapping, drawing, role play, etc. for my students to explore concepts and reflect on their experiences. After joining the MPI program, I feel more confident and have a sense of how I should prepare and organize my teaching content and material for short-term peace training program. I also hope that in the near future the Institute of Religion, Culture and Peace (IRCP) can again revive its intensive peace training

programs as it used to offer before. I can be an active agent to contribute to this process. Together with MPI, IRCP will become a leading peacebuilding institution in Southeast Asia reaching out to different groups of people.

Finally I would like to thank the United Board and MPI for the wonderful opportunity to improve my knowledge and teaching skills. I have gained confidence and inspiration to continue and develop peacebuilding work with my colleagues and students here at Payap University.

The following are some unforgettable moments at MPI 2018.



Week 1: Class of Fundamentals of Peacebuilding

**Understanding Culture and Identity as a Resource for Peacebuilding (UCIRP)**



Week 2: Class of Understanding Culture and Identity as a Resource for Peacebuilding

**Interreligious Peacebuilding: Approaches for Cooperation, Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (IRPB)**



Week 3: Class of Interreligious Peacebuilding



Applying religious peacebuilding model in Vietnamese context



With a learner-centered teaching method, a classroom would look like this.



Cultural night