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Promoting  
Philippine  
Culture and Values



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Cultural awareness is a requirement for social inclusion and equity. Enhancing the social fabric toward a high-trust society entails building better relations for social cohesion among people. More and better interactions among members of a community, in turn, require awareness and appreciation of culture and values that drive people's attitudes and behavior. Culture is that complex whole of the people's way of life, which includes the knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, values, ideas, sentiments, and any other capabilities acquired by a person as a member of society. It offers a summation and distillation of the past that provides a sound basis for living in the present and marching into the future.

Culture has several dimensions; its role in development spans and intersects with multiple sectors. As such, culture is regarded as one of the pillars for achieving inclusive, sustainable, and human-centered development. Building culture into the formulation of policies and in the design of development interventions enhances the effectiveness of programs and projects because cultural contexts are recognized. Failure to acknowledge the significance of culture in shaping our society may lead to cultural fragmentation, perceived distrust toward fellow Filipinos, parochialism, perpetuation of historical injustices, and inability to collaborate for nation building.

The priority areas of the cultural agenda are: (a) safeguarding and enshrining our cultural heritage; (b) achieving equity and inclusion in access to cultural resources and services; and (c) sustaining and enhancing cultural assets to foster creativity and innovation for socio-economic growth.

## Assessment

The diversity of people composed of different cultural groups in the region remains a challenge. The region is home to various tribes, both the indigenous groups and those who migrated from the Visayas and Luzon regions, who live in defined ancestral domain or communities with a common dialect, distinct practices and values systems. The indigenous tribes mingle peacefully with other tribes in local communities but maintain a different way of life that makes them distinct from the mainstreamed population.

While some indigenous tribes still practice pre-arranged marriages, intermarriage among Christians and the cultural

minorities had become a common practice in the region. A large number had even embraced the Christian faith as influenced by the various religious missionaries in the region. This proves that in the diversity of culture, there is social cohesion and peace among the people in the region where varied cultures co-exist and respect each other's differences.

In support of the objective of becoming a high-trust society, there is a need for the government to intensify its efforts to promote cultural awareness. Enhancing awareness of our diverse cultures is a pre-condition for social cohesion and inclusion. The highlights of the indigenous peoples

(IP) summit spearheaded by the 1002nd Brigade of the Philippine Army on May 13, 2015 was presented in the June 4, 2015 meeting of the RDC XII Macroeconomy, Development Administration and Finance Committee. Two resolutions were passed by the Committee and eventually supported by the Council proper. One resolution supported the preparation of a terms of reference to mainstream the indigenous political structure (IPS) in the formulation of policies and identification of development interventions. The objectives of the summit were to provide a better understanding of the IPs and to address major concerns on their ancestral domains and economic development issues. During the summit, it was emphasized that the government and its stakeholders must work together in providing opportunities for the IPs to live harmonious and fruitful lives as members of the society. The said summit also aimed to instill trust in all government efforts for

the IPs and optimism among them that they are considered a part of the society.

In recognition of the unique culture of the indigenous communities, each province and city celebrates festivals where different tribes participate to show the beauty of their culture. The schools and the communities are enjoined to participate in the competition during these festivals where participants wear tribal costumes and accessories while interpreting traditions and customs through street dancing. These are also done in some major activities of the local government units, such as foundation anniversaries.

On October 26-31, 2016, the Department of Tourism launched the Tau Sox: Festival of the First Peoples, in recognition of their rich indigenous culture and their significant contributions, particularly to the tourism industry.

## Challenges

While there may be unity in diversity in the region, conflicts arise and these impede the full development of certain tribal communities and indigenous peoples and the attainment of peaceful co-existence in the region. The following are the challenges that affect diverse culture in the region:

### Lukewarm involvement of IPs in development processes

One of the challenges confronting the indigenous peoples is the laidback implementation of the policies, decrees, and other related laws that recognize their inherent right to claim ownership over their ancestral domain handed to them by their ancestors since birth. These supporting laws include, among others, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), and the UN Declaration on the

Rights of the IPs (UNDRIP).

Section 17, Art XIV of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that “The State shall recognize, respect, and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions. It shall consider these rights in the formulation of national plans and policies.” Further, Chapter VI, Section 32 of R.A. 8371 on The Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997 states that “The IPs have the right to practice and revitalize their own cultural traditions and customs. The State shall preserve, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures as well as the right to the restitution of cultural, intellectual, religious, and spiritual property taken without their FPIC or in violation of their laws, tradition and customs.”

There is a need to intensify the participation

of tri-people in the development processes, particularly their membership in local planning and conflict resolution bodies. It is necessary that the issues and concerns of indigenous peoples shall be considered in all aspects of development. Issues are raised about the non-recognition of Indigenous Political Structure (IPS) and the highly politicized selection of indigenous people mandatory representation (IPMR) which is not based on culture.

### Indigenous peoples suffer from poverty and injustice

Along with inadequate manpower support, most indigenous peoples suffer from poverty and injustice due to lack of education, technical know-how, security, social facilities, micro-financing, and land tenure security. Their domain provides ideal terrain for rebel bases and because of deprivation, the IPs developed reliance on the rebels for security and sustenance.

### Need to fast track resolution of ancestral domain claims and mapping of IP areas

A number of ancestral domain claims remain unresolved due to the tedious requirements for application for Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) and the manipulation of free and prior informed consent process (FPIC). There is also no fund to implement the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADS DPP), hence, the continued absence of government and development in ancestral domain areas.

### Overlapping of land tenure instruments and support documents

For quite some time, the indigenous peoples are also faced with the overlapping of land tenure instruments and support documents. Laws were passed delineating the functions and jurisdictions,

as well as the operational issues between and among the agencies concerned, namely, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), National Commission on the Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the Land Registration Authority (LRA). Most often, conflicts still arise from among them.

### Inequity in the delivery of health services, discrimination and insensitivity to culture and traditions of the indigenous tribes

Tribes living in the hinterlands still cling to their traditional beliefs on the causes of sickness and healing practices because they are deprived of quality health services. In essence, culture-sensitive health care and nutrition services, particularly for the women, infants, persons with special needs, and the elderly are not adequately provided.

### Lack of latest data on the disaggregation of population by ethnic origin

Information on the profile of the indigenous peoples in the region is inadequate. Data on how many are the indigenous peoples and their specific locations are not available because recent data on the population by ethnic origin are still based on the 1990 Census. The inadequacy of data could limit the extent convergence of interventions that may be provided to the IPs.

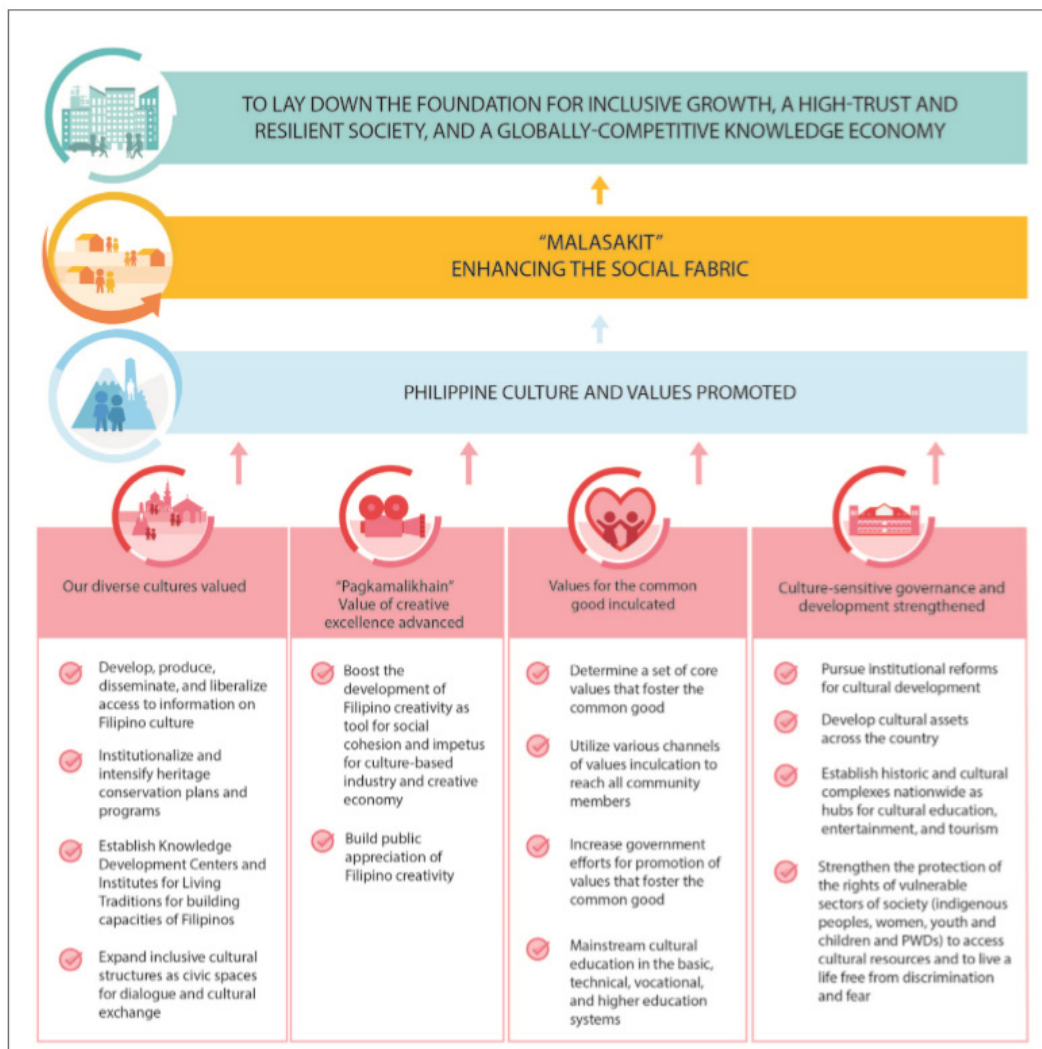
### Absence of documentation of the culture and practices of indigenous people

Each province in the region displays a particular culture that would need proper documentation to ensure its continuity and appreciation by the next generation.

The T’bolis in South Cotabato are a living tradition with their culture, food, and woven sacred cloth called T’nalak. The B’laan traditions in Sarangani and General Santos include the tabih which is a vibrant and elegant traditional woven piece of cloth from abaca strand, embroidery and cross stitches using cut pearl, and the suwat (comb). Cotabato City boasts of cultural charms of the colorful handwoven inaul, the brassware produced using the age-old wax evaporation technique for its intricate design, and the local delicacies

like pastil, tinagtag, tipas and dodol. The Tedurays are in the mountains of Sultan Kudarat who produce house items using materials from nature like bamboo, rattan and cogon grasses as house roofing and the finely woven baskets using natural dyes for designs that reflect plants and animals. At the foothills of Mt. Apo in Cotabato Province are the Manobos who claim to be the guardians of Apo with their rituals and customs. Structures like museums can be established for the display of cultural arts and crafts.

**Figure 6: Strategic Framework to Promote Philippine Culture and Values, 2017-2022**



## Priority Strategy

As Filipinos, the indigenous peoples in the region shall be afforded the right to a decent life by providing access to basic services, appropriate education and skills training opportunities and allowing them to exercise their rights in governing their communities. Strategies in affected IP areas require a deeper sense of awareness, sensitivity and understanding. To address their concerns, the following strategies are recommended:

- Promotion of social justice and equity among the indigenous peoples and intensified advocacy on culture-sensitive governance.
- Issuance of CADT/CALT.
- Implementation and compliance with the Joint Administrative Order No. 01-12 on the jurisdictional and operational issues between and among DAR, DENR, NCIP and LRA.
- Provision of equal access to basic social services, such as education and health services, housing, skills training opportunities, particularly those in far flung areas.
- Provision of sustainable livelihood and employment, technical skills training, and other development programs.
- Profiling of indigenous peoples in the region and the formulation of Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plans (ADSDPPs).
- Compliance with the provisions of the IPRA Law, particularly on their Right To Self-Governance and Empowerment

## Legislative Agenda

The region supports the recommendation that all agencies and local government units shall allocate one (1) percent of their budget

for programs and projects specifically intended for the indigenous peoples.

## Results Matrix

The region will continue to advocate the thrust of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts in classifying Heritage Properties located in the region and to preserve these sites as mandated by RA

10066 otherwise known as the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 for the state to conserve, develop, promote, and popularize the nation's historical and cultural heritage and resources, as well as artistic creations.

*Table 10: Results Matrix to Promote Philippine Culture and Values*

<b>Societal Goal: To lay down the Foundation for Inclusive Growth, a High Trust Society, and a Globally Competitive Knowledge Economy</b>			
<b>Intermediate Outcome: Enhanced the Social Fabric</b>			
<b>Sector Outcome: Philippine Culture and Values Promoted</b>			
Indicators	Baseline		Target
	Year	Value	
<b>Improved Local Governance on Culture and Arts</b>			
Percentage of LGUs with functional Local Culture and Arts Council (LCAC)	2016		
Percentage of LGUs compliant to the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) criteria on Tourism, Culture and the Arts	2016		
Number of IPs participating in the Development Process	2016		
Number of provincial plans with culture and arts component	2016		
<b>Increased Understanding and Promotion of Filipino Culture and Arts</b>			
Number of established and functional SLT and knowledge development centers	2016		6
Number of IKSP documentation produced	2016		
Number of awareness campaign programs on the rights of IP conducted	2016		
Number of LGUs undertaken cultural mapping	2016		
Increasing number of registered cultural property	2016		
Number of profiled cultural masters	2016		
<b>Improved Administration of Ancestral Domain Claims and the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP)</b>			
Number of CADT/CALT issued	2016		
Number of CADT/CALT approved by the Commission	2016		
Number of ADSDPP Formulated	2016		
<b>Increased appreciation and preservation of Filipino Values</b>			
Increasing number of institutionalized Filipino core values that foster common good	2016	3	
<b>Improved delivery of Culturally Responsive Socio-Economic Programs</b>			
<b>Number of IP students that availed scholarship programs</b>			
Educational Assistance Program (EAP)	2016	288	
Merit-based Scholarship Program	2016	28	
Number of conducted capacity building programs for IPs to address poverty	2016		
Percentage of sustained livelihood programs for the IPs community	2016		

Source of data: NCCA, LGUs, NCMF XII, NCIP XII