

**Project reference**

REH/2004-094-790

**EC Partner**Citizen's Disaster Response  
Centre**Facts and Figures**

- Duration: **2005- 2007**
- EC contribution:  
**€1.1 million**
- Beneficiaries: internally displaced people of Mindanao
- Health and education services provided to communities
- Water facilities with potable water installed
- **750 children** and **88 adult** members learned to read, count and write
- Peace-building activities and disaster preparedness committees set up

**EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION**

## Migration and asylum

### Taking Roots Again

Vulnerability reduction programme for the internally displaced people of Mindanao (Philippines)

*"Before I die, I hope to read stories of peace and of people uprooted no more."*

Habiba Hashin from Pagulangan, Maguindanao whose new found literacy skills will help her fulfil her dream at 75

**Context: Rebuilding the lives of internally displaced people in Mindanao**

In 2000, armed conflicts in Southern Mindanao displaced some 140 000 families or approximately 750 000 people from Central Mindanao, the autonomous region of Muslim Mindanao, Southern and Western Mindanao. Three years later another armed conflict resulted in the evacuation of more than 113 000 families or some 585 000 people. More than 300 houses were totally destroyed.

The "Taking Roots Again Project" was implemented against a backdrop of internal displacements, continuing economic hardship and natural disasters that continued to affect many parts of Mindanao.

**Objective: Rebuilding the lives of internally displaced people**

This project aims to rebuild and re-strengthen the socio-economic fabric of communities that have been displaced by the recurring armed conflicts in Mindanao.

**Impact: What has been achieved?**

Under the food security and livelihood component, farm equipment and post-harvest machinery have been distributed to the beneficiaries thereby reducing their production expenses and increasing their income.

Some 1 200 trained health workers and 142 teachers continue to help in providing health, education and other social services to the communities. Water facilities have also been installed providing safe and potable water to the communities.

A total of 750 children and 88 adults learned to read, count and write while more than 1 000 children and adults are enrolled in functional literacy programmes.

Peace-building activities and disaster preparedness committees have been put in place enabling internally displaced people to rebuild their lives anew after the internal conflicts that swept their communities.

# Migration and asylum

## Taking Roots Again

Vulnerability reduction program for the internally displaced people of Mindanao

### Habiba's Story

Habiba Hashin is already 75, but she did not know as a child what it was like to attend school, to write her own name and count.

Habiba remembered how, during her stay in an evacuation centre in Pagalungan, her family was not able to receive their ration of relief goods because her stub bore another's name. *"If only poverty and armed conflict would be immediately resolved, illiteracy would be unknown here,"* she said. *"Being illiterate is like being blind and deaf,"* she added.

On 5 July 2005, 26 women walked to the *madrasah* (Islamic school) for the start of the Adult Literacy Program (ALP) - their very first literacy and numeracy classes. Despite Habiba's poor eyesight, she painstakingly attended each class, making her ALP's oldest student. *"I can count now and write my name!"* she exclaimed, teary-eyed. After learning how to read, count and write, Habiba and 25 other classmates are excited with the news that their life-skills education will sustain their yearning for new learning. But they know that the pursuit of education has just started as many challenges lay ahead and the journey to peace is a continuing process.

Habiba has this to say, *"Before I die, I hope to read stories of peace and of people uprooted no more."* Even at 75, she is now better equipped to push for true and lasting peace in her war-torn community.

