

SULONG CARHRIHL's TRAINING PROGRAM Briefing Paper

A. SULONG CARHRIHL

SULONG CARHRIHL is a citizens' network that aims to prevent violations and promote observance of CARHRIHL (Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law), an agreement signed by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) in 1988 and put into effect in 2004.

SULONG CARHRIHL was organized in 2004 and formally launched in February 2005. Its conveners come from different peace, human rights, humanitarian and developmental NGOs, coalitions, sectoral organizations and academic and religious institutions from different parts of the country. SULONG CARHRIHL continues to reach out to other groups and individuals who wish to be part of the network and become active advocates of peace, human rights and humanitarian law in areas affected by the armed conflict between the Philippine government and the Communist Party of the Philippines- New People's Army- NDFP.

Goals and Nature of SULONG CARHRIHL

The primary activities of the network are:

1. Education and advocacy on CARHRIHL and peace building.
2. Prevention of violations and monitoring of observance of human rights and international humanitarian law in the context of the CARHRIHL through various mechanisms.
3. Network building for effective intervention locally and nationally.

In all, SULONG CARHRIHL hopes to address the needs of communities and groups affected by the armed conflict; support and sustain the peace process between the GRP and NDF; and provide additional avenues for constructive dialogue among the main stakeholders of the peace process.

As a "third party", the network will maintain its independence and autonomy from the parties to the armed conflict. It will not file complaints on behalf of the victims but will ensure that they will have recourse and that the CARHRIHL processes and structures are responsive. Most of all, it will campaign for the observance of CARHRIHL by both parties in order to prevent violations.

Organizational Form

The SULONG CARHRIHL network is led and coordinated by a Steering Committee composed of several individuals from different organizations and constituting a soon-to-be registered NGO. A Manila-based Secretariat performs the day-to-day needs of the organization. The Steering Committee and Secretariat work directly with partners in developing plans of action and providing assistance such as trainings and campaign support.

Local partners undertake advocacy and monitoring. Mutual support and coordination with national center is ensured through consultations, joint activities and other media communications such as the e-group, website and organizational reports.

In order to provide a venue for sharing lessons and experiences and drawing up plans and strategies, SULONG CARHRIHL hopes to regularize the holding of an annual consultative assembly of the network that will be attended by existing and potential partners.

B. The Training on CARHRIHL and PEACE

Sulong CARHRIHL's training module is unique in that it provides an intimate linkage between the promotion of human rights and international humanitarian law and peace building. The module thus develops and depends understanding of the network's slogan, "Our rights, our peace".

Six topics make up the complete module:

- Introduction: Objectives & Expectations of the Training, Sulong CARHRIHL
- Human Rights
- Effects of Armed Conflicts and the International Humanitarian Law
- Sulong CARHRIHL Orientation
- Causes of Armed Conflicts, Peace and the Peace Process
- Peace Building

The module adopts a highly participatory method. Trainers adapt the conduct of the training to the nature of the participants and the local situation. Conscious efforts are made to be sensitive to culture, gender, security considerations, and so.

The whole module takes at least three days. However, parts of the modules can be taught separately or independently, according to needs and priorities.

The module was tested in April 2006 with youth, religious, labor, women, and urban poor leaders from Central and Southern Luzon, as participants. Since then, it has been used in trainings for indigenous communities in Quezon and Cotabato, and social action workers in Bicol and Eastern Visayas. We are currently undergoing a second review and enhancement of the module, which we hope to finish by end of May 2007. A trainers' training is also scheduled in July 2007.

Objectives of the Training

- To deepen participants' knowledge and understanding of human rights, international humanitarian law, the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL), and peace building.
- To encourage and assist the participants in drawing up insights, plans and strategies to address the impact of armed conflict in their communities and advance peace building.
- To enhance partnership among and between participants and host organizations (Sulong CARHRIHL and local partner), and identify ways and means of mutual assistance and collaboration.

Summary of Each of the Topics

1. Introduction

This part allows for preliminaries such as introduction of participations, expectations check and objectives of the training, and orientation on Sulong CARHRIHL -- its organizational objectives and its role as third party in the peace process particularly the promotion and observance of CARHRIHL to communities affected by the armed conflict between the GRP and the NDFP.

2. Human Rights

This part discusses the definition of human rights, its history, foundations, principles and characteristics; and provides an overview of international human rights agreements.

3. Effects of Armed Conflict and International Humanitarian Law

Topics include definition, characteristics and effects of armed conflict focusing specifically on the high cost of war especially on the civilian population; the importance, history and development of the international humanitarian law; and the basic principles of IHL- protection, limitation, neutrality and distinction.

4. CARHRIHL

The fourth module deepens familiarity with HR and IHL, as elaborated in the different sections of the CARHRIHL. It accentuates CARHRIHL objectives, HR and IHL principles to which the conflicting parties have committed, and the role of the Joint Monitoring Committee of GRP and NDFP.

6. Causes of Armed Conflict, Peace and Peace Process

This section examines the armed conflict and its root causes; introduces the concept of negative (absence of physical conflict) and positive (development, social justice and resolution of violations) peace; and draws out participants' views on the ways to achieve negative and positive peace.

7. Peace Building

This section identifies facilitating and hindering factors in civil society peace building. It also allows participants to explore the key actors in their communities who are important in peace building, and the various elements needed in peace building.

C. Organizational Arrangements

The training will be co-organized by Sulong CARHRIHL and its local partner organization(s). A total of 30 participants is recommended for the conduct of a training.

Sulong CARHRIHL prepares the training kits and materials, and provides the facilitators for the training proper. It also provides budgetary assistance, based on the needs of the local partner.

The local partner organization discusses with the Sulong CARHRIHL secretariat the conditions and concerns they wish taken into account in holding the training; identifies and invites the target participants, and makes the technical preparation for the aspects necessary in holding the training such as the training venue, and board and lodging of participants. The local partner also prepares the budget for consideration, including a local counterpart, based on capacity. It also submits to Sulong CARHRIHL documentation of expenses agreed upon and incurred, as well as a narrative report and feedback.

Other arrangements will be mutually agreed upon by Sulong CARHRIHL and the local partners.