



**GOP-UNDP PROGRAMME
FOSTERING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**



**UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES - NATIONAL COLLEGE OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE (UP-NCPAG):
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER**

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FINAL OUTPUT REPORT

**ALTERNATIVE LAW GROUPS, INC.
NATIONAL PARALEGAL CONFERENCE
Collecting Stories, Exchanging Models**



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1. Rationale/Objectives

An innovative and more strategic approach in addressing the issue of inadequacy of legal representation for the poor is the training of paralegals from among the ranks of the poor. Paralegals are members of grassroots organizations and communities who are equipped with knowledge and skills that enable them to respond to the legal representation needs of their organizations and communities. The Alternative Law Groups, Inc. (ALG), a coalition of eighteen (18) legal resource organizations, is at the forefront of the efforts to train paralegals from among the poor. The ALG's paralegal formation program is based on the framework that the poor and marginalized should be empowered and have the capacity to be able to respond to their legal needs, with minimal support from lawyers and legal organizations.

Project Description

The project, "Paralegal Conference on Access to Justice by the Poor" aimed at consolidating the gains of the paralegal formation programs being implemented by the ALG involving the basic sectors. The conference provided a venue in looking at different models of community empowerment through providing the basic sectors with tools to use the law in advancing or protecting their rights and looking into the contribution of women in advancing access to justice at the community level.

The conference was a venue in discussing how the members of poor and marginalized groups, particularly women, can maximize the paralegal formation program as a means of responding to the issue of inadequate legal services and lack of access to justice. The conference also provided an opportunity to gather baseline data in the implementation of the paralegal formation program throughout the country. The conference was able to identify policy proposals that were presented to the Supreme Court seeking to enhance the administration and access to justice of the poor and marginalized.

The project was implemented for a period of five (5) months, from May-September 2006, including the preparatory and post-conference work. The paralegal conference was conducted in 26-30 June 2006 in SEAMEO, Innotech, Commonwealth Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

The conference was attended by paralegals from different areas throughout the country, and by representatives from government offices, donor agencies, civil society organizations, law students and other stakeholders of justice reform.

In the long term, the project will contribute to the attainment of "More accountable and rule-based justice institutions for greater access by the poor to justice and human security."

Objectives

General Objective:

To increase the level of accessibility and participation by the poor and marginalized to justice services by providing a venue for exchanges among community paralegals who belong to the poor and marginalized sectors; and between paralegals and government officers, towards enhancing (a) the poor's capacities to access and use mechanisms of justice to address their issues and concerns, and (b) the government's responses to ensure access to justice by the poor.

Specific Objectives:

- To provide a venue for exchanges among paralegals belonging to the poor and marginalized sectors in consolidating their gains and milestones in addressing their issues through the developmental use of the law and identifying access to justice and gender issues;
- To identify different models of engaging the Judiciary and other agencies involved in the administration of justice through the different paralegal formation programs that are being implemented by the ALG with its partners, particularly looking into the participation of women in community-based paralegal formation and access to justice issues;
- To provide a venue for dialogues between community paralegals and government officers to discuss solutions to the problem of limited access to justice by the poor and gender insensitivity of the different pillars of the justice system,
- To identify and present policy proposals for the Judiciary to respond and realize the objectives of the APJR in addressing the issues of the poor and marginalized, particularly looking into gender equality and equity.
- To start the development of a network of paralegals that will work for further empowerment of the poor and marginalized groups in using judicial and other services for justice.

2. Participants

The conference was attended by 151 stakeholders of justice reform – paralegals, representatives of the national government and local government organization, partner implementers, funding agencies, law students, and ALG members and friends.

A total of 83 Paralegals were present in the conference. There were 47 males and 36 females from NCR, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao who came representing 57 organizations. They belong to or working for the different sectors, namely: peasant (24), indigenous peoples (19), women (17), children (7), urban poor (6), labor (5), HIV/ AIDS & RH (2), and local government units (2).

During the Public Forum of the Conference, representatives from various national government agencies specifically the offices directly accountable to the participating sectors shared their insights on the issues facing the community paralegals . Partner NGOs and representatives of funding agencies were also present in the conference and showed their support in this event.

3. Content Outline/Coverage

Program of Activities

Monday, June 26, 2006

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION

Tuesday, June 27, 2006

Time	Activity
Morning	
8:00 - 8:30	Registration
8:30 - 9:00	Invocation Zuraida Anayatin, Edgar Domulot, Charis Ramos National Anthem Atty. Che Cabutihan
9:00 - 9:30	Introduction of Participants Atty. Jan Eugenio and Atty. Jo Sescon
9:30 - 9:45	Welcome Remarks Ms. Lorena Navallasca
9:45 - 10:00	Conference Objectives and Conference Orientation Jan Eugenio and Jo Sescon
10:00 - 10:30	The Alternative Law Groups (ALG) Atty. Arlene "Kaka" J. Bag-ao
10:30 - 11:30	ALG Paralegal Framework Atty. Marlon J. Manuel
11:30 - 12:00	Open Forum
12:00 - 1:00	LUNCH
Afternoon	
1:00 - 2:30	Presentation of Paralegal Models from Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao and Metro Manila Luzon: Atty. Dingby Ballesteros Visayas: Ms. Lorena Navallasca Mindanaw: Atty. Normie Batula
2:30 - 3:30	Presentation of Policy Agenda on Justice Reform (Synthesis of LVM) Ms. Jane Lynn D. Capacio
3:30 - 4:30	Validation Workshop (intra-region) Facilitators: Sergio Dacup, Atty. Mon Salas, Atty. Che Cabutihan, Atty. Jo Sescon and Atty. Rhia Muhi Documentors: Mr. Francis, Ms. Karen Tapang, Mr. Victor Enerio, Ms. Linette Alqueza, and Atty. Hazel Lavitoria
4:30 - 5:30	Reporting (Plenary) Atty. Jan Eugenio and Atty. Glenda Litong
5:30 - 6:00	Synthesis Atty. Jarley Sulay-Trugillo

Emcees: Atty. Jan Eugenio, Atty. Jo Sescon and Atty. Glenda Litong

Wednesday, 28 June 2006: **PUBLIC FORUM**

Morning	
9:00 - 9:30	Invocation Zenaida Anayatin, Remedios Marquez, Charis Ramos National Anthem Atty. Che Cabutihan
9:30 - 9:45	Welcome Address Mr. Gerry Bulatao
9:45 - 10:30	History of ALG and Paralegalism Atty. Carolina Ruiz-Austria
10:30 - 11:15	ALG PL Models and Policy Agenda of Grassroots Paralegals Atty. Marlon J. Manuel
11:15 - 11:30	Introduction of the Keynote Speaker Atty. Arlene "Kaka" J. Bag-ao
11:30 - 12:00	Keynote Address Sec. Corazon "Dinky" Juliano-Soliman
12:00 - 1:00	LUNCH
Afternoon	
1:00 - 3:00	Solidarity Messages
3:00 - 5:00	Planning for the Lakbay-Aral
5:00 - onwards	Dinner/Solidarity Night c/o ALG Secretariat

Emcees: Lyca Sarenas and Atty. Dingby Ballesteros

Thursday, 29 June 2006 - **LAKBAY ARAL**

8:00 - 9:00	Travel to the Supreme Court
9:30 - 11:30	<i>Lakbay-Aral sa Supreme Court</i>
9:30 - 10:00	SC Video Presentation
10:00 - 11:30	Q & A, SC Tour, and Picture-taking
11:30 - 2:00	LUNCH
2:00 - 4:00	Processing of the Lakbay-Aral Atty. Marla Barcenilla
4:00 - 4:15	Closing Remarks & Evaluation

4. Evaluation of the Activity

Evaluation of the conference was divided into three parts. The first part is the processing of the Lakbay Aral in the Supreme Court. The second is the paralegal's assessment of the entire activity using an evaluation form and the third is the assessment by the ALG members.

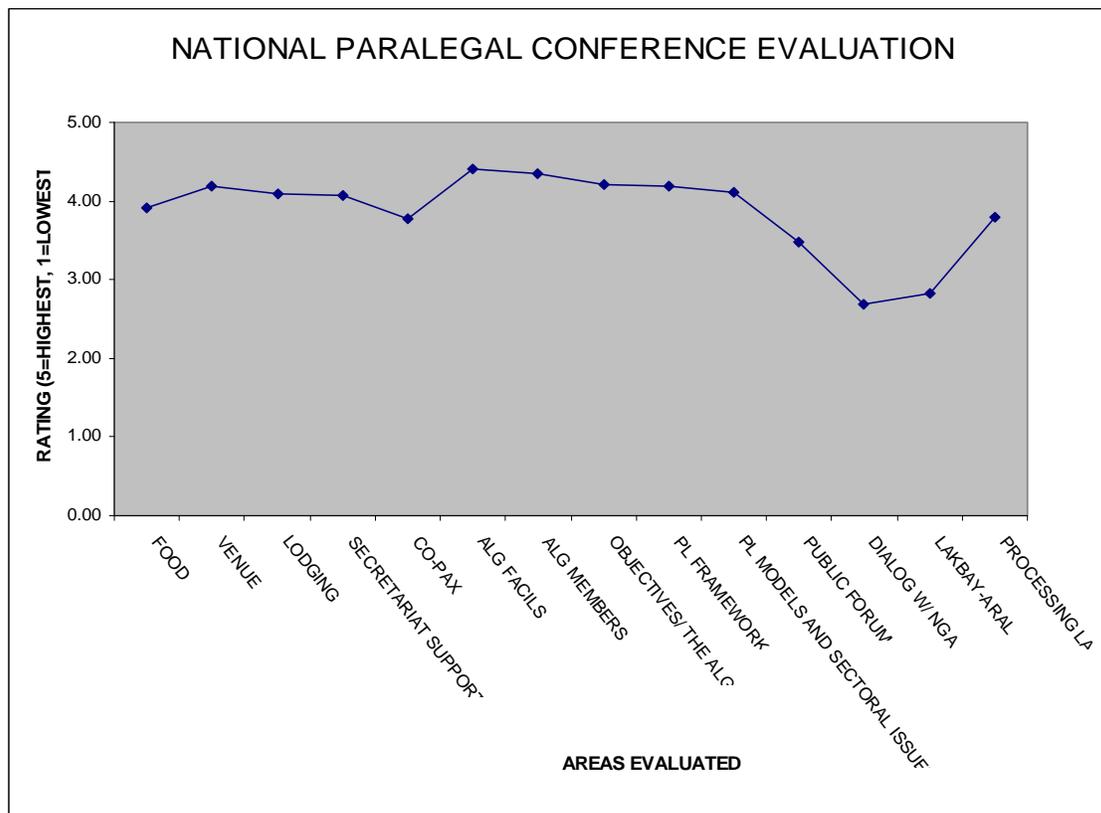
Processing of the Lakbay Aral

The following statements were points raised by the paralegals regarding their experience on the Lakbay Aral to Supreme Court.

1. The Supreme Court video presentation was a form of mind conditioning to gather sympathy from the viewers.
2. The dialogue was not facilitated well.
3. It was disheartening that there are still those among us who do not know how to follow instructions, i.e. the flow of the Q & A portion of the visit.
4. The capacity of the staff (two junior staff of the Supreme Court assisted and received the group) who were there to answer our questions was questionable. We were not able to get concrete answers/ commitments from them. Some of our advocacies were even disputed like the issue on the formal recognition of paralegals.
5. The absence of the justices was very disappointing
6. Clarification re MLOU's course on paralegal studies, the paralegal being referred to are the paralegals who assist lawyers, this is what they study. The ALG is in the process of developing a curriculum and will be pushing this agenda to the SC.
7. From that experience we are faced with the following challenges:
 - i. On the issue of lack of resources, the challenge for us is to push for reforms in the justice system and we have to demand for results. Lack of resources should not be a reason for us not to demand our rights to access to justice, it is not a reason for justice not to be served.
 - ii. We have succeeded in our first step of making the SC aware of our demands by submitting the statement. Let us make sure that we sustain our advocacies and demand results from the SC.
 - iii. Finally, let us share and use everything that we learned from this conference. Bring everything back to the community, move on and continue pushing for reforms.

Paralegals' Evaluation of the Conference

The paralegals evaluated the conference by using an evaluation form. This tool was used to know the level of satisfaction with regards to the various aspects of the conference. The mode used in measuring the satisfactory level was 1-5 scale with five (5) as the highest. They were also provided space for additional comments. The graph below shows the result of the evaluation.



From the Paralegals' assessment, the dialogue with the representatives of the national government agencies was disappointing because some government officials can not give concrete solutions to the issues raised. They think this is so because the representatives were not the authorities who can decide on the issues of the sectors. Another factor that contributed to the dissatisfaction was the inadequacy of time to exhaust the dialogue about one issue.

The ALG assessment of the Conference

Based on the assessment conducted by the member representatives, the conference provided a venue for other paralegals to be enlightened on the strategies of other paralegals in tackling their issues. On the interaction among and between paralegals, there was mixed observations. One said that there interaction among paralegals from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao was less while one said there was sufficient interaction time. One representative felt that the expectation to share stories was not met. She hoped that there would have been longer time for the paralegals to share knowledge, resources, and strength in their advocacies.

The Workshop on day one was all right but it needs more time for the sharing of stories.

On the public forum, there were questions and replies that dragged on. Facilitation was commendable because they were able to manage the number of questions raised by the paralegals who have been wanting to vent their sentiments to national government representatives. This would have been all right had there been longer time to accommodate all the issues raised. This particular activity was empowering on the part of the paralegals because it was seen that there was equal treatment between the paralegals and the government officials.

Although not all government officials who were invited came, some ALG members were impressed with the Secretariat's effort in making these government officials present. This is so because the observer noted that it is not that easy for government representatives to attend functions organized by a non-government organization knowing that they seldom share the same views.

On Lakbay Aral, to some ALG member representatives, the objectives were unclear. Thus, they do not know if these objectives were achieved or not. It was also observed that it is hard to blame the Supreme Court representatives on their answers to the issues raised because they are not in the position to address them. It was also pointed out that the preparations made for the SC visit was too much considering that not one SC Justice or at least a Court Administrator was present during the dialogue. A statement submitted to their office could have been enough.

While consultations or cliniquing with the lawyers were not really part of the conference design, this was registered as unmet expectations.

Internally, the activity provided a good opportunity for the coalition to work as one. It showed a high rate of participation and cooperation among member organizations. Each one was ready to give his/her support during the activity and the representative from the member organizations fit in easily in the group. It was evident that it was a coalition activity - there was team effort. The coalition did not rely solely on the Secretariat. At some point the conference was member-led, member-driven activity.

The creation of an Organizing Committee and the composition of the conference secretariat had a big role in the success of the conference. The secretariat came from not just one organization but from four organizations –SALIGAN, ALTERLAW, BALAOD Mindanaw and KAISAHAN. It was a big help that the secretariat was composed of ALG members because they were already familiar with the process and culture of the coalition.

Praises were also given to the photo exhibit prepared by SALIGAN interns and to the conference logo.

On communications, there was a delay in conveying the information among the members. Some instructions came out late – e.g. format on the sectoral issues. Another reason is the inaccessibility of the yahoogroups by some members. Or the inavailability of the staff to reply to the messages because he/she is on a field work.

Overall, coordination was a difficult task but on a scale of 1-5, it was rated 4.

Difficulties/ Issues Encountered and Lessons Learned

- On content: Be more conscious/ realistic with the time allocation and the expected output especially if there are dialogues with national agencies.
- Difficulty in facilitating the dialogue with the government officials: Many participants wanted to forward their respective issues, which is understandable because they don't get to talk to the government representatives often.
- Come up with detailed real-life stories: Provide ample time for the participants to share their experiences. Collect them, collate them. These stories will be the stories behind the models that we have presented.

5. Directory of Participants

Directory of PARALEGALS

	Names	Sex	Sector/ Ethnicity	region	Address	Organization
	ALTERLAW					
1	Beth Papa	F	HIV/AIDS – RH Bicol, Manila	ncr	1066 Remedios St. Malate, Manila	Pinoy PlusAssociation
2	Jess Ramirez	M	HIV/AIDS – RH Bicol	ncr	2613 Diad St. Malate, Manila	Positive Action Foundation Philippines, Inc. (PAFPI)
	BALAOB					
3	Samuel Abrogar	M	Peasant	mindanao	Madaguig, Claveria, Misamis Oriental	PL Claveria
4	Ireneo Butawan	M	peasant Surigaonon (Upland Farmer)	mindanao	Carmen, Surigao del Sur	LBDA
5	Nelson Nullas	M	Peasant	mindanao	Agusan del Sur	KAMMAE
6	Rene Penas	M	Peasant	mindanao	San Vicente, Sumilao, Bukidnon	MAPALAD
7	Ricardo Taculayan	M	Peasant IP Sebuano	mindanao	Molopolo Kib, Davao del Sur	HAGKIMATA
8	Rhodora Vicente	F	peasant Cebuana Farmer	mindanao	Brgy. Kalagonoy, Gingog City	Blooming Forest MPC
9	Estrella Villarín	F	Peasant, Lumad IP	mindanao	Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon	PALAMBU
	CLB					
10	Moises Andales	M	Women and children	visayas	Cebu	Cebu CASAGAL 340-5369/ 340- 0978
11	Abenadel Atonducan	F	Women and children	visayas	Cebu	Cebu CASAGAL (032)344-7967/ 09194163038/ 09168785879
12	Carlitos Duenas	M	children and Cebu	visayas	Cebu City	Cebu CASAGAL
13	Erlinda Parame	F	Women and children	visayas	Cebu City	Cebu CASAGAL

14	Leticia Patalinghug	F	Women and children, cebuano	visayas	Cebu	Cebu CASAGAL
	ELAC					
15	Eric Auza	M	environment/ Cebuano	visayas	Cebu City	CEI
16	Jocelyn Caseres	F	Environment	visayas	Cebu City	CFA
17	Luciano Insik	M	Cebuano and Fisherfolk peasant	visayas	Cebu City	SANRACA
18	Michael Maglasang	M	Cebuano, environment	visayas	Tacloban City	ELAC
19	Jose Natividad	M	Peasant	luzon	Malaking Patag, Culion, Palawan	ELAC
20	Felipe Serdena	M	Peasant	luzon	Malaking Patag, Culion, Palawan	ELAC
21	Marlon Tamsi	M	Fisherfolk	luzon	271-E Malvar St., Puerto Princesa City 9067762265	ELAC
	FREELAVA					
22	Ray Galas	M	Bisaya LGU	visayas	54 Panganiban St. Cebu City	Lupon Brgy. Pahina Central
23	Oscar Morales	M	LGU Cebuano	visayas	317-L Creekside, Lorega San Miguel, Cebu City	GAD F.P. Brgy. Lorega San Miguel
	KAISAHAN					
24	Danilo Degorio	M	Ormokanon, Farmer peasant	visayas	Mahayag, Ormoc City	MUSFA
25	Nestor Elimane	M	Ilonggo	visayas	Banate, Iloilo	PATANOM
26	Orlando Nolada	M	Peasant	visayas	Calacja-1, Hamtic, Antique	APPLAN
27	Ananias Parcon	M	Peasant, Ilonggo	visayas	Com. Drive Passi City, Iloilo	PATANOM
28	Juancho Sabarre	M		visayas	Caibiran, Biliran	
	LRC/KSK/FoE – CDO					
29	Arcelin Balincasag	F	IP Manobo	mindanao	Quezon, Bukidnon	Quemtras
30	Jesus Catamco	M	Cebuano Peasant	mindanao	Poblacion B, Midsalip,	Kamisumi

					Zamboanga del Sur	
31	Analyn Esan	F	IP Manobo, Talandig	mindanao	P-8 Kisanday, Maramag, Bukidnon	Kkinamata
32	Jessel Suello	M	IP Manobo	mindanao	Quezon, Bukidnon	Quemtras
33	Wilma Tero	F	IP Subaanen	mindanao	Subaanen Ministry 7021 Midsalip, Zamboanga del Sur	TUPUSUMI
	LRC/KSK/FoE – DAVAO					
34	Roger Billote	M	Farmer peasant	mindanao	Macambol, Mati, Davao Oriental	MMSAID
35	Lito Guerrero	M	IP Higaonon, Alimaong Peasant	mindanao	Macambol, Mati, Davao Oriental	MMSAID
36	Miguel Lomayong	M	IP	mindanao	Columbio, Sultan Kudarat	La-Bugal
	LRC/KSK/FoE - LUZON					
37	Peter Duyapat	M	Ifugao Farmer peasant	luzon	Didipio, Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya	DESAMA
38	Florinda Inlab	F	Ifugao Farmer peasant	luzon	Didipio, Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya	DESAMA
39	Tolentino Inlab	M	Ifugao Farmer peasant	luzon	Didipio, Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya	DESAMA
40	Lorie Licop	F	Marinduqueño	luzon	Mogpog, Marinduque	MACEC
41	Midz Maling	F	Marinduqueño	luzon	Boac, Marinduque	MACEC
42	Agnes Panay	F	IP Igorot	luzon	Bontoc, Mt. Province	Bontoc
43	Rosa Tomasa Sangayab	F	IP Igorot	luzon	Bontoc, Mt. Province	LRC
	PANLIPI					
44	Gerry Callado	M	IP Igorot	luzon	Baguio City	Panlipi
45	Edgar Domulot	M	IP Ayta	luzon	Villar, Bihawo, Botolan, Zambales	Panlipi
46	Remedios Marquez	F	IP Agata Dumagat	luzon	General Nakar	Panlipi

47	Marivic Bero	F	IP Ilocano	luzon	Rm 205 DBP Bldg., Rizal Ave., Puerto Princesa City, Palawan 5300 9169845200	Panlipi
48	Demetrio Romion	M	IP Sibuyanon	luzon	Cambajao, Cajidlocan, Romblon	Panlipi
49	Maricor Tolentino	F	IP Hiligaynon	visayas	Negros Occidental	Panlipi
50	Alejo Zata	M	Sulod/ Bukidnon	visayas	Sapao, Dumangas, Iloilo, Panay Island	Panlipi/ Katipan
51	Victorino Gementiza Jr.	M	IP	mindanao	Kidapawan City	Panlipi
52	Catalino Kutaquio	M	IP Agta	luzon	Quezon	Panlipi
53	Laarni Pasion	M	IP Mandaya	mindanao	Mati, Davao Oriental	Panlipi
54	Jonah Rienzi Roa	M	IP Bisaya	mindanao	Rm. 308 Abalos bldg., Aguinaldo St., Iligan City	Panlipi
	PBPF					
55	Jimmy Buan	M	IP	mindanao	Kinilis, Polomolok, South Cotabato City	MBFA
56	Virginia Granada	F	Dabaweano Farmer peasant	mindanao	Davao Oriental	SAFAI
57	Sulpecio Navaro Jr.	M	Fisherfolk peasant	mindanao		ISLAMDUNK
58	Gumaga Palao	M	Maguindanaon Environment	mindanao	Sultan Kudarat Pendatun, Maguindanao	LGU
	PLRC					
59	Zuraida Anayatin	F	Muslim Women	mindanao	015 Balagtas St., General Santol City	PLRC
60	Emilia A. Casil	F	Davaweano Women	mindanao	252 Purok 5 Brgy. 23-C, Davao City	Federation of Barangay Health Workers Davao City
61	Perla Dajao	F	Cebuano Women	mindanao	Brgy 21-C, Davao City	SEA-K
	PROCESS-Panay					

62	Lydia Caronica	F	Women and children	visayas	Marina St., San Jose, Antique City	BJA
63	Carlos Luces Sr.	M	Fisherfolk peasant	visayas	San Jose, Antique	Process Panay
64	Edna Magbanua	F	Women	visayas	San Jose, Antique	Process Panay
65	Esteban Salazar	M	Antiqueño Peasant	visayas	Esperanza, Culasi, Antique	Process Panay
	SALIGAN					
66	Buen Soceso Abapu	M	Fisherfolks peasant	luzon	Culion, Palawan	Culion Paralegals
67	Edwin Bustillos	M	Labor	luzon	Sct. De Guia, T. Morato, Quezon City	Alliance of Progressive Labor-NUWHRAIN 9178017309
68	Shiela Condono	F	Bicolano Women	luzon	Naga City	NCBFI
69	Monica Guillermo	F	Bicolana Urban Poor	luzon	228 Peñaranda St., Legazpi City	COPE NGO
70	Emily Saulon	F	Bicolana Women	luzon	15-A P.Diaz Ext. Sta. Cruz, Naga City	NCCW
71	Audie Lavador	M	Urban Poor	ncr	34 Union St. Ext, T. Sora Ave., Culiati, QC	ULRTF
72	Leni Ogarte	F	Labor	ncr	Blk. 4 Lot 28 Yakal St., Macaria Homes, Molino 2, Bacoor, Cavite	CPHELU-NUWHRAIN
73	Johnny Payod	M	Urban Poor	luzon	102 Sct. De Guia, T. Morato, Quezon City	KAMAO-APL
74	Lilibeth Santos	F	Women	ncr	Blk. 43 Lot 57 Sarmiento Homes, Muzon, SJDM, Bulacan	Women's Crisis Center
75	Bernadette B. Lingo	F	Urban Poor	ncr	15 San Jose Frisco, Quezon City	ULRTF
76	Margarita Villa	F	Cuyonin, Peasant	luzon	Culion, Palawan	Culion Paralegals
77	Rolly Villanueva	M	Urban Poor	luzon	Muntinlupa	HPFP-NCR

78	Albert Olazo	M	Labor	luzon	143-G Road 20, Proj. 8, Quezon City	NUWHRAIN
79	Nelly Lemoncito	F	Women	visayas	Negros Occidental	Quedan Kaisahan
80	Donna Nano	F	Labor Women	luzon	102 Sct. De Guia, T. Morato, Quezon City	NUWHRAIN-APL
	WLB					
81	Shirley Bohol	F	Women	ncr	8 Narcisus St., Roxas Dist., Quezon City	WLB
	WOMENLEAD					
82	Evelyn V. Abagao	F	Urban poor women	ncr	Upper Nawasa Prk 3 Unit 7 Brgy. Commonwealth, Quezon City	DAMPA
83	Ma. Daisy D. Gregorio	F	Women and Children	ncr	Brgy. Women's & Children's Desk, Brgy. 178 Camarin D., Calocan City	BWCD

Directory of Guests

Department of Agrarian Reforms			
Atty. Ruben Alvan	Assistant Director, Bureau of Agrarian Legal Assistance (BALA)	m	928 70 31 (206)
Atty. Primo Lara	Trial Attorney II, BALA	m	928 56 38
Atty. Zosimo Dagsa	Legal Officer, BALA	m	928 70 31 (107)
Department of Agriculture			
Atty. Jeselyn Santos	Attorney III, Legal Department	f	929 69 17
Department of Environment and Natural Resources			
Atty. Armi Jane Roa-Borje	OIC Undersecretary for Legal Affairs	f	
Atty. Michelle Go	Assistant Secretary for Legal Affairs	f	
Department of Social Welfare and Development			

Raquel R. Ascaño	Director	f	951 71 25
Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board			
Atty. Wilfredo Imperial	Director of Executive Services Group	m	927 27 23
Maritime Industry Authority			
Atty. Jabeth A. Dacanay	Officer-In-Charge	f	524 27 52
Mine and Geosciences Bureau			
Atty. Danilo U. Uykieng	Attorney III, Mines and Geosciences Legal Staff	m	926 09 06
National Commission on Indigenous Peoples			
Ms. Dahlia Dait-Cawed	Division Chief, Office of Empowerment and Human Rights Division	f	373 9657
Atty. Basilio A. Wandag	Director for Legal Affairs	m	374 59 51
National Conciliation and Mediation Board			
Atty. Hans Leo J. Cacdac	Executive Director	m	haby1305@yahoo.com
National Labor Relations Commission			
Atty. Manuel Manansala	Executive Labor Arbiter	m	781 78 54
Philippine Coastguard			
Atty. Lissa Belle Villanueva	Judge Advocate	f	527 84 81 lissabelle_villanueva@yahoo.com
Philippine National Police			
Atty. Arlyn Agtay	Legal Officer, PNP Legal Service	f	0917 856 27 04
League of Municipalities of the Philippines			
Atty. Romeo C. Plata	Chief, Administration and Legal Officer	m	913 57 37-38

6. Copies of Resolutions, Agreements, Draft Bills, Administrative Order

ALG National Paralegal Conference
27-29 June 2006
SEAMEO Innotech, Diliman Quezon City

Statement to the Supreme Court

We, the partner paralegals of the Alternative Law Groups, resolved to raise the following issues and concerns to the Supreme Court:

- **Discrimination and marginalization of paralegals before courts and quasi judicial bodies.** There are not enough alternative lawyers that have the heart to work with marginalized groups and identities. We, paralegals, are the ones that perform many of the legal work: conduct of legal research, gathering of evidence, and community strategizing of legal angles. Unfortunately, amid our efforts, we are not recognized when we go to courts and wish to represent ourselves in litigations. More so, when we go to courts, we are discriminated just because we are not graduates of law, not wearing a formal attire, and not speaking in the English language.
- **Expensive justice and complex justice system.** Expensive court fees, docket fees, and other expenses that are needed in filling cases often hinder us from seeking social justice. Distance of courts to our communities also hamper our access to justice. Also, the use of legalese and the English language during hearings and in the legal documents alienates us from the law and the legal system. Beyond processes, disputes could be filed in many quasi-judicial bodies and courts (multiple entry points).
- **Delayed administration of justice, leading to loss of interest of litigants.** Our cases are long and overdue and as we have experienced ourselves, justice delayed is justice denied. Every day, month, and year that we cannot till our lands, gather our livelihood from forests, and secure our food from the oceans means every day, month, and year that we are less in our lives and in the bar of justice.
- **Lack, if not absence, of training of judges and court personnel on laws addressing sectoral issues.** We recognize that our issues are not the subjects of law training. In many instances, issues concerning agrarian reform, urban housing, coastal management, and indigenous people's rights are not appreciated by judges and court personnel.
- **Lack of designated courts.** Amid the presence of our Moro brothers and sisters in Manila like Taguig and Quiapo, we do not have Shari'a courts in these places. Environmental courts are sorely missing too.
- **Lack of court personnel and huge gender disparity among court personnel.** In many places, there are not enough judges that could attend to our cases. Women are also not sufficiently represented in our justice system.

We respectfully demand that the Supreme Court to immediately act on these issues and concerns. Specifically, we push forth our recommendations:

- **Formal recognition on the role of paralegals by the courts and quasi-judicial agencies.** Given the quantity of cases that we face and the lack of alternative lawyers that are willing to assist us, it is due time that the Supreme Court recognize our knowledge, skills, and capacity to represent ourselves and our organizations and communities.
- **Orient / re-orient judges and court personnel on addressing sectoral issues and issues on women and children,** like the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL), Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA), Indigenous People's Rights Act (IPRA), Juvenile Justice Act, Fisheries Code of the Philippines, and the Violence Against Women and Children Act (VAWC), among others.
- **Use local languages in courts and quasi-judicial bodies.**
- **Direct judges and prosecutors to prioritize the prosecution of cases against human rights violations and environmental degradation.** Cases of the marginalized groups and sectors must be prioritized. Consider the social standing of litigants in prioritizing the resolution of cases.
- **Strictly implement the time table for case disposition.** Provide penalty for violations.
- **Lessen court expenses.** Begin by reviewing the court fees and other expenses. Also, lessen the docket fees.
- **Establish SC branches in Visayas and Mindanaw as well as special courts for environmental courts.** Cases of the poor and marginalized need to be filed in Manila. Travel expenses needed for filling cases as well as the exorbitant court fees are taxing. If we were able to establish Court of Appeals in Visayas and Mindanaw, we hope that in time, we would be able to establish Scs in regional areas.
- **Constitute Shari'a Courts as mandated by law and establish Shari'a courts in other areas.**
- **Popularize the Judicial Code of Ethics.** Educate the public on the responsibilities and obligations of justices, judges and other pillars of the legal system.
- **Involve the marginalized sectors in the appointment of judges and justice.** Provide a venue for the participation of the poor in the selection of court officers. Make public the review and selection of Judicial and Bar Council.
- **Appoint more women in the judiciary.**

***This document was signed by all the paralegals who participated in the conference and was submitted to the Supreme Court.*

7. News releases, Publications

A press statement was released to various media outfits urging the Supreme Court to uphold justice for the poor and marginalized. An article came out in the online news of Inquirer and GMA 7, the INQ7.net.

'Let us defend the poor,' paralegals ask Supreme Court

By Tetch Torres

INQ7.net

Last updated 07:32pm (Mla time) 06/29/2006

PARALEGALS across the country have asked the Supreme Court to allow them to represent the poor and marginalized sectors, just as lawyers do, in cases they are facing before lower and quasi-judicial courts.

In a letter to Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, around 100 paralegals presented themselves as the answer to the shortage of lawyers who can represent farmers, workers, indigenous peoples, women and children.

According to Estrella Villarín, a paralegal coordinator of the Panaghiusa sa Lalawigan Mag-uuma sa Bukidnon (Union of Farmers in the Province of Bukidnon) which works for agrarian justice, said they may not be graduates of law but they have taken courses and received training in legal work from what she called "alternative lawyers."

"We did not pass the bar but we consider ourselves adept in legal work as we also take legal courses from alternative lawyers and graduate from these courses as paralegals. We paralegals, who could aptly be called "abogadong bayan (people's lawyers)" are the ones who perform many of the legal tasks done by lawyers such as legal research, the gathering of evidence, formulation of resolutions, pleadings, affidavits and motions," Villarín said.

Villarín has been engaged in paralegal work for farmers since 1996.

However, Villarín said courts and quasi-judicial bodies often discriminate against them.

"We are not recognized when we go to the courts and wish to represent ourselves and our communities in litigation because we are not graduates of law, do not wear formal attire and do not speak in English," she said.

Edwin Bustillos, 39, national vice chairperson of the National Union of Workers in Hotel, Restaurant and Allied Industries and a paralegal of five years, specializing in labor law, said he has faced the same discrimination when handling labor disputes.

"Because I am not a lawyer, labor arbiters often belittle my credibility in representing illegal dismissal cases (filed by) my fellow workers," Bustillosa said. "They often imply that I could not match the qualifications of high-caliber lawyers representing the management accused of violating labor laws."

The paralegals also urged the Supreme Court to eliminate, if not lower, the expensive court and docket fees that hinder, if not prevent, the poor from filing cases, as well as to allow the use of local languages and dialects in court hearings.

"The use of English and other legal terms during hearings and in legal documents alienates the poor from the law and the legal system," said Bustillosa. "The Supreme Court could solve this problem if language can also be democratized by allowing the use of local languages during hearings and in writing legal documents."

The paralegals also asked the high court to establish branches in the Visayas and Mindanao so the poor in far-flung provinces need not spend to travel to Manila to file cases.

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A Message To The Supreme Court To Uphold Justice For the Poor and Marginalized

Posted on 6.29.06

We, 100 paralegal leaders all over the country are hereby urging the Supreme Court to take a firm stand in strengthening and advancing paralegalism in the Philippines.

Over the decades, paralegalism has proved its power in addressing legal issues besetting the poor and marginalized sectors of society. What we paralegals need right now is the utmost support of the Supreme Court that could help ensure that our goal of democratizing access to justice will lead to the victory of the less privileged.

We therefore urge the Supreme Court to institute mechanisms that would formally recognize the role of paralegals in the justice system so that lower courts and quasi-judicial bodies would give due acknowledgment to our role in helping the basic sectors advance their legal rights.

Because there is a growing perception that the High Tribunal could be swayed by a few but influential and powerful groups who often trample on the rights of the poor and marginalized, we thus challenge the Supreme Court to prove otherwise - that its decisions are based on justice for the greater good and not politics favoring the powerful few.

Reaffirming to the public that the judiciary is an independent judiciary, separate and free from the influence of the executive and legislative branches of government would lead the people to renew their faith in the Supreme Court as the court of last resort.

Because we believe that justice should work for the interest and aspirations of the poor majority comprising the basic and marginalized sectors - farmers, workers, fisher folk, indigenous peoples, urban poor, women and children - we urge the Supreme Court to render decisions that would not exacerbate their plight but empower them in their quest for a more just and equitable distribution of opportunities and resources.

Because the justice system virtually remains in its ivory tower, we urge the Supreme Court to go down and spread its power to the ground so that the poor and marginalized would no longer need to take a difficult climb to reach their most sought after equality before the law.

This can be done if the Supreme Court will take decisive action against corruption and political interference in the judiciary, strengthen conflict resolution mechanisms at the barangay level, popularize and give teeth to the genuine implementation of the Judicial Code of Ethics, fully address the problem in the shortage of judges, prosecutors and public attorneys so that the growing backlog of cases could also be solved, establish

Supreme Court branches in the regions, provide additional budget for the creation of local courts which could promptly address the cases of the basic sectors and eliminate if not lower the legal fees paid by these sectors.

These are but a few of the many challenges that the Supreme Court has to face right now especially at this time when the prevailing public perception is that the two other branches of government are not responding to the people's demand for freedom and equality before the law.

WE URGE THE SUPREME COURT TO BE THE GUIDING LIGHT OF JUSTICE FOR THE POOR AND THE MARGINALIZED.

WE URGE THE SUPREME COURT TO BOLDLY TAKE A STAND IN DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE.

WE URGE THE SUPREME COURT TO JOIN US IN TAKING THE LEAD IN PUTTING AN END TO THE WORSENING INJUSTICE VICTIMIZING THE POOR MAJORITY.

SC Urged to Recognize Paralegals As Lawyers of the Poor

Posted on 6.29.06

Around 100 paralegal leaders from all over the country representing hundreds of people's organizations yesterday trooped to the Supreme Court urging the judiciary to formally recognize the paralegals' role in representing the cases of the poor and marginalized sectors before lower and quasi-judicial courts.

In a statement addressed to SC Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, the paralegals said that due to lack of alternative lawyers and public attorneys who could represent the cases of farmers, workers, indigenous peoples, women and children, it is high time for the High Tribunal to recognize the paralegals' knowledge, skills, and capacity to represent these sectors in their cases before the courts.

Though paralegals who themselves come from the basic sectors, are not graduates of law, they took courses and trainings in legal work provided by alternative lawyers such as the Alternative Law Groups, Inc., a coalition of 17 legal resource non-government organizations primarily engaged in lawyering for the poor.

"We did not pass the bar but we consider ourselves adept in legal work as we also take legal courses from alternative lawyers and graduate from these courses as paralegals. We, paralegals who could be aptly called "abogadong bayan" are the ones who perform many of the legal tasks done by lawyers such as legal research, gathering of evidence, formulation of resolutions, pleadings, affidavits and motions," said 49-year old Estrella Villarin, a paralegal leader from Bukidnon engaged in alternative lawyering for farmers since 1996.

Unfortunately, amid the paralegals' efforts in democratizing access to justice for the poor, Villarin said that they are being discriminated and marginalized before the courts and quasi-judicial bodies.

"We are not recognized when we go to the courts and wish to represent ourselves and our communities in litigation because we are not graduates of law, do not wear formal attire and do not speak in English," said Villarin, a paralegal coordinator of Panaghiusa sa Lalawigan Mag-uuma sa Bukidnon, composed of 22 people's organizations working for agrarian justice.

The same discrimination is also being felt by paralegals who represent themselves and their fellow workers in labor dispute cases before quasi-judicial courts.

"Because I am not a lawyer, labor arbiters often belittle my credibility in representing illegal dismissal cases of my fellow workers. They often imply that I could not match the qualifications of high-caliber lawyers representing the management accused of violating labor laws," said 39-year old Edwin Bustillosa, a paralegal of five years specializing in labor laws and national vice chairperson of the National Union of Workers in Hotel, Restaurant and Allied Industries.

To democratize access to justice by the poor and marginalized, paralegals also urged the SC to eliminate if not lower the expensive court and docket fees which hinder the poor from filing cases.

Another hindrance in democratizing access to justice according to the paralegals is the use of the English language during court hearings. "The use of English and other legalese terms during hearings and in legal documents alienate the poor from the law and the legal system. The SC could solve this problem if language could also be democratized by allowing the use of local languages during hearings and in the writing of legal documents," said Bustillosa.

Paralegals also urged the judiciary to establish SC branches in Visayas and in Mindanao so the poor from far-flung provinces would no longer need to spend for their travel to Manila to file cases.

"Because the justice system virtually remains in its ivory tower, we urge the SC to go down and spread its power to the ground so that the poor and marginalized would no longer need to take a difficult climb to reach their most sought after equality before the law," concluded Villarín. -30-

8. Proceedings of Events/Activities

Day One: Presenting Models, Validating Results

Prior to the conference, pre-conference activities were conducted in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao where ALG members facilitated discussions among local paralegals for them to identify the different strategies and approaches used in paralegal formation programs in their respective areas. These strategies and approaches became the basis of defining the paralegal formation models that were implemented. Aside from the strategies and approaches, the discussions also identified the different issues on justice reform and policy recommendations that would help address these issues. Finally, the discussions also tried to draw out what the local paralegals perceived as success stories from their experiences as paralegals. Day one was devoted entirely on the presentation and validation of the results of the pre-conference activities.

Each cluster (Luzon and NCR, Visayas, Mindanao) presented the results of the pre-conference activities. The three clusters presented their respective paralegal formation models, issues on justice reform, policy recommendations and success stories. After the cluster presentations, a synthesis of the issues and policy agenda, still based on the pre-conference activities, was presented for validation.

To validate the results, the participants were divided into workshop groups to discuss what had been presented. Guide questions and templates were distributed to give uniformity to the workshop results. ALG members facilitated and documented the discussions. After the workshop, the results were presented before the plenary. After all the groups have reported, a synthesis of all the workshop results was presented.

Day Two: Sharing Advocacies, Forging Alliances

Day two was a public event where guests from different government agencies, NGO's, funding agencies and other partner networks came to signify their solidarity with the advocacies and activities of the ALG and the paralegals. After the expressions of solidarity, a public forum was conducted where the paralegals were able to ask their queries directly to the representative/s of the government agency concerned.

Former DSWD Secretary, Ms. Corazon "Dinky" Soliman gave the Keynote Speech where she stressed the important role of paralegals in the country today, foremost of which is being a primary source of information on the law (and its interpretation) so that ordinary people may understand and become more aware of it. She also commended the commitment of the paralegals in facing the everyday challenge of working for their sectors, convincing them that the law can and will work for them despite all the discrimination and worse, humiliation that they suffer from those who were formally sworn in to uphold justice.

Day Three: Unifying Policy Agenda, Taking the First Collective Step Towards Justice Reforms

After presenting the paralegals' agenda to its public, they pushed the agenda further by going to the Supreme Court to submit the unified statement regarding the issues being faced by paralegals around the country today and the group's proposal for policy reforms that would address these issues.

Staff from the Supreme Court Public Information Office (SC-PIO) received the group at the SC en banc where the SC-PIO presented a short documentary on the present conditions of the judiciary. After the video showing, an open forum followed where the paralegals were able to ask their questions regarding the judiciary vis-à-vis their policy agenda.

After the open forum, the paralegals formally submitted a copy of the unified statement on the issues and the corresponding policy reform proposals for immediate action. The SC-PIO received the statement and assured the paralegals that the statement would be forwarded to Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban upon his return from his official trip abroad.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

ACTIVITY	HIGHLIGHTS																																																																												
DAY ONE	COLLECTING STORIES, EXCHANGING MODELS AND VALIDATING RESULTS																																																																												
Registration																																																																													
Invocation and National Anthem	Three participants representing the Moros, Christians and Indigenous Peoples rendered an ecumenical prayer to start the conference																																																																												
Introduction of Participants	<p>Emcees for the day, Atty. Jan Eugenio of Balaod-Mindanaw and Atty. Jo Sescon of PANLIPI introduced the participants by acknowledging them through their geographical origins. They also introduced the different member organizations of the ALG.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="467 636 1354 1268"> <thead> <tr> <th>LUZON</th> <th>VISAYAS</th> <th>MINDANAO</th> <th>ALG</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Nueva Vizcaya</td> <td>Negros Occidental</td> <td>General Santos</td> <td>ASAP</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bontoc</td> <td>Iloilo</td> <td>Davao</td> <td>ALTERLAW</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Benguet</td> <td>Cebu</td> <td>Misamis Oriental</td> <td>AHRC</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Zambales</td> <td>Antique</td> <td>Surigao del Sur</td> <td>BALAOB</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Naga, Bicol</td> <td>Leyte</td> <td>Agusan del Sur</td> <td>CLB</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quezon Province</td> <td>Tacloban</td> <td>Bukidnon</td> <td>ELAC</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NCR</td> <td>Romblon</td> <td>Davao del Sur</td> <td>FREELAVA</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Palawan</td> <td>Misamis Occidental</td> <td>KAISAHAN</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Marinduque</td> <td>Davao Oriental</td> <td>LRC-KSK</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Sultan Kudarat</td> <td>PBPF</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Zamboanga del Sur</td> <td>PROCESS</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>South Cotabato</td> <td>PLRC</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Maguindanao</td> <td>PANLIPI</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>North Cotabato</td> <td>SALIGAN</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Lanao del Norte</td> <td>TK</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>WLB</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>WOMENLEAD</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>KANLUNGAN (observer)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	LUZON	VISAYAS	MINDANAO	ALG	Nueva Vizcaya	Negros Occidental	General Santos	ASAP	Bontoc	Iloilo	Davao	ALTERLAW	Benguet	Cebu	Misamis Oriental	AHRC	Zambales	Antique	Surigao del Sur	BALAOB	Naga, Bicol	Leyte	Agusan del Sur	CLB	Quezon Province	Tacloban	Bukidnon	ELAC	NCR	Romblon	Davao del Sur	FREELAVA		Palawan	Misamis Occidental	KAISAHAN		Marinduque	Davao Oriental	LRC-KSK			Sultan Kudarat	PBPF			Zamboanga del Sur	PROCESS			South Cotabato	PLRC			Maguindanao	PANLIPI			North Cotabato	SALIGAN			Lanao del Norte	TK				WLB				WOMENLEAD				KANLUNGAN (observer)
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<p>Welcome Remarks</p> <p>Ms. Lorena Navallasca – PROCESS Panay</p>	<p>Ms. Navallasca's Welcome Remarks revolved around the conference's theme of "Collecting Stories, Exchanging Models."</p> <p>She highlighted the importance of the participants' openness in sharing their actual experiences in paralegalism saying that 99.9% of the success of the conference would depend on the richness of the stories and models that will be shared by the participants. She encouraged them to share not only their personal stories but more importantly, to share the collective experience of their sector.</p> <p>She then continued to challenge the ALG members to be able to facilitate the process so that the lessons may be learned from both successful and not-so-successful experiences. The lessons, according to her, will be very valuable as these would serve as guide for the ALG members as well as the paralegal's' future programs. According to her, success stories should be replicated while failures should serve as reminders for improvement.</p> <p>Finally, she welcomed the participants by congratulating them for becoming a part of this historical moment of paralegalism in the Philippines, this being the very first national paralegal conference in the country.</p>																																																																												

<p>Presentation of Conference Objectives and Conference Flow</p>	<p>Atty. Sescon presented the conference objectives while Atty. Eugenio gave the overview on the conference flow (<i>please see Annex 1: Program of Activities, for the conference flow</i>).</p> <p><u>Conference Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a venue for exchanges among paralegals belonging to the poor and marginalized sectors in consolidating their gains and milestones in addressing their issues through the developmental use of the law; 2. Identify different models of engaging the Judiciary and other agencies involved in the administration of justice through the different paralegal formation programs that is being implemented by the ALG with its partners; 3. Identify and present policy proposals for the Judiciary to respond and realize the objectives of the APJR in addressing the issues of the poor and marginalized.
<p>The Alternative Law Groups</p> <p>Atty. Kaka Bag-ao, BALAOD-Mindanao</p>	<p>Atty. Kaka Bag-ao, executive director of BALAOD-Mindanao gave the orientation on the Alternative Law Groups.</p> <p>She started the orientation by giving a rundown of the different member organizations of the coalition pointing out that the coalition has been in existence for the past fifteen (15) years.</p> <p>The ALG, according to her, is a nationwide coalition of 17 organizations (and still expanding) that provide developmental legal assistance to poor and marginalized communities. Unlike traditional lawyering, the ALG looks at laws and legal resources as instruments that may be used by the basic sectors in defending and pursuing their rights. The group pushes for developmental laws that facilitate the empowerment and access to justice of the marginalized groups/ communities.</p> <p>With this framework, the ALG's work both within and beyond the courtroom. Components of their work include: education, policy reform advocacy, direct legal services, research and publications, law internship and curriculum development and paralegal formation and legal education.</p> <p>Atty. Bag-ao also presented the six priority bills that the ALG is pursuing today, one of which is the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act that was successfully passed last April 28.</p> <p>In closing, she quoted former Chief Justice Hilario Davide's statement on alternative lawyers saying that the alternative lawyers should be the mainstream for it is them who are the true and ideal lawyers, the conscience of the legal profession. It is the work of the alternative lawyers who elevate the standards of the legal profession.</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex2A for Atty. Bag-ao's presentation.</i></p>
<p>ALG Paralegal Framework</p> <p>Atty. Marlon Manuel</p>	<p>Atty. Marlon Manuel, executive director of SALIGAN, gave the orientation on the paralegal framework being used by the Alternative Law Groups. Before his presentation, Atty. Manuel leveled-off with the participants by asking them why the need for paralegal formation programs. Here are their answers:</p>

- SALIGAN

- *We are here even though we are not lawyers, when we settle something in the communities we know what is "legal"*
- *For PO's kelangan ng paralegal lalo kung walang abugado, kung pupunta pa sa bayan, me bayad pa yun.*
- *Yung pagpapatupad ng batas sa communities (eg agrarian reforms) malaking tulong sa pagpapaalam sa communities ang batas*
- *Kahit di na paratingin sa (formal court) korte ang mga kaso lalo na sa lugar na walang judge. (Alternative Dispute Resolution)*
- *First Aid sa problema ng masa, kulang at mahal ang abugado, kahit di na kailangan ng abugado.*
- *Kahit di abugado, me kaalaman kami sa legal na aspeto.*
- *Malaki ang tulong namin lalo na sa mga barangay na mahihirap tulad ng (assistance) sa preparasyon ng mga legal na dokumento. Malaki ang tulong esp. financial kasi free lang ang services.*
- *Lawyers, legal ang ginagamit, paralegal di limited sa formal legal system, pwede metalegal tactics*
- *Dahil may puso tayo at gusto nating tumulong sa mga taong nangangailangan ng tulong... Yun lang ang paraan para makatulong sa mahihirap, esp marginalized people na hindi kayang mag-hire ng lawyers at hindi kayang paratingin sa korte ang concerns.*
- *Maraming illegal na nagaganap, kulang ang abugado... Nakakatulong sa pagpapalaganap ng kaalaman sa community re: laws and legal processes.*
- *Kabawasan sa trabaho ng abugado, katulong sa abugado sa paghawak ng kaso. Assist lawyers, especially sa communities*
- *Nagiging direct link ng lawyers sa communities*
- *Mas focused/ knowledgeable, mas expert sa ilang usapin kesa sa mga lawyers (dahil mas lubog sa baba/ community)*
- *Malaki ang need ng community for paralegals, kailangan may alam (ang mga tao) sa batas... lalo sa mga communities na me immediate issues na kinakaharap (mining)*
- *Frontliners*
- *Trying to determine other means and measures beyond the confines of the law*
- *Gusto na ng tao na ilagay ang batas sa sarili niyang kamay sa mabuting paraan (bigay pag-asa)*

According to Atty. Manuel, the idea of grassroots paralegalism is a Pinoy concept. In fact, many countries are already following our footsteps. While the original concept of paralegalism was more of charity work or tokenism, the Philippines' practice of grassroots paralegalism comes from the recognition that marginalized communities have the capacity to defend their rights and to use the law and the legal processes to address their concerns whether or not the members of these communities have been formally educated or not. It is anchored on the belief that if ordinary citizens are well informed and have the necessary support, they would have the confidence to participate in the legal process thus, lessening their dependency on lawyers.

In the context of Philippine society, paralegalism is a response to the existing social realities of inequality and injustice caused by imbalance relationship between the rich and the poor. Ideally, these injustices should be addressed by the legal system but in reality, these are not addressed due to the inaccessibility of the justice system, it being elitist and expensive.

	<p>Atty. Manuel also pointed out that this situation remains despite the numerous lawyers that the country produces every year and despite the existence of significant laws and programs that help ensure the marginalized people's access to justice. Aside from having only a few number of lawyers choosing to work for the poor, there is difficulty in implementing the laws and the programs due to lack of resources (financial resources, logistics and personnel)</p> <p>To address the situation, one of ALG's strategies is developing groups of paralegals among the basic sectors who would help address their community/ organization's legal needs. This is done through the implementation of paralegal formation programs where capability building activities like legal education and actual case handling, are given to paralegals so that they would be able to develop their knowledge and skills on laws and the legal process.</p> <p>Finally, Atty. Manuel shared the core principles of ALG's paralegal framework. These are: study the law; analyze the law; use the law; share the law; change the law to change society and lastly, paralegalism is not just legal service but means to achieve social justice.</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex 2B for Atty. Manuel's presentation</i></p>
OPEN FORUM	<i>Please see Annex 5: OPEN FORUM 1 for the full transcript</i>
LUNCHBREAK	LUNCHBREAK *** LUNCHBREAK *** LUNCHBREAK
Presentation of Paralegal Models form Luzon, NCR, Visayas and Mindanao	<p>The three clusters of the ALG (Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao) presented their respective paralegal models based on the pre-conference consultations that were conducted by each ALG member with their partner grassroots paralegal organizations. Each presentation was a summary/ synthesis of the results of the pre-conference consultations.</p> <p>Atty. Dingby Ballesteros of LRC-KSK presented the results of the Luzon discussions, Ms. Lorena Navallasca presented the results from the Visayas and Atty. Normi Batula of Balaod-Mindanao gave the Mindanao presentation.</p> <p>The three presentations followed the same format:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of ALG member organizations identifying the specific areas where they can be found and the specific sectors/ communities/ concerns that they are working with. <i>(The Mindanao presentation included a discussion on Mindanao's socio-politico-economic situation to allow the audience to understand the context from where the paralegal formation programs in Mindanao is coming from)</i> 2. Models of Paralegal Formation <i>(while Luzon and Visayas presented a summarized/ general model of the different paralegal formation programs that are being implemented in their areas, Mindanao's paralegal models were presented based on the particular experience of the institution/s implementing the program vis-à-vis the specific sector with whom the program was designed for)</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Processes b. Strategies and approaches c. Components and activities 3. Success Stories 4. Challenges and issues

	<p>5. Learnings, Insights and Recommendations</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex 2C, 2D and 2E for the details of the presentations.</i></p>
Presentation of Policy Agenda on Justice Reform (Synthesis)	<p>Ms. Jane Lynn Capacio, executive director of KAISAHAN presented the summary of the outputs (issues and policy reform agenda) that were surfaced from the clusters' consultations prior to the conference.</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex 2F for Ms. Capacio's presentation</i></p>
Validation Workshop	<p>Atty. Bag-ao explained the workshop mechanics and gives instructions for the reporting of workshop results.</p> <p><i>For details, please refer to Annex 3A</i></p>
Reporting of Workshop Results	<p><i>Please refer to Annex 3B & 3C for the results of the validation workshop and the collated results of the issues and policy reform agenda.</i></p> <p>Note: <i>Results of the workshop were translated into a unified statement containing the issues and policy agenda of the paralegals. The unified statement was submitted to the Supreme Court for immediate action. Please refer to Annex 4 for copy of the statement.</i></p>
Synthesis of Workshop Results	<p>Ms. Jarley of LRC-KSK Mindanao presented the synthesis of the workshop results.</p> <p>The results of the workshop show that the existing paralegal formation program strategies (organizing, education, policy proposals, IEC) have equipped the paralegals with the skills that they need to address the legal needs of the community. These can also be used to help address the justice reform issues that were identified during the workshop.</p> <p>For the ALG, the paralegals see the group as the lead in pushing for actions and policy reforms. They see ALG as the coordinator/ unifier who provides venues for exchanges. One important role that the group pointed out is for the ALG to act as coordinator /facilitator in crafting the ethical standards of paralegals.</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex 3D for the synthesis.</i></p>
DAY TWO	SHARING ADVOCACIES, FORGING ALLIANCES AND PUSHING FOR COMMITMENTS (presenting policy agenda to the public)
Invocation and National Anthem	Ecumenical prayer (Moros, Christian, IP)
Welcome Address Mr. Gerry Bulatao	<p>Mr. Gerry Bulatao, former Undersecretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform and former Executive Director of KAISAHAN, gave the welcome address for the second day of the conference.</p> <p>He started his message by looking back at the beginnings of paralegal formation in the Philippines during the late 60's and comments that this conference is actually an expansion of sectors and concerns. He mentioned that while in the 60's only peasants and trade union people do paralegal work (it was not yet even called paralegal at that time), this conference is a gathering not only of peasants and laborers but women, urban poor and indigenous peoples that work on different concerns- labor, ancestral domain, environment especially those related to mining, etc. He sees this phenomenon as a result of the few number of lawyers who work for the poor. Due to the lack, if not absence</p>

	<p>of legal support, it became necessary for the poor sector to develop their legal acumen from among themselves.</p> <p>He identified three ways to support the development of the legal acumen (Knowledge, Skills, Attitude) of the non-lawyers so that they may be able to effectively apply the law to their causes. First, the Supreme Court to issue a memorandum circular recognizing the need for paralegals to help in the application of the law and increase the legal acumen of the different sectors. Second, for law schools to take paralegal development seriously to the point of including it as a subject in their curriculum. Third, professionalizing paralegals by letting them take what he calls the “para-bar” an examination (both oral and written) that would test the knowledge, skills and attitude of paralegals.</p> <p>He ended his message by making a pitch in for what he described as an “immediate challenge that is facing us all today” regarding the killings that have been happening around the country and how this affects the lives of the paralegals, if this has not affected them yet. He called on everyone to do what he/she can to stop the killings. According to him, one way to stop it is by working with the Supreme Court who despite giving out good decisions on cases like the EO 464, CPR and 1017 cannot do it alone. He encouraged everyone to expand the network of advocates with individuals in government as well as those outside of the government so that the killing would stop.</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex 6A for the full transcript</i></p>
<p>History of ALG and paralegalism</p> <p>Atty. Carolina Ruiz-Austria, WOMENLEAD</p>	<p>Atty. Carolina Ruiz-Austria, co-founder and former Executive Director of WOMENLEAD discussed the history of ALG and paralegalism by relating it to her personal experiences of working as and with paralegals.</p> <p>She started by giving a short orientation on the beginnings and philosophies behind alternative law. According to her the emergence of alternative law in the Philippines runs parallel to the wave of social movement in the country. It is founded on the philosophy of providing an alternative to the traditional legal practice that reinforces sex and gender, class, race and ethnicity-based oppression in society. It does not only provide legal assistance but works on developing alternative paradigms that questions the reason behind the law. It pushes for the development of a legal alternative philosophy that would help achieve the establishment of a more humane, more compassionate and more just society.</p> <p>After giving a short background on the philosophies behind alternative law she went on to relating how working with the ALG’s have defined the course of her life and the learnings that she discovered along the way. And one of the most important realizations that she had on paralegalism was, paralegalism is not a quest to turn non-lawyers into lawyers, neither is does it end in providing legal representation to the poor and marginalized and making them subjects of law. Paralegalism is all about working with the marginalized sectors and giving them the recognition of being “rights-bearers”.</p> <p>She ended by quoting what she said is an important lesson that would serve as reminders to paralegals. “Law is not the source of rights, they are only the practical tool to assert and claim what are already ours as inalienable and universal rights.”</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex 6A for the full transcript</i></p>
<p>ALG PL Models and</p>	<p>Atty. Manuel’s presentation was basically an orientation and awareness campaign aimed</p>

<p>Policy Agenda of Grassroots Paralegals</p> <p>Atty. Marlon Manuel, SALIGAN</p>	<p>towards the conference's invited "public" which consisted of representatives from the national government agencies, funding agencies and other partners.</p> <p>The presentation was divided into four parts: 1) an orientation on alternative law and grassroots paralegalism, 2) presentation of the summarized results of the ALG's paralegal models and 3) presentation of the issues and challenges faced by paralegals today and 4) summary of the paralegal's policy agenda on justice reform. The first part was the same as the one he presented on the first day while the next three parts were the summary of the results of the cluster discussions that were presented and validated in yesterday's workshop.</p> <p>He pointed out that the issues and recommendations that were gathered were specialized because these came from the perspective of the grassroots paralegals themselves who were "working and trying to access the legal system."</p> <p>He ends his presentation by explaining the fundamentals of the paralegal formation program... "Paralegal program is in essence changing the law, changing how we see the law, changing how we use the law, changing the legal system so that it can be more effective in addressing the concerns of the poor, somehow contributing to changing society making it more just and humane. Paralegal formation is not just a service delivery program, it is a social justice program, a development program that is essential in developing communities and delivering justice..."</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex 2G for details of Atty. Manuel's presentation</i></p>
<p>Introduction of the Keynote Speaker</p>	<p>Atty. Kaka Bag-ao introduced the Keynote Speaker Sec. Dinky Soliman</p>
<p>Keynote Address</p> <p>Sec. Corazon "Dinky" Juliano-Soliman</p>	<p>Former DSWD Secretary Dinky Soliman's keynote address revolved around the concepts of justice for the poor in a democracy and the key role of paralegals in defending and upholding this.</p> <p>According to her, in a democracy, one of the key instruments in bringing justice to the poor is the law. In the Philippines, the past twenty years have been a struggle for people working in development organizations to push for the passage of laws that will resolve the economic and political inequities in the country. The word war has been won with the passage of these laws. However, the greater challenge of implementing these laws and resolving conflicts that emerge from the implementation of these laws is still a continuing struggle. It has yet to be seen that these laws be translated into the everyday transactions of ordinary people with those in authority to implement the law.</p> <p>This is where the paralegals play a key role. First, to help people understand and use their newfound awareness of the laws that should help them assert their right to justice. Second, to facilitate a process of making proposals to change the law if the law is defective and is being used as an instrument to trample on people's rights. Third, to become sources of information of both the written law and its interpretation.</p> <p>She pushed the challenge further when she said that more than ever it is at this point in our country's history that the role of paralegals is most important. Going beyond the sectoral issues, it is also the paralegals' duty and obligation to explain the issues that confront us as a people. First is to show how the government uses the law in doing illegal actions. Second is to explain and help the people analyze and understand the implications of changing the constitution, which is the basis of all the laws of the land.</p>

	<p>With the situation getting more and more confusing to so many people, it is the responsibility of those who have the understanding of the law to explain and help the people discern the implications of these changes to their lives and the lives of the future generation.</p> <p>Finally, she congratulated the paralegals for their passion to face the challenges that confront them everyday. She urged them to 1) continue doing what they think is right not only for their sector but for the society as a whole, 2) continue convincing the ordinary people that the law will and does work for them and 3) continue convincing the formal court/ legal system and the people working within these structures to recognize them as equals and as rightful representatives of their sectors in defending their rights.</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex 6A for the full transcript</i></p>
OPEN FORUM	<i>Please see Annex 5: OPEN FORUM 2 for the full transcript</i>
LUNCHBREAK	LUNCHBREAK *** LUNCHBREAK *** LUNCHBREAK
Solidarity Messages	<p>Representatives from national government agencies, funding agencies, partner networks and other organizations gave solidarity messages signifying their appreciation and support to the efforts and programs of the ALG and all the paralegals nationwide. However, not all who attended earlier were able to give their solidarity message since the program started at 2:15 in the afternoon (it was scheduled to start at 1pm). Some guests have already left before the program started.</p> <p>National government agencies who were able to stay and express their support were the DSWD, NLRC, NCMB, COASTGUARD, DENR, DAR, BALA, NCIP, PhilJA. Funding agencies and partners who gave their solidarity messages were representatives from CIDA, UNDP-SGP with UP NCPAG, JJ Network, RHAN-FPOP, The Asia Foundation.</p> <p><i>Please see Annex 6B for the solidarity messages.</i></p>
OPEN FORUM	<i>Please see Annex 5: OPEN FORUM 3 for the full transcript</i>
Planning for the Lakbay Aral	<p>Instructions for the next day's lakbay-aral were given to the participants. After the instructions were given, the group was again divided into workshop groups where each group was tasked to come up with two priority questions which they think should be asked during the dialogue with the SC-PIO. The groups also assigned representatives who would be asking the questions during the dialogue.</p> <p>After the workshop, the group agreed on the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Does the SC recognize the roles of the paralegals in justice reforms? (Samuel Abrogar)</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>If yes, what can the Supreme Court do to facilitate the recognition of the paralegals as a part of the legal system, including the appearance of PLs before regular, special courts and QJ bodies.</i> b. <i>If no, why does the Supreme Court not recognize the paralegals and their role to marginalized sectors.</i> 2. <i>The SC in the La Bugal decision overturned itself in the Motion for Reconsideration. What were the factors considered by the Court, did it base its decision purely on economic and political factors, or did it also consider the lives and peoples dependent on the lands where mining operations are located? (Agnes Panay)</i> 3. <i>Is there an effort or program to promote gender consciousness of judges and court</i>

	<p><i>personnel, especially those handling VAW cases, particularly rape? (Carlitos Duenas)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. <i>In medicine, medical students are required to undergo exposure to marginalized communities as a part of their curriculum, why is it that the integration of a similar exposure not included in the curriculum of law schools, when the SC has the power to do the same? (Sheila Condeno)</i> 5. <i>Considering that there are existing ethical standards for lawyers, judges, and justices, would it be possible for the SC to do the following: popularization of existing legal and judicial ethics; venue for complaints absent the formal/technical legal structure (hotline, petition, text messages, emails); reaffirming to the public the nature of an independent judiciary, separate from the executive and legislative? (Emily Saulon)</i> 6. <i>Can the SC ensure the establishment of special courts such as family, shari'ah in all cities and provinces as well as propose the creation of special courts which are sector specific and issue specific, ex. labor, IP, env't, fisheries ? (Moises Andale)</i> 7. <i>Are the Courts aware that various cases are filed by companies and landowners to silence community voices or actions, and what is the Court doing to address this issue, for example, the passage of memorandum or circular recognizing the same? (Rene Serilla)</i> 8. <i>What can the supreme court do to address the issues on discrimination against marginalized sectors, for example, use of English, clothes, court costs, especially those that may effect access to justice (Midz Maling)</i> 9. <i>What is the Supreme Court doing to address the issue of the slow disposition/resolution of cases, as well as the backlog of cases in all court levels? (Nelly Lemoncito)</i> 10. <i>If the Constitution was to be amended, would you agree to the proposal that judiciary officials will not hold office through the appointment of the Head of State? (Ray Galas)</i> 11. <i>The Court of Appeals have already implemented their regionalization, why is it not the same with the SC?</i> 12. <i>What is the mechanism of the courts to hold court personnel accountable to violations of rules and regulations and laws? (Rene Serilla)</i> 13. <i>What are the mechanisms to popularize new laws like RA 9344 Juvenile Justice Act, so as not to create misperceptions? (Oscar Moral)</i> 14. <i>Can the SC consider passing a memorandum or circular wherein the counsel for the clients signs the verification? (Victorino Gementiza)</i>
Dinner/ Solidarity Night	<p>The solidarity night featured song and dances that were presented by participants from every region. Members of the ALG also presented a song number to the delight of the participants.</p> <p>Singer Dong Abay of Yano and Singer-TV host Toni Gonzaga graced the event and rendered songs for the group.</p>
DAY THREE	UNIFYING POLICY AGENDA AND TAKING THE FIRST COLLECTIVE STEP TOWARDS JUSTICE REFORM
Travel to the Supreme Court	<p>The group left SEAMEO Innotech at around 7:30 in the morning riding two buses. They arrived at the Supreme Court at around 9:00 and were guided to the court en banc at exactly 9:30.</p> <p>Two staff from the Supreme Court-Public Information Office (SC-PIO), Jed Eva and Atty. JM Erni welcomed the group and gave a short orientation on the tasks and functions of</p>

	<p>the he SC PIO. They also expressed their support to the paralegals and affirmed the Supreme Court's recognition of the paralegal's big contribution to the justice system.</p> <p>After the orientation, they gave a short introduction on the film that will be presented to the group and explained that the film shows the realities being faced by the justice system in our country today. The film, shot by ABS-CBN will give its audience an idea of the problems being faced by the judicial system and the efforts and programs being done up by the judiciary to address these problems.</p>
OPEN FORUM	<i>Please see Annex 5: OPEN FORUM 4 for the full transcript</i>
Presentation and Submission of Policy Reform Agenda	<p>After the open forum, three representatives from the group presented and submitted the copy of the policy agenda for justice reform that the paralegals wanted the Supreme Court to immediately act upon (<i>see Annex 4 for copy of the statement</i>)</p> <p>Paralegals' message to the Supreme Court through the SC-PIO:</p> <p><i>"Naririto kami para ipaabot sa bulwagang ito, ang Supreme Court, ang collective statement na nagawa ng mga paralegal mula sa iba't-ibang lugar ng ating bansa. At hindi lang namin ipapa-receive kundi hihintayin din namin ang magiging kasagutan/ katugunan ng ating kamahal-mahalang Chief Justice dito sa statement naming ito. Mahalagang-mahalaga na sa lalong madaling panahon ay matugunan at mabigyang linaw ang mga katanungan na aming ipinapahayag sa kagalingan n gating hustisya sa ating bayan. Maraming salamat."</i></p> <p>The SC-PIO staff through Atty. JM Erni received the statement and promised the group that the statement will be forwarded to the Chief Justice upon his arrival from his official trip abroad.</p> <p>After the dialogue, the group did a short tour of the Supreme Court library and had their pictures taken around the Supreme Court building.</p>
LUNCHBREAK	LUNCHBREAK *** LUNCHBREAK *** LUNCHBREAK
Processing of the Lakbay Aral	<p>After lunch, the participants were divided into groups and were asked to process/ discuss the lakbay-aral. Each group was to assign a reporter to present the group's assessment.</p> <p>GROUP 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Dissatisfied yung grupo kasi parang di well-documented (media) yung mga nangyayari. Parang information dissemination lang ang naganap.</i> - <i>Nakakalungkot kasi yung excitement ng iba sa grupo ay hindi para sa ninanais na isulong kundi para sa picture taking. Naging parang "mini-market" tuloy sa loob ng SC</i> - <i>Di rin naging maayos yung pagkakatag ng mga tanong at saka di malinaw sa atin kung ano ang ibig nating mangyari.</i> <p>GROUP 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Natutuwa sa ALG sa pag-iisponsor ng activity at dahil dito ay nakarating sila sa SC.</i> - <i>Sa video presentation, di masyadong marining ang audio, wala pang caption kung sino ang nagsasalita.</i> - <i>Dun sa sumasagot ng mga tanong, lalo na dun sa babae, parang hindi siya sure dun sa mga sagot niya. Mas confident pa yung lalaki. Tapos puro under</i>

study ang sinasagot nila.

- *Dun sa Q and A, nalulungkot sila sa ibang kasamahan sa grupo dahil bagamat nagkaroon na ng workshop kahapon at napagkasunduan na merong 14 questions na tatanungin at binagsakan na ito, AT malinaw na malinaw ang instructions na itong 14 questions ang dapat tanungin para ma-address lahat ng sectoral concerns ... Unfortunately, meron pa ring mga pasaway talaga na mga kasamhang paralegal. Marami pa rin ang di naman dapat nagtanong e, nagtanong pa rin. As paralegals dapat kasama sa characteristic ng mga paralegal yung pagiging disiplinado, marunong sumunod sa instructions. "Simple instructions lang sa atin, di pa tayo makasunod!"*
- *Nakakapanghinayang yung panahon, dapat sana ay natalakay natin lahat ng mahahalagang isyu, marami pa tuloy questions na hindi naitanong.*
- *Recomm: Sa oras, dapat mag-observe ng time para maximized yung panahon natin kasi me mga questions na di dapat tinanong. Parang nabalewala yung workshop. Sayang yung opportunity...*

GROUP 3

- *Mga sagot, puro hanging... under study, in process... pag sensitive question, safe ang sagot. Maganda ang pinalabas pero na-pre-condition na ang mga tao dahil inuna nang pinakita ang kahinaan/ problems ng judiciary. Pag .08% lang ang budget, di talaga magkakaroon ng pagbabago/ reporma...*
- *On Clinical Legal Education Program at sa pagiging mandatory nito na ang sinagot nila ay academic freedom... sino ba ang magde-define ng academic freedom? Paano kung ang eskuwelahan ay nagtutulak ng neo-liberal na agenda, pano mapu-push ang concerns ng marginalized sectors?*

GROUP 4

- *Salamat sa ALG! This is the best conference that we ever had*
- *Marami ring nakitang positibo sa nangyaring lakbay-aral tulad ng pagkakaroon ng initiatives/ efforts mula sa SC for justice reform; positibo rin na malaman na amenable din pala ang SC na ito para sa pagbabago ng sistema...*
- *Di satisfied sa sinagot tungkol sa judiciary being an independent body kasi ang lagi lang isinasagot ay "the actions of the judiciary will speak for itself" na yung mga decisions nila ang magpapatunay na independent sila pero alam natin na hindi naman ito nangyayari.*
- *Sana next year me conference uli...*

GROUP 5

- *Salamat sa ALG, well-organized ang conference...*
- *Tungkol sa tour, agree sila sa mga naunang puna. Tulad nung sa SC, napansin na lahat ng mga isinasagot ay negative (under study, kulang sa pondo, etc)*
- *Recommendation sa ALG: push more, para di lang nila (SC) pag-aaralan pero kikilos sila para gagawan na nila (SC) agad ng resulta (issues raised in the statement to SC)*

GROUP 6

- *Excited to go to the SC but it was frustrating because the person whom we dreamt to meet/ address our problems was not there... even one justice was not there.*

GROUP 7

- *Di nakamit yung pagkapanalo dahil yung tao na dapat magreceive ng position paper ay wala kaya di masagot ang mga tanong natin*
- *Recommendation: Maging masigasig sa pagfollow-up ng position paper para malaman natin ang resulta/ sagot ng SC*
- *Sa presentation ng mga tanong, nalilito ang sumasagot ng questions dahil masyadong mahaba ang pagprisinta, mahahaba ang mga tanong. Di maayos ang (facilitation) ng mga tanong.*

GROUP 8

- *Salamat sa ALG sa ganitong pagkakataon ng pagsasama-sama at sana di matapos dito*
- *Video presentation, nakakadismaya tingnan ang kondisyon at nakakadismayang marining ang mga hukom na di makapagtrabaho ng maayos dahil sa kalagayan ng court rooms at sa kakulangan ng budget. Ni hindi naipakilala ang 15 justices at hanggang kelan ba ang term ng mga ito, kasi isa sa minungkahing para sa People's Participatory Governance ay ang pagiging bahagi ng magbibigay ng info kung sino ang itatalagang SC justices... Di sapat ang video presentation lamang.*
- *We were attended to by Info Officers lamang, sana kahit assistants man lang ng mga justices ang humarap.*
- *Tagumpay: Paglalalag ng kumpleto, komprehensibo na statement na magkakaroon lamang ng katuparan pag nakakuha na ng tugon mula sa SC*

GROUP 9

- *Sang-ayon dun sa nag-raise tungkol sa di pagsunod ng ilang participants sa pinagkasunduang daloy ng pagtatanong dahil nagdulot na ito ng kalituhan sa mga taong naka-assign na magtanong.*
- *Masaya ang grupo na sila ay nakapunta sa SC dahil rare opportunity ito lalo na sa mga taga-probinsiya*
- *Sa Q and A, naintindihan nila na may mga questions na ni-raise na they are not authorized to answer.*
- *Ipinakita ng video kung gaano kadami talaga ang mga pending cases, ipinakita rin ang video para maintindihan natin ang sitwasyon nila.*
- *Discontented sa sagot tungkol sa isyu ng recognition ng paralegals dahil walang kongkretong sagot na ibinigay dito.*

GROUP 10

- *Salamat sa ALG, malaking tulong (ang conference) sa mga paralegals. Ang mga learnings sa conference ay magamit/ implement sa kanilang mga lugar at makatulong din sa (pagtugon ng) mga justice (concerns) sa kanilang lugar.*

GROUP 11

- *Salamat sa ALG, sana maulit pa*
- *Inasahan na justices ang mga makakaharap para yung mga tanong ay masagutan. Insufficient ang sagot ng mga PIO.*
- *Sana magkaron ng kasagutan yung statements na binigay at sana maging matagumpay.*
- *Sa ipinakita sa video ipinapakita lang nito na ibinabasura talaga ang mga kaso... ipinakita dito ang kahinaan at kabagalan sa pagkilos ng korte, kaya di nakakapagbigay ng hustisya. Pati info system at access sa hustisya mabagal din, lalo na dun sa mga malayo sa Manila.*

GROUP 12

- *Salamat sa ALG, lalo sa participants, marami kaming natutunan*
- *Kung maraming pasaway na participants na nagsitanong, di din na-facilitate ng maayos sa loob ng SC (sa part ng ALG). Sana merong nagpapadaloy (cue) mula sa mga ALG para alam ng mga paralegals kung sino na ang susunod na magtatanong, buti na lang andun si Atty. Manuel na nagpakita ng suporta at lumakas ang loob namin.*
- *Sa video, ine-expect na na ipapakita talaga ang hirap ng SC para di sila hanapan.*
- *Mabait ang statement na ginawa, sana mas (matapang) na isulong ang mga demands... Isulong at maging vigilant sa pagsulong ng reporma, hindi lang sa bahagi ng ALG kundi pati sa mga paralegals, siguraduhin na makuha ang reporma na sinusulong para sa hustisya*

GROUP 13 (letter/ note)

- *ALG and PL pass position paper to Congress to sponsor a bill recognizing institutional support to colleges offering courses in BS Paralegal Education*

GROUP 14

- *Napaka-moot and academic that it was purely a "visit" that the PIO are providing information to students about what SC is all about. Although we were able to raise our issues and problems, wala naman talaga tayong nakuhang resulta. We were not able to receive concrete answers...*
- *We were expecting a dialogue, however dahil wala ni isang justice who can give concrete answers, yung naganap na (paghaharap) mababalewala din kasi walang justice na makakarining nung mga concerns na nilatag ng group.*

GROUP 15

- *We have the sentiments the same as other groups... salamat sa ALG.*

Atty. Glenda synthesized the feedbacks and made the following points:

1. The video presentation was a form of mind conditioning to gather sympathy from the group.
2. The dialogue was not facilitated well.
3. It was disheartening that there are still those among us who do not know how to follow instructions (agreement on the script)
4. The capacity of the staff who were there to answer our questions was questionable. We were not able to get concrete answers/ commitments from them. Some of our advocacies were even disputed like the issue on the formal recognition of paralegals.
5. The absence of the justices was very disappointing
6. Clarification re MLQU's course on paralegal studies, the paralegal being referred to are the paralegals who assist lawyers, this is what they study. The ALG is in the process of developing a curriculum and will be pushing this agenda to the SC.
7. From that experience we are faced with the following challenges:
 - a. On the issue of lack of resources, the challenge for us is to push for reforms in the justice system and we have to demand for results. Lack of resources should not be a reason for us not to demand our rights to access to justice, it is not a reason for justice not to be served.
 - b. We have succeeded in our first step of making the SC aware of our

	<p>demands by submitting the statement. Let us make sure that we sustain our advocacies and demand results from the SC.</p> <p>c. Finally, let us share and use everything that we learned from this conference. Bring everything back to the community, move on and continue pushing for reforms.</p>
Closing Remarks	<p>Atty. Marla Barcenilla, executive director of WOMENLEAD, gave the closing remarks where she thanked all the participants for taking part in the conference and acknowledged the important role of the paralegals especially on the part of the ALG. According to her this conference is just the beginning of a stronger and louder endeavor towards the fulfillment of our advocacies for justice reform</p>
Closing Activity	<p>For the closing activity, one participant (Zuraida Anayatin) led the group in reading a presentation entitled "GEESE" which highlights the values of teamwork, unity, shared leadership, encouragement and support especially in times of difficulties and great challenges.</p> <p><i>Please refer to Annex 2H for the powerpoint presentation.</i></p>

9. Documents on Good and Innovative Practices
10. Copy of Codified Knowledge Products on Governance Reforms
11. Documents on Models on Participatory Governance Mechanisms and Approaches

Copies of documentation on these #9, 10, 11 are already integrated in the other parts of the report.

Documentation Products of Events

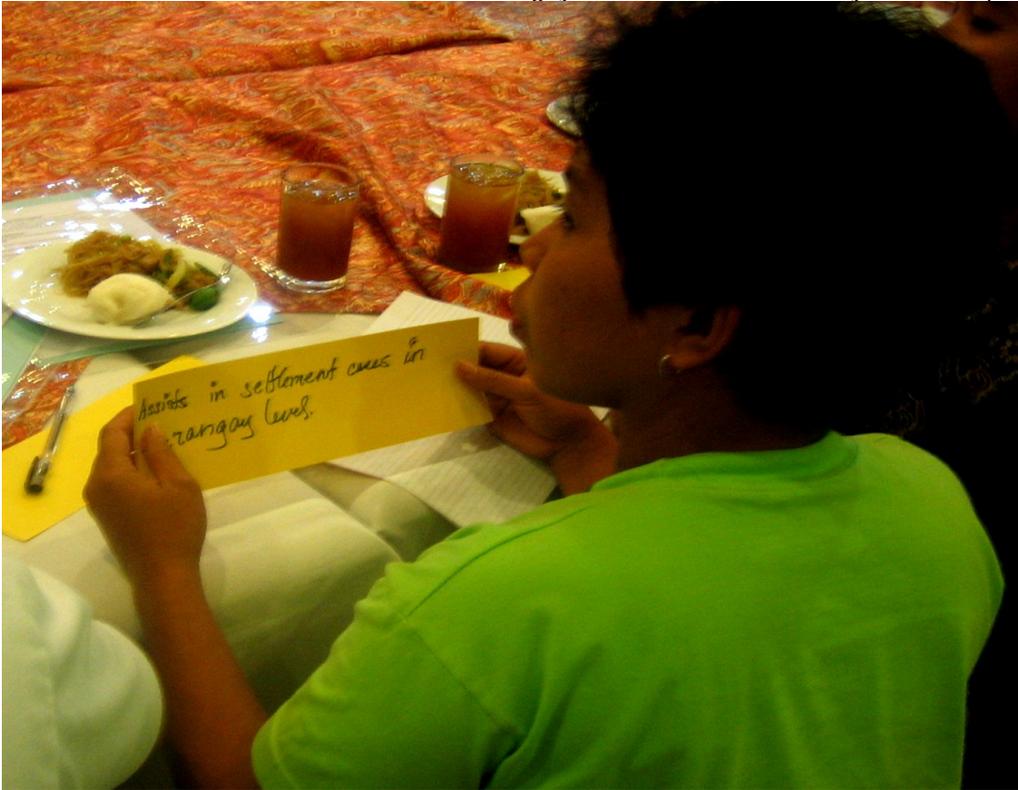
a. The ALG and the Paralegals



b. Muslim paralegal sharing her stories during the Open Forum



c. "assists in the settlement of cases in barangay level" – One of the many roles of a paralegal



d. Mindanao Paralegals' Presentation during the Solidarity Night



e. Paralegals visit the Supreme Court



f. Beaming paralegal, first time in Supreme Court



g. Legal Officer of the Public Information Office of the Supreme Court receiving the manifesto submitted by the Paralegals for SC action.



Financial Report*Form Number: FR-002*

(a) Designated Institution: GOP-UNDP Programme Fostering Democratic Governance
 (b) Programme / Project Number : 00046745 Justice and Human Rights Reform
 Programme / Project Title : ALG National Paralegal Conference
 (c) For the Period : July - September 2006
 (d) Currency : Philippine Peso

(I)		(II)			(III)			
Item		Chart of Account			July	August	September	Total Amount
(f)	Opening Balance				9,120.00	(102,280.00)	(102,280.00)	
(g)	Advance Received	-					-	-
(h)	Available Funds (f+g)	-			9,120.00	(102,280.00)	(102,280.00)	-
Detail Expenditures:		Account	Fund	Donor				
Project ID		74500	04000	00012				
	Paralegal Conference				111,400.00			111,400.00
								-
								-
								-
(i)	Total Expenditures				111,400.00	-	-	111,400.00
(j)	Closing Balance (h-i)				(102,280.00)	(102,280.00)	(102,280.00)	(102,280.00)
(k)	Outstanding Obligations							(102,280.00)
(l)	Planned Expenditures for October - December 2006							
(m)	Total Requirements (k+l)							(102,280.00)
(n)	Advance Requested (m-i)							(102,280.00)

(i)	Total Expenditures		-	-	400,000.00	400,000.00
(j)	Closing Balance (h-i)		-	76,710.00	9,120.00	9,120.00
(k)	Outstanding Obligations					
(l)	Planned Expenditures for July-September 2006					
(m)	Total Requirements (k+l)					-
(n)	Advance Requested (m-j)					-

Designated Institution Approval /
Signature:

Country Office Approval / Signature:

Name:

Atty. Marlon J. Manuel
Executive
Director

Resident Representative

Title:

UNDP

Date:

Date: