



MARADECA Inc.

Maradeca

The Official Publication of the Maranao People Development Center, Inc.
April 2025-JUNE 2025

UPDATES



Supporting our Farmers, Growing our Future

WHAT`S INSIDE?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 - Editorial 3 - Marantao, Saguiaran get new
MARADECA Staff Sharpen Skills .. 4 - Experts show Basilan....
Reaching the Unreached..... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 - Building Resilience Among.... 6 - Feature: Jariar's Story.....
Early Recovery Assistance 7 - Philippine Coffee Expo 2025.....
UNICEF partners witness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 - Last Mile Project Exit
Conference in
Lanao del Sur |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

EDITORIAL :

Building Resilient Communities: MARADECA's Collaborative Approach

Societal challenges are a constant and inherent part of progress and transformation, and they are a timeless theme addressed by many. These challenges are often interconnected, spanning areas such as health, peace and economic livelihood. Both government and non-government organizations are at the forefront of these issues. Nongovernment organizations like MARADECA are vital partners in tackling complex challenge, filling critical gaps in health, peace and livelihood.

In the area of health, NGOs provide essential services and psycho-social support to remote conflict-affected communities. They also lead grassroots initiatives for dialogues and peace education. Additionally, NGOs play a key role in livelihood programs, empowering communities through training and resources for sustainable enterprises. These efforts help reduce economic vulnerabilities.

As MARADECA continues its work to support the disadvantaged, it stands firm against challenges by building resilient communities. Resilience is not just about recovering from setback, it's about engaging communities with tools and knowledge needed to thrive on the face various challenges, such as health crisis, natural disasters and socio-economic hurdles. MARADECA is steadfast on its dedication to build resilient communities through its collaborative and innovative effort.

For example, MARADECA's critical health intervention, from providing immunization to children in Lanao del Sur and searching individual with tuberculosis in Mindanao and Visayas, foster foundational well-being for a community to thrive.

MARADECA's commitment also extends to disaster response, where it provides aid and livelihood support to people rebuild their lives after the floods. Furthermore, MARADECA's child sponsorship program empowers children with knowledge of their rights, safety, and education, creating a generation of informed citizen who can lead sustainable community development initiatives.

Genuine resilience is also linked to sustainable community-based project. The success of coffee and vegetable farming in Sulu and Basilan, as another example, demonstrates how local initiatives with community participation can create economic opportunities and self-reliance. MARADECA has also actively participated in discussion on peace, security and human rights to ensure that in a resilient community, every voice is heard and rights are upheld. MARADECA understands that a resilient community is an ongoing collaborative effort requiring empathy, innovation, and a belief in the potential of every individual.



ABOUT THE COVER PHOTO

The cover features Mr. Ahajani Ahajuli, Barangay Chairperson of Kabbon Takas, Patikul, Sulu, as he leads the hauling of coffee seedlings to local farms. His hands-on involvement reflects the community's shared commitment to sustainable coffee production and the empowerment of local farmers.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editorial in Chief: Salic B. Ibrahim

Associate Editor: Sinab D. Ibrahim

Feature Editor: Safia Dimatingcal-Mapandi

Managing Editor: Alvin M. Abbas

Layout Editor: Hairiah C. Abdul-azis

News Editor: Awi Cayon

Advisory Board Members: Dr. Moctar Matuan and Mr. Mobashar Abbas

CONTRIBUTORS

Faridah Salic, Aquilah Kahar, Fairosa Casan, Norhana Talib, Norliah Deron, Johayma Diamo, Jihan Cali, Omilhair Palawan, and Melanie Camid.



Marantao, Saguiaran get new school armchairs, learning kits

LANAO DEL SUR – Several day care centers and Arabic-language schools in two municipalities of this province got the rare chance in June this year of getting new school materials, including armchairs and learning kits, to improve their learning environment.

A total of 153 “School-in-a-Box” kits, 520 durable armchairs, and 20 plywood materials were received in 13 schools - 4 day care centers and 11 madaris - across both municipalities.

What was significant in the distribution of educational kits, armchairs, and learning materials to children in the municipalities of Saguiaran and Marantao was that the beneficiary schools were located in underserved and conflict-affected areas.

In Saguiaran, the distribution reached the barangays of Pantaoraya Dilausan, Basak Maito, Pagalamatan, and

Miphaga, highlighting the collective role of communities in protecting children.

At the Pantaoraya Islamic Academy, Ustadza Mohmina Cali and Hadja Sohra Bukhari expressed their gratitude, saying: *“May Allah grant reward to Plan and MARADECA for the help. This is great, not only for the students but also for the parents”.*

In Marantao, the program benefited learners from five barangays—Bacong, Mantapoli, Maul Ilian, Camalig Poblacion, and Lumbac Inudaran.

Hon. Jallaludin Naga Gulam of Bacong welcomed the support, noting the urgent need for classroom improvement. *“The new armchairs will greatly help our children to sit comfortably and focus on their studies. We are grateful to MARADECA and Plan International Pilipinas for their unwavering support,”* he said.

The initiative was conducted under Plan International Pilipinas’ Child Sponsorship Program and aligned with Brigada Eskwela 2025, supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Quality Education by ensuring equitable learning opportunities for children, especially of the Bangsamoro region. MARADECA Inc. partnered in the endeavor.

Mr. Joel D. Dizon, LDSPA program operations manager of Plan International Pilipinas, clarified that not only the sponsored child received the supplies but all children may utilize the classroom supplies that were meant to be used for pupils’ activities inside the classroom.

Parents and guardians were also around to witness the new materials

“Thank you so much, MARADECA and Plan International Pilipinas, for the coloring books,” said eight-year-old Sittie Aimah Diamla from Barangay Mantapoli.

MARADECA Staff Sharpen Skills in Gender Protection and Emergency Response

In a dedicated effort to translate international knowledge into local impact, MARADECA Inc. held two intensive “re-echo” training sessions for its staff this past April at the Ragayan Training Center in Marawi City. The initiative aimed to equip frontline teams with advanced skills in gender protection and emergency response, building upon insights from recent national and Asian seminars attended by MARADECA delegates.

The first training focused on the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security (RPA-WPS). Facilitated by Project Officer Ms. Aquila Kahar, the session introduced staff to robust Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) frameworks. Through interactive workshops, participants explored strategies to integrate WPS principles into MARADECA’s community programs, particularly those in conflict-affected and marginalized areas.

The second training, held in partnership with PLAN International Pilipinas, centered on Gender in Emergencies (GiE). Project Coordinator Ms. Norliah Deron and Project Officer Ms. Omilhairah Abdul Azis led workshops designed to sharpen the team’s knowledge of gender-responsive actions during crises.



One of MARADECA staff during the workshop session on Gender Protection and Emergency Response re-echo training

A key activity involved staff creating a detailed response plan for a climate change-induced disaster, highlighting the critical role of gender in effective emergency management.

These back-to-back sessions have empowered our program and project teams. Staff are now actively incorporating these new gender-responsive tools and data-driven MEL practices into their daily work, ensuring that MARADECA’s interventions are more strategic, inclusive, and effective in promoting sustained change.



“This is the first time we’ve had healthcare services come to our community.”

This is one iconic and touching comment that MARADECA Inc. has ever heard in the many communities work it was doing.

This happened in Tawi-Tawi, the southernmost island province of the Philippines, when MARADECA Inc. conducted Active Case Finding (ACF) activities in search of possible cases of tuberculosis.

“We’re so grateful to MARADECA for bringing TB screening to our doorstep. It’s a huge relief to know our health status without having to spend a lot of money and time traveling to the city,” the resident beneficiary said.

She was able to undergo the free chest X-ray, providing beneficiaries with a free and crucial diagnostic tool for detecting TB.

The MARADECA-ACF team went to the communities of South Ubian, Tandubas, Tabawan, Sapa-Sapa, Languyan, Sitangkai, Simunul, Panglima Sugala, and Bongao, bringing much-needed healthcare services to these remote areas. Many beneficiaries were visibly emotional, with some even tearing up as they shared their struggles in accessing healthcare services.

REACHING THE UNREACHED: MARADECA’S TB SCREENING EFFORTS IN TAWI-TAWI



**ACCESS TB P
MUNICIPALITY OF SI
(Sitangk
TA
Ju**

Experts show Basilan, Sulu farmers the natural way of soil care

LAMITAN, Basilan – PIN Coffee Specialist, Reinaldo Palencia taught farmers in Basilan and Sulu that there is a natural way to maintain soil structure and nutrient balance to optimize crop productivity.

This came to fore in the training sessions from April 14, 2025 with farmers in 10 barangays of Basilan and 10 barangays of Sulu, mostly growing coffee in their farms.

They demonstrated and discussed with farmer participants the Integrated Nutrient Management (INM), a method of maintaining soil structure of their farm and improve the nutrient balance of their coffee to increase the yield.

The INM is a holistic agricultural strategy that optimizes crops productivity, including coffee, and minimizes land degradation by judiciously combining organic, biological and inorganic nutrient sources to enhance soil’s physical, chemical, biological and hydrological properties ensuring optimal plant nutrition.

Farmers said they were amazed to know that all the ingredients to improve their coffee is readily made from their backyard.

The participants were also taught how to grow vegetables as good option to diversify their coffee farms and as essential in maintaining nutrient balance.

The BAEP-LEAP, a program funded by European Union in the Philippine, Implemented by People in Need (PIN) and Maranao People Development Center (MARADECA) Inc., and United Youth of the Philippines-Women (UNYPHIL) organized the training.

The turnover of a Maxima Cargo Bajaj tri-wheeler to Marinaut 16'ers Credit Cooperative in Marawi City



Building Resilience Among Lanao IDPs Thru New Livelihood Support

Three cooperatives, counting members are the former internally displaced residents in Lanao del Sur received needed boost to their sustenance in a fresh livelihood support from donors.

On June 24–25 the Maranao People Development Center (MARADECA), Inc., and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) turned over sewing machines and a tricycle to three cooperatives, which were formed after a bloody 2017 siege of Marawi City that displaced not only city residents but also many lakeside municipalities.

The event marked a key step in helping conflict-affected communities rebuild through resilience and self-reliance of these cooperatives, the MARADECA said.

The Pagnao ko Masa Cooperative of 60 active members in the municipality of Tugaya was given six sewing machines to boost its handicraft, dressmaking, tailoring, and garment production. Its members have been producing traditional baor malong, and uniforms for local markets.

The 3 Stars Credit Cooperative of 33 members in Marantao was also given six sewing machines in addition to its existing machines that were used in its community tailoring projects. The new machines will be used to set up a community sewing center to produce loom-woven for sale in nearby towns. This cooperative was established in 2019 and sustained itself through credit and savings services and small-scale trading.

The Marinaut 16'ers Credit Cooperative, with the basic 15 IDP families as members in Sagonsongan, Marawi City, received a Maxima Cargo Bajaj tri-wheeler, or tricycle, which will be used for delivery services, hauling of goods, and cooperative operations. The cooperative will have good use of the tricycle to deliver water to households in the Sagonsongan Transitory Shelter for fellow evacuees, easing the burden of families



Showcasing loom woven products of 3 stars together with Mr. Pedrola of UNDP

who struggle with access to water for daily household chores. Particularly for 3 Stars Cooperative, MARADECA has helped it since 2019, not only in enhancing the skills of members but also helped in building its sustainable livelihood. *“And now, we are truly grateful for receiving these sewing machines from UNDP and MARADECA.”* said Norlinza Abedin, president of 3 Stars Cooperative.

“While the assistance provided by the UNDP program may seem small, our vision and ambition to support you are much greater. We may not be able to provide everything you request, but we firmly believe in your strength, resilience, and creativity to make the most of what is given. Every form of support, whether big or small, carries deep value because it comes from the heart. Today, we entrust you with the assistance provided, and we hope you will care for it and use it as a tool to build a brighter and more sustainable future for your community,” said Mr. Noel Pedrola, UNDP program officer.



Early Recovery Assistance Reaches 291 Flood-Affected Families in Balabagan and Kapatagan, Lanao del Sur

In the aftermath of the flash flood that devastated the municipalities of Balabagan and Kapatagan, Lanao del Sur early this year, many farming families have been left struggling with the loss of their primary sources of livelihood. Crops were destroyed, and essential farming tools were swept away, and rebuilding their lives and livelihoods posed immense challenge.

In response to this urgent need, the MARADECA Emergency Response Team, in partnership with Give to the World, carried out an early recovery assistance initiative on April 3-4 targeting 291 severely affected families to jumpstart the process. The affected families received farming tools, vegetable seeds, and fertilizers to help them resume planting, rebuild small gardens, and recover their means of living.

"This assistance allows us to start again. Even the tools and seeds give us a reason to move forward. Sukran bo," said one farmer from Kapatagan. The assistance was based on Rapid Needs Assessments conducted in coordination with Local Government Units (LGUs), Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Offices (MDDRMOs), and barangay leaders.

This collaborative process ensured that the intervention was timely, contextually appropriate, and targeted families who were severely affected. With a strong local presence and help of community-based organizations and an understanding of the community context, MARADECA mobilized resources, coordinated logistics, and ensured the transparent distribution of early recovery assistance.



FEATURE:

A Life-Changing Moment: Jariar's Story of Hope and Gratitude

In the search for active cases of the once-dreaded tuberculosis disease, MARADECA Inc. stumbled upon the interesting case of Jariar R. Diabo, a 63-year-old woman from Barangay. Raba, Godod, Zamboanga del Norte.

Jariar's story is one of struggle and resilience. Her husband, a farmer, earns a meager P2,000 a month, which often falls short due to unpredictable harvests and weather conditions. Jariar's health concerns also went worse, unaddressed due to lack of resources. She suffered from heartburn and a persistent cough, but the thought of visiting a doctor seemed like a luxury she couldn't afford.

That was until the day she learned about the free chest X-ray service offered by MARADECA's ACCESS TB program. Jariar's eyes lit up with hope as she grabbed the opportunity to finally know the state of her health. Though nervous about undergoing an X-ray for the first time, her desire for answers outweighed her fears.

The day the X-ray service and Jariar's anxiety was palpable. As she underwent the procedure, a sense of relief washed over her. When the results came out, Jariar was overjoyed to learn that she didn't have any lung disease. Tears of gratitude welled up in her eyes as she shared her heartfelt thanks to the organizing team of MARADECA, Philippine Business for Social Progress, and the Global Fund. *"Masaya na ako ngayon dahil sa libreng x-ray, natuklasan ko na wala pala akong sakit,"* Jariar said with a smile. *"Hindi hadlang ang kahirapan sa ating kalusugan. Magpakatatag at labanan ang sakit."* ("I'm happy now because through the free X-ray, I discovered that I don't have any illness. Poverty is not a barrier to our health. Be strong and fight illness.")

Jariar's story is a testament to the power of compassion and healthcare. Through the ACCESS TB program, MARADECA not only provided medical services but also brought hope and reassurance to communities in need. Jariar's story shows that even in the face of adversity, healthcare can be a beacon of light, empowering individuals to take control of their lives and fight against illness.

The Maranao People Development Center (MARADECA) Inc. has partnered with the PBSP and funded by The Global Fund to conduct active case finding in searching for tuberculosis cases. This treatable and curable disease affects communities worldwide.

Philippine Coffee Expo 2025: A Milestone for Industry Growth and Mindanao Farmers

MAKATI CITY - The Philippine Expo 2025 in May this year provided the unique opportunity for coffee farmers in Mindanao's southwestern-most island provinces of Sulu and Basilan, their inaugural experience at a national-level event.

The direct exposure significantly boosted their motivation to further enhance the quality of their coffee, believing they too can participate in the future competition said Mr. Ibrahim from LABRECO of Basilan, as he looked at it as a determined challenge. He said they will not just participate but aim to win the Philippine Coffee Quality Competition for the Excelsa category.

Similarly, Mr. Ronnie, a coffee farmer from Sulu, said the experience gave him profound hope to improve his coffee farm, and inspire more farmers to establish coffee farms in his barangay, Kabbon Takas. He hoped to renew the reputation of his barangay as a renowned home for excellent coffee after the place was abandoned due to decades-old conflict.

The expo held on May 9-11 at One Ayala Makati served as a dynamic platform to showcase specialty coffee, share vital knowledge and insights, celebrate coffee culture, and propel industry growth through collaborative efforts,

according to the organizers. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Agriculture (DA), and the Philippine Coffee Guild.

Some 21 coffee farmers, traders, cooperatives, local government units attended the expo as organized by MARADECA and People in Need (PIN) staff to get them the exposure to improve production of quality coffee, expand experiences and networks of the coffee stakeholders in Basilan and Sulu. Attendees from Mindanao also included those from BAEP-LEAP Program, a program funded by European Union, implemented by the (PIN), MARADECA, and United Youth of the Philippine (UNYPhil-Women).

This year, the coffee sector saw the record-breaking green coffee sales, with prices soaring to P9,900 per kilo. Industry insights were shared through diverse sessions such as "Kape at Kwentuhan", coffee exhibition, business matching opportunities, product demonstrations, roaster producer forum, cupping room, and pop-up cafes. The event also welcome international specialty guest exhibitors, guild barista and roasting competitions.



UNICEF, partners witness MARADECA's public health engagements in Lanao del Sur



Group Learning Session at Barangay Matao Araza, Masiu, facilitated by the RHU in partnership with UNICEF and the MARADECA Team.

The team from UNICEF and partners from local governments witnessed firsthand in June this year the public engagements of MARADECA to promote immunization and public health awareness in Lanao del Sur.

The UNICEF team and other partners heard community members, including fathers, talked about immunization and public health in one Group Learning session in Barangay Matao Araza, Masiu.

There was also mentoring and coaching of Bakuna champions held at the MARADECA office in Marantao, and facilitated by communication for development officer, Ms. Saimah Baulo.

The UNICEF team has noted that *"this only shows that not only mothers, but also fathers value the health of their children."*

The MARADECA activities aimed to build the capacity of local health workers and community influencers in promoting vaccination and addressing hesitancy. It continued: *"These Bakuna champions will be recognized in their communities. Even though they are volunteers, this recognition will help them feel valued and appreciated."*

From 2023 to 2025, the UNICEF, Relief International (RI), and MARADECA coordinated with the Provincial Health office, the Ministry of Health-BARMM, and local governments to strengthen immunization system and restore vaccine confidence in underserved and post-conflict communities of Lanao del Sur. Efforts targeted the zero-dose and under-immunized children in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs).

The Covid-19 Vaccine and Routine Immunization Delivery Support (CDS Tranche 3)-Last Mile project particularly gathered the MARADECA partners to provide technical support, training, and community engagement.

MARADECA's grassroots work, grounded in culturally sensitive approaches, has engaged religious and traditional leaders while activating feedback mechanisms to overcome barriers to immunization.

The UNICEF said: *"This visit shows us that when communities, local governments, and partners come together, immunization can reach every child, even in the most difficult areas. Our collective goal is simple but powerful: to protect children's lives and give them a healthier future. We are committed to working hand in hand with BARMM, local leaders, and organizations like MARADECA to make this possible."*

LAST MILE PROJECT EXIT CONFERENCE IN LANAOS DEL SUR HIGHLIGHTS VACCINE IMPORTANCE

The concluding chapter of the CDS3 Last Mile Project in three exit conferences have pointed out the value of community acceptance of immunization as the health shield of residents.

Among the points highlighted were the following:

- Unpredictability of public health threats emphasizes that immunization must remain a priority to protect vulnerable communities.
- Continued education and persuasion of parents to adapt immunization
- Many children who were previously missed finally received their vaccines.
- The Last Mile Project proved that even the most isolated areas in BARMM can be reached through unity and collaboration.
- Hope for wider vaccine acceptance, improved cold chain systems, and stronger partnerships to sustain and institutionalize.
- Training of community health workers, and strong social mobilization efforts played a crucial role in reaching remote and underserved Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs)

Data presented by MARADECA and National Immunization Program coordinators of Masiu and Pagayawan show a significant rise in immunization coverage.

The formation of Bakuna Champions, Community voices reflected the impact on the ground.

A Barangay Local Government Unit representative from Masiu said that *“many children who previously missed finally received their vaccines. The presence of health workers and MARADECA volunteers made a real difference in building trust and awareness.”*

This was due to persuasion among parents to adapt immunization program. A former vaccine-hesitant parent from Barangay Matao Araza said she feared vaccines due to wrong information she got. *“But after patient explanations from MARADECA and RHU (Regional Health Unit) teams, I understood that vaccines protect my child. Now I encourage other parents not to let fear win.”*

Khadapi M. Pangcoga, Barangay Chairman of Ilian, Pagayawan, said *“The program has been a huge help especially in educating illiterate parents and grandparents on the value of vaccines. Conflicts over vaccination decisions were resolved through group learning sessions.”*

“The Last Mile Project proved that even the most isolated areas in BARMM can be reached through unity and collaboration. While this phase ends, our responsibility

continues. We hope the gains in vaccine acceptance, improved cold chain systems, and stronger partnerships will be sustained and institutionalized,” the municipal health officers of the two municipalities said.

“This is not an exit but an entrance to a new era of collaboration,” the Integrated Provincial Health Office said.

The immunization and exit conferences were conducted on June 23 in Pagayawan, June 26 in Masiu, and June 30 at the Integrated Provincial Health Office (IPHO). The initiative was a collaborative effort among Unicef, Relief International, and MARADECA Inc., in close partnership with local government units, rural health units, and local communities.

The conferences brought together municipal and barangay officials, health workers, and community representatives to review the project’s accomplishments. They also identified continuing gaps, such as shortages of medical supplies and the need for sustained logistical and financial support from LGUs and BLGUs to fully implement the National Immunization Program (NIP).

The exit conferences said the success of the next immunization would depend on collective action, community participation, and sustained commitment.



Exit Conference in Municipal annex, Brgy. Ningir, Pagayawan, LDS



Exit Conference in Executive Conference Hall, IPHO, New Capitol, Marawi City



(063) 228 - 3635
 maradeca99@yahoo.com
 www.maradeca.org
 www.facebook.com/maradeca99



ADDRESS:
MAIN OFFICE:
 Brgy. Ragayan Poonamarantao,
 Marantao, Lanao del Sur, 9711,
 BARMM, Mindanao, Philippines.

SATELLITE OFFICE:
 Iligan Office: #23 Yale St,
 Celdran Village Brgy. Tubod, Iligan City.
ZAMBOANGA OFFICE:
 Brgy.Pasonangca, Zamboanga City



“Liberating the disadvantaged from poverty”