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**TAG4: LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN MINDANAO**

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**Second Quarter Report FY2010**  
January 1, 2010 to March 31, 2010  
(Cooperative Agreement No. AID 492-A-00-09-00031-00)

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Submitted by



**The Asia Foundation**

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## Acronyms

ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BMFI	Balay Mindanaw Foundation Inc.
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
GPMI	Galling Pook Foundation Inc.
LCP	League of Cities of the Philippines
LGA	Local Government Academy
LMP	League of Municipalities of the Philippines
LoGoTRI-PhilNet	Local Governance Training and Research Institutes
LRI	Local Resource Institution
MDC	Mayors Development Center
NGOs	Non-Government Organization
RFA	Rapid Field Appraisal
TAF	The Asia Foundation
TAG	Transparent Accountable Governance
TWC	Technical Working Committee
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## I. Introduction

This report covers the accomplishments of The Transparent Accountable Governance (TAG4): Local Governance in Mindanao Project from January 1, 2010 to March 31, 2010.

TAG is supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under Cooperative Agreement No. AID 492-A-00-09-00031-00 and implemented by The Asia Foundation (the Foundation). TAG4 runs from 01 October 2009 to 30 September 2012 and appropriately responds to USAID's priority of strengthening local governance in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao.

TAG specifically aims to: 1) strengthen local government institutional linkages and capacity for policy reform through data generation, information sharing, and policy dialogue; and 2) improve the quality of local governance for sustained peace and development in Mindanao.

To accomplish these objectives, the Foundation works with local governments, civil society, national government agencies, and other local governance stakeholders. The collaboration focuses on improving governance, making local environments more conducive to restoring peace and order, and addressing poverty.

The approach of the project is through technical assistance, education and training, advocacy efforts, sharing of good practices, information dissemination, and policy discussions involving multiple stakeholders.

Activities during the life of the project include:

- Rapid field appraisal to assess decentralization in Philippine local governments;
- Policy fora to discuss issues affecting local governments and to disseminate exemplary practices in local governance;
- Organizational strengthening of the secretariats of the Leagues of Local Governments (LCP and LMP);
- Direct technical assistance to Mindanao local governments and improve their capacity to deliver local services;
- Local government budget monitoring by civil society in Mindanao;
- Setting up the peer-based accreditation process for local resource training institutions providing trainings to local governments;
- Books distribution to Mindanao through The Asia Foundation's Book for Asia program.

In implementing the various project activities, the Foundation engages the expertise of government and non-government organizations as well as individual experts familiar with local governance issues in Mindanao, and are interested in the project. Working with them ensures the immediate start-up of activities and the generation of counterpart resources to ensure success, and high sustainability rate for project activities.

The Foundation adopts a *demand-driven* and *assisted self-reliance* approach in providing technical assistance to local governments. The project only works with local governments interested in the reform process, that have political leaders who support the program, which demonstrate a commitment to partner with, and involve civil society groups in undertaking the reforms. They should also be willing to involve other stakeholders in the reforms and to provide counterpart contributions for project-related activities.

The technical assistance provided to local governments enrolled in the project revolves around the themes of fiscal responsibility, transparency and accountability, and service delivery.

## I. Accomplishments for the Quarter

### **Objective 1: To strengthen local governments' institutional linkages and capacity for policy reform through data generation, information sharing, and policy dialogue.**

*Activity 1.1: Conduct of Rapid Field Appraisal (RFA) to assess results of decentralization in Philippine local governments.*

#### Specific Objectives:

1. To measure and assess the impact of decentralization and devolution across the nation not only in local governments but also in the country in general. Areas to focus on are poverty reduction, contribution to economic growth, progress in the countryside, and quality of public services.
2. To learn from the experiences of donor programs to guide future local governance programming, as well as discern benchmarks and processes for assistance in local governments.
3. To use the findings from the study as a tool for initiating policy recommendations and dialogue around important local governance and decentralization issues, and for clarifying policy debates needed by key actors, including the leagues of local governments, to facilitate immediate action.
4. To help identify the substance of specific activities under the three broad project categories of transparency and accountability, fiscal responsibility, and service delivery improvements that could be provided to the participating local governments.

#### Activities and Outputs for the Quarter.

During the quarter, the project hired 16 regional consultants to conduct the RFA in 16 regions. On February 17, 2010, the TAG project hosted a consultative workshop with government agencies, leagues of local governments, non-government organizations, academe, the private sector, and development partners to decide on the issues that will be covered by the RFA, and for the stakeholders to agree on the parameters of the assessment to be made. The workshop started with a presentation of key findings and recommendations of previous RFAs conducted-- highlighting the recurring issues and policy recommendations. This was followed by a brief mention of recent decentralization studies conducted in the last

five years, and the focus of these recent studies. There was also a short explanation on how this RFA will be different from the last RFAs conducted.

Based on this discussion, the project, with the 16 regional consultants underwent a design workshop from February 18-19 and came up with the standard set of data to be gathered. Field work started on February 22 and was completed March 30, 2010. A total of 192 local governments were taken as sample, broken down as follows: 45 provinces, and 147 municipalities /cities. From each local government, regional consultants interviewed 15-25 people from government and non-government organizations.

Below is the status of the activities according to the workplan:

Sub-activities	Timeframe	Status
1.1: Conduct of Rapid Field Appraisal to measure the impact of decentralization to Philippine local governments	Jan –Sept 2010	Ongoing
1.1.1 Hiring of field consultants	Jan. 2010	Completed
1.1.2: Consultations to design the scope of the study	Jan. 2010	Completed
1.1.2: Field data gathering	Feb-Mar 2010	Ongoing
1.1.3: Data Analysis and consolidation	April 2010	To be completed
1.1.4: Report Writing	May-June 2010	To be completed
1.1.3: National presentation of results	July 2010	To be completed
1.1.4: Publication of report	August-Sept 2010	To be completed

### Implementation Challenges

1. Regional consultants have difficulty interviewing local elected officials as most of them are already busy campaigning long before the start of the campaign for the local positions;
2. At least two selected municipalities backed out for fear that the data that will be gathered will be used against them during the elections;
3. One consultant was mistakenly associated with the former Governor, a bitter rival of the current Governor;
4. Letters requesting for interview and data were sometimes not responded to by local governments.
5. In National Capital Region, even technical staff are difficult to pin down for interviews.

*Activity 1.2: Policy fora and dissemination of exemplary practices in local governance.*

### Specific Objectives:

1. To improve the institutional linkage between national government agencies and local government units.

2. To capture, recognize and promote good local governance practices in ARMM through an awards program that will inspire the exemplary performance among local governments in the region.

Activities and Outputs for the Quarter.

Two staff from Galing Pook Foundation attended the Grant Management Seminar conducted by The Asia Foundation on February 17-18. The Grant Management Seminar enables potential partners of The Asia Foundation to be familiar with the Foundation's financial policies and reporting requirements, as well as discuss issues and processes related to project implementation. The Grant Management Seminar was immediately followed up by one-day training on Quickbooks Accounting software on March 9, 2010 at TAF office.

In addition, the Galing Pook has already submitted its budget to the Foundation for a one year grant on ARMM Awards. A meeting was held on March 8, 2010 between the Executive Director of GPFI, and the Foundation's Internal Audit to discuss the budget and the justifications needed for some of the cost items indicated. A Letter of Agreement for the conduct of ARMM Awards was executed between The Asia Foundation and Galing Pook Foundation.

<b>Sub-activities</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Status</b>
1.2. Policy fora and dissemination of exemplary practices in local governance	Dec. 2009-Sept. 2012	Ongoing
1.2.1. Quarterly fora (2)	June and Aug. 2010	To be completed
1.2.2. Bi-annual Leaders' Forum (1)	Sept. 2010	To be completed
1.2.3. Search and screen exemplary local governance practices in ARMM	Dec. 2009-Feb 2011	Ongoing
1.2.3.1. Capacity building on financial management for Galing Pook Foundation	Dec. 2009-May 2010	Ongoing
1.2.3.2. Consolidate and organize key officials in the ARMM government and LGUs, and local and foreign development agencies operating and with stakes in ARMM	June 2010	To be completed
1.2.3.3. Produce manual of operations for Promoting Innovation and Excellence in Governance in ARMM	July 2010	To be completed
1.2.3.4. Call for applications	July-Sep 2010	To be completed
1.2.3.5. Organize the Screening Committee	Aug.-Sept. 2010	To be completed

Implementation Challenges:

1. Finding a local government in ARMM that would qualify for Galing Pook Awards without lowering the award program's standards so as not to affect or destroy the program's credibility.

2. Newly elected officials may not be motivated to submit entries to the award program especially if the project or innovation was initiated by the former Mayors or elected officials
3. The cash incentive may not be enough to entice local officials to submit entries. Galing Pook may be compelled to source out other funds to provide additional funds that will enable local governments sustain their innovative practices.

*Activity 1.3: Strengthening the LCP and LMP Secretariats.*

Specific Objective:

1. To harness the role of the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP), and the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) as premier venues for discussions of issues affecting local governments.

Activities and Outputs for the Quarter.

The Leagues of Municipalities of the Philippines and the League of Cities of the Philippines have signed separate agreements with The Asia Foundation signifying their willingness to undergo organizational development interventions to strengthen the leagues' secretariat. Mayor Manuel Escalante, LMP Secretary General signed the agreement for the LMP and Dr. Steven Rood signed in behalf of the Foundation. Mayor Alfonso S. Casurra, National Executive Vice President of the League of Cities of the Philippines signed the agreement in behalf of LCP while Dr. Rood signed for the Foundation. The executive directors of both leagues also signed as witnesses to the agreements.

The project has started to review the LMP's documents of incorporation and by-laws, as well as the structure and position description of the LMP Secretariat Staff. The *curriculum vitae* of some staff have also been looked into. Mayors Ismael Tomaru of Aparri, Cagayan, Roque Tiu of Tanauan, Leyte, and Exuperio Lioren of Jagna, Bohol have also been interviewed to get their assessment of the capacity of the secretariat and their views on how to make it more responsive to the needs of league members.

Below are some initial impressions on the LMP secretariat:

1. The staff are very good and able to easily respond to problems.
2. Executive Director is no longer co-terminus with the President (i.e. the Executive Director does not exit at the same time as the President); even the staff have permanent appointments ensuring the continuity of LMP programs.
3. There is a good collaboration between the Secretariat and the LMP National Directorate, as can be seen from the advocacy and many resolutions produced during the island conferences.
4. The Secretariat has good leadership which enables it to formulate themes for conferences, develop a guide for mayors, and provide a lot of inputs during conferences.

5. The Mayor's Development Center (MDC) is a big help in professionalizing local elective officials. MDC uses mayors as resource persons, which helps a lot in sharing, learning and adopting best practices.
6. MDC needs to have its own staff. Right now, it is using the LMP Secretariat Staff, which interferes with the performance of the staffs' regular functions.
7. There is a very fast turnover of LMP staff, which needs to be resolved because it is not easy to deal with new ones and teach them new skills.
8. There is a need for the staff to look closely at the needs of the provincial chapters because some chapter heads are interested only in the benefits that they get for themselves and their municipalities.
9. Some provincial chapter are organized with full-time coordinators, others are not.
10. There is a need to clearly define the relationship between the LMP National Office and the Provincial Chapters.
11. There is also the need to look into the relationship between the head of the provincial chapters and their respective chapter members.
12. The LMP Secretariat has to come up with mechanisms on how to extend help to mayors of far-flung municipalities who seldom come to Manila. Being able to help in this need may encourage members to pay their LMP dues.

With LCP, some organization documents including position descriptions of the staff and their curriculum vitae (CV) have also been reviewed. A meeting with the staff to explain the purpose of the project was also done after which interviews with some of them were conducted to get their idea of the capacities they still need to make them more effective in their work.

Below are some of the initial impressions about the LCP secretariat:

1. The CVs indicate a good recruitment system, although the executive director tells that all the employees have their mayor patrons and that she is not yet able to get their full cooperation.
2. The executive director who is new at LCP feels she is still treated as an outsider and she is not fully knowledgeable yet of many of the things that the staff are doing.

Interviews with some city mayors have also been slated. But schedules have yet to be fixed. The interviews aim to get the mayors':

1. Views on the strengths and weaknesses of the LCP;
2. Expectations from the LCP Secretariat;
3. Perception on the customer orientation and service delivery standards of the LCP Secretariat;
4. Vision for the LCP; and
5. Perception on the structure of the LCP vis-à-vis its ability to attain its goals.

Sub-activities	Time Frame	Status
1.3. Strengthening the capacities of league secretariats	Dec. 2009- Sept. 2010	
1.3.1. Discussions with the Leagues officers and secretariat to determine the scope of the assistance.	Dec. 2009	Completed
1.3.2. Hiring of organizational development experts	Jan. 2010	Completed on February 16, 2010
1.3.3. Conduct of organizational diagnosis and assessment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultations with the leagues' officers</li> <li>• Consultations with secretariats staff</li> <li>• Consultations with leagues' partners</li> </ul>	Jan. 2010	Ongoing
1.3.4. Presentation of findings to leagues' officers	Feb. 2010	To be completed. May happen by July 2010
1.3.5. Workshops to draft policies, and design appropriate processes and structure for the secretariat.	Mar. 2010	Delayed.
1.3.6. Trainings , coaching and mentoring the secretariats staff	April-June 2010	To be completed
1.3.7. Presentation of recommended policies, processes and structure to the leagues officers	July 2010	To be completed
1.3.8. Adoption of the recommendations by the officers	Aug. 2010	To be completed

#### Implementation Challenges

1. The coming election has made the scheduling of meetings and interviews difficult. Mayors are seldom available now that local campaigns have already kicked- off.
2. The staff of the leagues are also rushing to finish commitments, and complete deliverables in their various projects before changes in local leaderships take place. Hence league secretariats have initially been slow in responding to requests for documents and meetings.
3. The physical transfer of the LCP office from Makati City, to its new office in Eastwood, Quezon City has also disrupted some meeting and interview schedules.

**Objective 2: To improve the quality of local governance for sustained peace and development in Mindanao.**

*Activity 2.1: Technical assistance to Mindanao local governments.*

Specific Objective:

1. To improve the quality of local governance conflict affected areas of in Mindanao.

Activities and Outputs for the Quarter.

The project completed with the profiling of local government in six target regions in Mindanao, identifying potential partner local governments per province and region, determining their income class, listing the mayors, pinpointing projects in the area and donors as well, and listing also business and civil society organizations. The total number of local government with profile is 269, broken down as 15 provinces, 16 cities, and 254 municipalities.

The data generated will be used in determining local governments that will be invited to the project orientations, and later to submit proposals for technical assistance. What remain to be done are the inventory of local experts and consultants and the development of menus for the technical assistance. About half of the information was taken from the websites of some government agencies, donor agencies, civil society organizations, and non-government organizations (NGOs). When remote data were incomplete or unavailable, supplementary information was gathered from the local government itself. These are the list of accredited NGOs, nature of conflict in the area, list of foreign assisted programs, and updated list of tertiary schools. Collection of the said data was done through actual visits to the provinces from January to March 2010.

<b>Sub-activities</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Status</b>
<i>Activity 2.1: Technical assistance to 60 Mindanao local governments</i>		
2.1.1. Mapping of TAG sites: 2002 to 2009 (TAG2 & TAG3)	Oct. 2009	Completed
2.1.2. Selection of Provinces for phase 4 of TAG project	Oct. 2009	Completed
2.2.3. Developing the menu for technical assistance, profiling of local government, local experts and consultants.	Nov. 2009-Jan 2010	Completed the profiling of local government. Have yet to complete the inventory of local experts and consultants and develop the menu for technical assistance
2.2.4. Two Regional Project Orientations	June-Aug 2010	To be completed

<b>Sub-activities</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Status</b>
2.2.5. Selection process for local governments	July-Aug 2010	To be completed
2.2.5.1 Organizing the Screening Committee	April 2010	To be completed
2.2.5.2 Formulating the mechanics and criteria for selection	May 2010	To be completed
2.2.5.3 Deadline for submission of proposals	July-Aug 2010	To be completed
2.2.5.4 Screening of proposals	July & Sept. 2010	To be completed
2.2.5.5 Awarding of approved proposals	July & Sept. 2010	To be completed
2.2.6. Local governance reforms started in 15 local governments	Aug. 2010	To be completed

*Activity 2.1.1: Special efforts in Maguindanao*

A special effort focused on improving administration of the province of Maguindanao was implemented as part of Mending Maguindanao Province after the shocking election-related incident in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao on November 23, 2010,

The appointment of Acting Governor, Nariman “Ina” Ambolodto in December 15, 2009 was well-timed for extending immediate technical assistance. A member of provincial legislative council, a faculty member of Notre Dame University in Cotabato City, and a neutral between the two contending factions - Ampatuan and Mangudadatu. Ina’s decision not to run for any elected positions in May 2010 and her determination to do something worthwhile for Maguindanao Province was remarkable.

Meetings with the Acting Governor on December 21 and 31, 2009 in Cotabato and Manila resulted in an agreement between The Asia Foundation and the provincial government of Maguindanao to extend technical assistance to the province, specifically on Organizational Diagnosis/Assessment and Financial Assessment and training.

The Organization Development Consultant was deployed to the province of Maguindanao from January 6 - 13, 2010 to do the organizational assessment and needs of the province. The consultant did a combination of key informant interviews and small groups discussions with the different heads of offices and technical staff from 16 offices of the provincial government. Based on the interviews and documents gathered and examined, the consultant came up recommendations which was divided into “Immediate and Long Term.” Immediate recommendations are those that can be done within six months to implement, while long-term recommendations are actions that require some capital outlay and can be attended to within the year or later.

The Key Findings and Conclusions of the Organizational Assessment were categorized in the following areas:

1. Working Atmosphere
2. Structure and Human Resources
3. Organizational Culture
4. Awareness of Duties and Responsibilities
5. Inter-Departmental Coordination
6. Loss of Provincial Equipment and office supplies
7. Need for Technical Assistance
8. Revenue Enhancement

A copy of the Organizational Assessment Report was handed over Acting Governor on February 12, 2010. The Acting Governor's term was supposedly ending January 31, 2010. However, it was extended up to February 23, 2010 pending the outcome of the screening process for a new set of provincial officials initiated by a committee composed of representatives from different offices in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Few days after the submission of the OD Report, a new Acting Governor was installed by the executive department of ARMM on February 24, 2010. Along with the appointment of Acting Governor Gani Biruar, a businessman and scion of a big ethnic Iranon clan in the first district of the province, is the temporary halt of the special effort in Maguindanao. With barely three months before the new elected governor will take an oath, the team opted to wait and present the results and findings of the Organizational Assessment in Maguindanao when the new elected Governor assumed office, and from which the new Governor can use the report to have a clear picture of the overall staffing patter of the provincial government

#### Implementation Challenges

1. Only the technical assistance on Organization Diagnosis was completed within this quarter. Finding the Financial Management Consultant (FMC) for Maguindanao Province proved to be difficult. All possible consultants that were approached by the TAG team declined citing personal security as reason, considering the sensitivity of the subject matter to be covered.

*Activity 2.2: Local budget tracking.*

#### Specific Objectives:

1. To improve civil society organizations' access to local government fiscal information, especially the budget.
2. To increase the transparency and accountability of local governments in the preparation and utilization of their budgets.
3. To develop tools and technologies for local budget tracking.

4. To develop of models civil society – local government engagement in transparent and accountable fiscal management.

#### Activities and Outputs for the Quarter.

The Foundation will work with Balay Mindanaw Foundation Inc. (BMFI) for the conduct of the Local Budget Tracking component. BMFI still has to comply with certain requirements as part of the due diligence process. A seminar on grant management was provided to two staff of BMFI on March 24-25, 2010 in Davao City. The seminar enables TAF partners to have a better understanding of the grant management process, the applicable general terms and conditions, and to have clearer perspective on how to effectively manage the grant funds.

<b>Sub-activities</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Status</b>
<i>Activity 2.2: Local budget tracking.</i>		
2.2.1. Consultations with the leagues, local governments, and civil society groups.	Jan. 2010	Delayed
2.2.2. Short listing of local governments to be invited to the project	Jan. 2010	Delayed
2.2.3. Sending of invitations and conduct of project orientations	February 2010	Delayed
2.2.4. Selection of 20 local governments	February 2010	Delayed
2.2.5. Selection of local civil society partners to do the tracking	March 2010	Delayed
2.2.6. Trainings on local budget tracking and documentation for civil society organizations	April-May 2010	To be completed
2.2.7. Start of first round of budget tracking for calendar year 2010.	June – September 2010	To be completed

#### Implementation Challenges

1. Potential civil society partners are still awaiting the results of the local elections before identifying possible local government partners.
2. Local budget tracking is a new work for some local NGOs, they need some guidance and some push to do the work.
3. Some resistance from local governments is expected especially those with first term officials.

*Activity 2.3: Peer-based assessment and accreditation system for local governance trainings.*

#### Specific Objectives:

1. To improve the quality of training programs for local governments.
2. To expand local governments' information and access to quality training programs.

### Activities and Outputs

The Foundation provided a sub-grant to the Local Government Training and Research Institutes Philippine Network, Inc. (LoGoTRI-PhilNet) to conduct the peer-based assessment and accreditation of local governance trainings conducted by its member-Local Resource Institutions (LRIs). A Letter of Agreement was signed between The Asia Foundation and LoGoTRI-PhilNet on January 15, 2010 with the objective of 1) developing the mechanisms for accreditation of local governance trainings and 2) implementing the peer-based accreditation system, initially to 25 local resource institution members of LoGoTRI-PhilNet, covering three LRIs each from the National Capital Region, Luzon and Visayas, and 16 LRIs from Mindanao.

The LoGoTRI-PhilNet Board of Directors and members of National Secretariat had their first meeting on February 2, 2010 which resulted in the drafting of a resolution for the adoption and appropriating of counterpart part funds in support of the activity. They also formed the Technical Working Committee or Accreditation Team composed of six members (2-NCR, 1-Luzon, 1-Visayas, 1-Mindanao and 1 from the National Secretariat). The members are heads of universities and a technical staff from the Local Government Academy (LGA).

On February 4-5, 2010, the Accreditation Team had their first meeting where they discussed the accreditation process and drafted the mechanics for the accreditation system. A meeting was also set for the last week of April to finalize the mechanics for the accreditation and set the schedules for LRIs to be visited, scheduled to happen beginning the 1<sup>st</sup> week of May.

The activity was formally launched on March 12, 2010 during the Capacity Development Expo 2010 on March 12, 2010. The Expo is a venue for knowledge exchange and awareness-building on local government competency needs to enable capacity development providers and donors converge efforts to effectively respond to local development challenges in the Philippines. The activity was hosted by the Local Government Academy. The peer-based accreditation project was of the several activities presented by LGA. Present during the Expo were European Union Ambassador Alistair McDonald, Undersecretary Panadero of the Department of the Local Government, Dr. Steven Rood, DILG Regional Directors, Heads of LRIs, Local Government Leagues, Galing Pook Foundation, and representatives from the different university-based Institutes of Local Governance.

<b>Sub-activities</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Status</b>
<i>Activity 2.3: Peer-based assessment and accreditation system for local governance trainings.</i>		
2.3.1. Meetings and consultations with LGA and LoGoTRI-PhilNet's Board of Directors	December 2009	Ongoing
2.3.2. Formation Technical Working Committee (TWC) to design the: a) Mechanics for the accreditation system b) Monitoring system for continues observance of the LRIs on the standards set	December 2009	Completed

Sub-activities	Time Frame	Status
forth by the system		
2.3.3. TWC interviews and consultations with experts on the field and with selected members	Jan.-Feb 2010	Completed
2.3.4. Presentation of the draft system to LoGoTRI-PhilNet's members in a general assembly for review and approval, and adoption of the Board of Directors	March 2010	Ongoing
2.3.5. Invitation to LRIs for pilot implementation	March 2010	Ongoing
2.4.6: Conduct of accreditation on selected areas/region	April-June 2010	To be completed
2.4.7. Recognition of LRIs that have passed the accreditation, during the General Assembly	July 2010	To be completed
2.4.8. Roll-out implementation to other LRIs		To be completed

### Implementation Challenges

1. Coming up with common schedules that will work both for the members of the accreditation team and the personnel of training institutions to be visited.

### *Activity 2.4: Books for Asia (in Mindanao).*

#### Specific Objective:

1. To increase the availability of reading materials in conflict affected areas of Mindanao.

#### Activities and Outputs

No activities yet under this component.

## **II. Program Management**

Staffing for the project is already in place. During the quarter the project has obtained the approval of the Monitoring and Evaluation, and the Branding and Marking Plan, and applied for a presumptive exemption for Books for Asia markings (to mark book boxes rather than individual books).