

HARVESTING PEACE: CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONSHIP IN BARANGAY KAKAI RENABOR, THE PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRAK

Barangay Kakai Renabor adalah sebuah distrik kecil yang terletak di Lanao Del Norte, Filipina. Kawasan ini dikenal sebagai salah satu titik rawan dan arena konflik di Mindanao. Di kawasan ini masyarakat Kristen dan masyarakat Muslim memiliki sejarah yang kurang menyenangkan. Hal ini terkait dengan ketegangan emosional yang menyebabkan mereka saling bentrok dan saling melakukan tindak kekerasan. Hubungan tidak harmonis ini terjadi karena setiap kelompok bersikeras untuk hidup sendiri-sendiri, saling menafikan kelompok lain. Hanya ada dua pilihan: masyarakat Kristen tanpa Muslim atau masyarakat Muslim tanpa Kristen. Namun pada, saat ini kedua kelompok dapat hidup berdampingan dalam harmoni. Mereka saling bekerja sama menanam dan memanen tanaman dalam satu lahan, dan melupakan kenangan pahit serta sejarah luka masa lalu. Mereka mampu untuk hidup saling menghargai dan saling menghormati. Artikel ini hendak mengurai proses transformasi konflik yang dilakukan dalam proses penyelesaian konflik, bagaimana mereka mengatasi ketegangan, dan apa yang mereka butuhkan untuk membangun masa depan yang lebih baik.

Kata Kunci: hubungan Kristen-Muslim, kekerasan, perdamaian, dan transformasi konflik.

ABSTRACT

Barangay Kakai Renabor is a small district in Lanao Del Norte, Philippine. It is renowned as the area of conflict. Christians and Muslims used to fought one another, and living in emotional tension that guided them to commit various violences. Disharmonious relationship was exist because every group insists to live exclusively in Barangay, and striving to eliminate the existence of others. There were only two choices: Christians without Muslims or Muslims without Christians. So did their previous story. Recently, they live conjointly harmoniously. They work cooperatively both in planting and harvesting. Indeed, they do it in one similar terrain. Christians and Muslims bury their bad memories and wounds. They live side by side with the spirit of mutual respect and mutual understanding in the Barangay community. This paper aims to discuss the conflict transformational process which has accomplished in order to reconcile Christians and Muslims, how they overcomed tensions, and what they required to develop a better future. In doing so, this paper will describe how they solved the conflict, what sort of tools they used, and what the expected-future they need.

Keywords: Christians-Muslims relationship, violence, peace, and conflict transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The story began from my first visit to Davao City, Philippine, on May-June 2013. I was involved in the Peace-building Training sponsored by MPI (Mindanao Peace-building Institute). The program explored both theoretical and practical activities to enrich participants' and facilitators'

perspectives concerning the peace-building process. We recognized that it is indispensable to share various peaceful experiences with people from different countries such as the United States, Germany, Vietnam, Japan, Kenya, India, Myanmar, Pakistan, Nepal, and Indonesia. The program conducted within three consecutive

weeks. We discussed and learned the theoretical framework of peace-building, peacemaking, peacekeeping, conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation in the first week. Next, we explored the “scope of conflict” to enhance our experiential and empirical studies of peace-building in the second and three weeks.

I am blessed having the chance to join the field trip to the Province Lanao Del Norte with other ten participants from various countries. It was one-day trip from Davao City to Lanao Del Norte by a mini-van. We visited universities, NGOs, religious leaders, and Mindanao people in order to learn and experience their peaceful attempts to transform the conflicts. One of our destination in Lanao Del Norte was the Barangay Kakai Renabor, Tubod. This district represents an ideal harmony between Muslim and Christian people who live in the same place peacefully, while in the past they had a dreadful history of religious disharmony, not to mention they perplexed tensions as well.

Basically, the harmonious life in Kakai Renabor suffices the very basic theory of interfaith dialogue. Referring to Kung (2007), we should understand that religion has become one of the most important elements in the process of peace-building. In his well-known book, *Islam: Past Present and Future*, Kung asserts that “No peace among the nations without peace among the religions. No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions. No dialogue between the religions without investigation of the foundations of the religions.” (Kung, 2007, xxiii). This statement arguably reflects that religion could be the unifying factor in which case it might resolve and reconcile the social and political conflicts within society. The so-called religious violence seems to be ingrained in the religion’s role.

Along with Kung’s point of view (2007), Knitter (2002), calls us to improve our strategy on developing a new perspective of interfaith dialogue. Based on theological perspective of Christianity, he conceives at least four approaches

in this particular context. The first is *replacement model* which represents only one true religion. The second is fulfillment *model* which conveys that the one could fulfill the many. The third is *mutuality model* which suggests that many true religions could be called to dialogues, and the last is *acceptance model* that attempts to put many religions on its own positions: *so be it* (Knitter, 2002). In this context, Christians and Muslims of Barangay Kakai Renabor appear to practice the Knitter’s last approach.

Previously, Swidler (1983) conceives *the dialogue Decalogue* to create an ideal approach of inter-religious dialogues. The main points are: (i) the primary purpose of dialogue is to learn, that is, to change and to grow some understanding of reality, and then to act consistently based upon such reality; (ii) inter-religious or inter-ideological dialogues should be a two-sided project—within each religious or ideological community and between religious or ideological communities; (iii) each participant should join the dialogue with a complete honesty and sincerity; (iv) in the inter-religious dialogue we should not compare our ideals with our partner’s practices, but rather our ideals with our partner’s ideals, our practices with our partner’s practices; (v) each participant should define himself or herself; (vi) each participant should come to the dialogue with no hard-and-fast assumptions against the direction of where the points of disagreement go to; (vii) dialogue could proceed merely between equal participants; (viii) dialogue could take place only on the basis of mutual trust; (ix) Persons who join the inter-religious dialogue should be at least self-critical against both themselves and their own religious or ideological traditions; (x) each participant should eventually attempt to experience their partner’s religions or ideologies from the inside (Swidler, 1984).

To strengthen and to develop the theological perspective on interfaith dialogue, Hick (1980). (Hick, 1980). Persuasively elucidates many perspectives on religious pluralism by which is considered as a tool to reconstruct some peaceful

thoughts on the interfaith dialogue. Hick insists that religious differences should not be put as a blocking factor to build peace among people.

However, some people assume that religions have two opposite sides, to wit, both determining violence and peace. Unlike Kung, Girard (1977) conceives religions as a dominant factor that both triggering the social violence and establishing the social cohesion. Through religious sacrifice, he claims that violence which threatens community is ritually dismissed: turned outwards rather than inwards on to the members of the community. According to Girard (1977) there is an inevitable relationship between violence and religion. He supposes that religions do not function properly in keeping violence off the community. In addition, Girard (1977) argues that violence is mimetic, and people committing violence tend to be bound with the historical expulsions, and be eventually drawn into the mimetic frenzy. Mimesis commands people to do violence in various unimaginable ways. The only way to stop the unjustified violence, and keeping societies from total calamities is by conducting a sacrifice. Here, religions appear as a part of violence (Girard, 1986).

In contrast to the aforementioned perspective where religions trigger violence, Appleby has interestingly elucidated the logical connection between religions and violence into three levels of understanding: strong religions, weak religions, and pathological religions. The first level means there is a closed and inseparable relation which binds the notion of violence with religious convictions. It is appealing that Appleby starts his point of view by naming religions. It shows that he actually concerns with religious values and implicitly considers violence as an outside influence or effect in understanding religions. Here, people believe that religious teachings are deliberately constructed and imaginatively created without any relevance to reality (Appleby, 2012, 3-11). Referring to Mircea Eliade, people suppose religions as “the sacred” which order and regulate some circumstances, including violence.

Religions have been fundamentally convicted as a basis of cruelty and violence (Eliade, 1987).

The second level holds that religions are likely seen as the subordinate reason to other factors such as politics, economy, culture, prestige, etc. This perspective excludes religions as the main source in explaining conflicts. In contrast to the first level, people in this level perceive religions as instrumental factor that could be simply and easily excluded as a trigger of social conflict. The objective measure on determining the root causes of violence is not always religions. Nevertheless, religions cannot be totally excluded from the reasoning process and justifications of violence because it clearly is a part of human experiences (Appleby, 2012, 11-15). Moreover, the third level is ambiguous. Appleby calls this level as pathological religions.

Beside the spirit of interfaith dialogue and the curiosity of religion’s roles in creating violence, the process of conflict transformation is seen as one of essential factors to develop peace-building. In his book, *Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis*, Ho Won Jeong (2008) classifies several stages to understand the root of conflict, to analyze its situation and behavior, to feel its dynamics and escalation, and finally to solve the conflict (Jeong, 2008). Putting this perspective as a framework, this paper aims to, firstly, elucidate the root of inter-religious conflict between Muslims and Christians in Barangay Kakai Renabor. Secondly, to analyze the past and the current situations of the conflict in order to understand its dynamics and escalation. Thirdly, to portray some solutions to be made in the conflict.

KAKAI RENABOR AND THE CONFLICT OF MINDANAO

Kakai Renabor is a beautiful small district which has abundant coconut trees. There is a small main path to enter the district. It is not easy to reach this venue because Kakai Renabor is a remote area which is not accessible to the ordinary vehicles. I arrived to the area together

with other persons on the field trip arranged by Pakigdait¹ to make a dialogue with the chairman and the people of Barangay Kakai Renabor. We are interested to observe the harmonious inter-religious relationship between Christians and Muslims.

Geographically, Barangay Kakai Renabor is one of twenty-four districts (Barakanas, Baris (Lumangculob), Bualan, Bulod, Camp V, Candis, Caniogan, Dalama, Kalilangan, Licapao, Malingao, Palao, Patudan, Pigcarangan, Pinpin, Poblacion, Pualas, San Antonio, Santo Niño, Taden, Taguranao, Tanguguiron, Tubaran) under the municipality of Tubod. It is located in the outlying area of Tubod. The municipality Tubod, inhabited by approximately 44,095 people, belongs to the Province of Lanao Del Norte, Philippines.

Lanao del Norte is part of Northern Mindanao. This province is a fertile land that connects Western Mindanao to Central and Eastern Mindanao. The nearby cities for this province are Pagadian, Ozamis, Tangub, Marawi, and Iligan. To visit Lanao del Norte, people can drive through Cagayan de Oro or from Ozamis Airport.

Five of its municipalities (Linamon, Kauswagan, Bacolod, Maigo, and Kolambugan) are within the Iligan-Cagayan Industrial Corridor. Ten of its municipalities are coastal towns blessed with rich fishing grounds: the Illana Bay, Panguil Bay, and Iligan Bay. Twelve municipalities are upland towns adorned by vast agricultural and forest based crops and products. Muslim communities are generally found in the highland; whereas, Christian communities dwell the coast. The province is proud to be a major contributor to the overall development in Mindanao. It hosts three out of seven Agus Hydropower Plants, which generates 80% of Mindanao power grid. There are more than 70,000 hectares of coconut

land located in Lanao del Norte, and it is the second largest producer of copra in the region. Other major products are rice, fruits, corn, and aquaculture products.

The province of Lanao is divided into Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur on July 4, 1959 based on the passage of Republic Act 2228. Iligan City formerly served as the capital of Lanao del Norte until June 24, 1982. Then, the capital of the province is moved to the municipality of Tubod close to Batas Pambansa 181.²

It is important to comprehensively portray the location of Kakai Renabor, just to notice that this district is situated within the “area of conflict” in Mindanao Island. We know that the southern Philippines has a long history of conflict, with armed groups including the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the Abu Sayyaf group, the communists, the clan militias and criminal groups. They actively operate in the area. Obviously, religious conflict between Muslims and Christians in Barangay Kakai Renabor has no direct implication to the major armed conflict in Mindanao though the religious conflicts there should be considered as a “common and local issue” in the region.

Conflict between Muslims and Christians in Mindanao had its historical background from the unjust Spanish occupation, which occurred from the mid 16th century up to the 19th century. The Moros and the indigenous groups inflamed the resistance in Mindanao region against the Spanish, and as a result the latter is distressed in colonizing the region. After 1898, when the United States controlled the Philippines territory, the previous encouraged the Catholics from the north to settle down to the south, and it caused a rapid shift of population there: the Muslims and indigenous people switch over from being the majority to the minority. Along with the 1996 treaty of the Autonomous Region of Muslim

¹ Pakigdait Inc. is Non-Governmental organization which concerns on interfaith dialogue and peace building. It contains Moslem and Christian member who regulate and manage inter-faith activities and peace bulding process. The office of Pakigdait is located in Lanao del Norte.

² The information of Lanao Del Norte is quoted from the official website: <http://lanaodelnorte.gov.ph/Profile/profile-tabs-and-info.html>

Mindanao (ARMM), the region includes other provinces such as Maguidanao, Lanao del Sur, while the island Provinces are Sulu-Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, and Basilan (Guerra, 2010).

THE ROOT OF CONFLICT AND ITS SOLUTION

Like any other conflicts, the tension between Muslims and Christians in Kakai Renabor was naturally growing and escalating from a trivial case. Tots Pasandan (Interview, 20/9/2013) said that the conflict in the region began when the families had a fight. It started when the horse of one family was tied near the house of another family. The horse somehow destroyed the plants of other family. It was a problem of neighborhood but unfortunately the friction grew bigger and wider when the male head of one family said some nasty words to the female head of other family. Among Meranaos (and Philipinos) it is forbidden and taboo for a man to say nasty words to a woman since such thing is disrespectful. Culture, ethics, and religions should have penetrated into the area of conflict. It happened at the end of 2008.

The conflict escalated and grew up worse when there was some bloodshed. There were already unjustified killings happened in Kakai Renabor and other places. Chaos was happened everywhere. The Barangay (villages), the municipal, and the provincial government work hand in hand to seek the resolution of conflict. Considering the destruction in Kakai Renabor, the local officials also stepped in to resolve the conflict. Both conflicting parties tried the traditional *Rido* (clan feuds) settlement and the legal settlement but it was failed as well. These failures led to retaliatory killings which affected the whole community. The Kakai Renabor *Rido* was a complex conflict taking resources and identities. In short, it seems to be a resource-based conflict as well as an identity-based conflict.

It is interesting to note that prior to the conflict, the population of Kakai Renabor was 70% Muslims and 30% Christians. Yet, when

the conflict started the Muslims sold their lands and moved out from Kakai due to extreme fear of their security. Thus, it rapidly reversed into 30% Muslims and 70% Christians (Interview, 23/9/2013).

There were at least three principal elements working and complementing one another to solve the conflict: NGOs, government, and religious leaders. These three elements had worked painstakingly to stop the conflict escalation, and attained the reconciliation. They used some supporting factors that could enduringly stop the conflict, such as (i) the cooperation and the willingness from the community to work together to attain peace in the community, and (ii) the collaboration from different stakeholders such as the provincial government of Lanao del Norte, the Municipal Government of Tubod, the Barangay Council of Kakai Renabor, the military, the Philippine National Police, NGO's and other relevant organizations that contributed a lot and gave their support and time in helping the community.

To activate networking among several elements in the peace-building process, the Government the Philippines has formally established The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), which is called by Peace Office. This institute is authorized to supervise, coordinate, and integrate the implementation of comprehensive peace process. It is built by the Aquino administration's National Security Policy. It focuses on basic services, economic reconstruction, sustainable development, and the security reform. OPAPP also promotes the mainstreaming of peace process in order to gain the support of general public to force both the government and the armed groups to remain at the negotiating tables and achieving peace agreements immediately. This effort is a combined communication and social mobilization campaign along with peace partners from various sectors, promoting projects and activities that intend to bring the peace process into the public consciousness.

Peace office manages all process of peace-building, not to mention supporting the peace process and reconciliation of Kakai Renabor conflict. Along with Pakigdait (an interfaith group/ NGO), the government facilitates to empower the people, giving hope, providing linkages among different stakeholders. They provide a space and create a venue wherein Christians and Muslims of Kakai Renabor could talk and express their feelings, opinions and thoughts, and work together as one cohesive community.

Interestingly, a significant means to the process of reconciliation and helping the conflicting community; is to give them ranches and work together. The peace-builders (especially from Pakigdait, Inc.) supported Muslims and Christians of Kakai Renabor to live in harmony and forget the past, the wounds of conflict. They gave approximately two hectares of farm to Christians and Muslims in Kakai Renabor, Tubod, to be a medium for co-operation. It is necessary to deepen understanding and to respect each other.

Both Muslims and Christians in the Barangay has been working together and developing the farm. They planted coconuts, onions, cucumbers, tubers, and other vegetables in the area given by the government. The Barangay people succeed to deal with their protracted conflict by forgiving and not remembering what had happened towards among different religious groups in the society. When the team of Pakigdait took me to the farm, talking with the farmers, seeing what they have been doing to the land; I could feel the nuance of harmonious relationship between two groups. The peasant leader told to me that the process of farming means the process of healing as well. The more they focus on farming, the more they dismiss the past especially the conflict. It shows us the effectiveness of storytelling in mediation.

As a part of conflict reconciliation process, Pakigdait Inc., always gives financial, conceptual, psychological supports to the people. This process worked on the right track because every single basic element involved in this process is always supporting and communicating one another. The

government played its authority to strengthen the process, NGOs such as Pakigdait performed its roles to run and deepen an understanding of mutual respect, and the conflicted parties learned to solve the problem by thinking rationally. Moreover, the role of religious leaders in the area played a significant role to solve the problem. Analogously, we could draw the process of conflict reconciliation as following:



Scheme 1. The process of conflict reconciliation

The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) was a formal institution which officially supervised the process of conflict reconciliation in the Barangay. To do several supporting activities, the office has been cooperating with the army and the NGOs, especially for keeping and developing mutual trust among the people. Besides farming, these institutions made several activities such as trauma healing and practical training to increase their skills.

The government thinks that poverty could trigger society to commit violence. Geneva Declaration on Armed violence and Development (2010), *More Violence, Less Development Examining the relationship between armed violence and MDG*, elaborates the connectivity between development, poverty, and violence. In doing so, the Mindanao State University established a center called IPDM (Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao). This

institution is also indirectly engaged in the process of conflict transformation between Muslims and Christians in Barangay Kakai Renabor.

Poverty is widely considered as one of the most significant cause of violence. It links to the violence in a number of ways. In this particular context, poverty may include poor housing, distressed neighborhood, or disrupted families. Indeed, cultural condition has also connected to a high level of violence among poor people. Poverty leads people to be bound with social pathology. In his book, *The Locus Effect: Why the End of Poverty Requires the End of Violence*, Haugen (2014) explains “a number of massive topics of tremendous complexity: levels and categories of criminal violence against the poor; the impact of violence on economic development, poverty alleviation, and the modern human rights struggle; the legacy of colonial justice systems in the developing world; the privatization of justice systems; the story of justice systems in aid programs; the political economy of criminal justice systems in the developing world; the history of law enforcement development; current experiments in justice system reform; and more.” The author of this book emphasizes that “each of these topics touches on a vast field of intellectual endeavor that features diverse experts, scholarly literature, treatises, and the latest academic article just posted to the Internet. What follows, therefore, is not exhaustive in any area but is hopefully a coherent and provocative weaving of credible arguments that makes the case for urgent and energetic engagement with the woefully neglected global crisis of violence against the poor” (Haugen and Boutros, 2014, xvi).

Referring to the theory of Conflict Tree, the process of conflict reconciliation begins with uncovering artificial and symbolic violence, the basic reason, and finally to find the root of conflict. It also explores the needs, the interests, and the position of conflicting groups. The theory of conflict tree also deals with some differences between the structural and dynamic factors, and explaining how conflict issues link these two

aspects. Moreover, it explores three elements of conflict: effects, core problems, and main causes (Ramsbotham et al, 2011). Some people arbitrarily argued that the conflict could be easily solved and reconciled because it is only a small conflict which engage several persons among two groups. This argument is not appropriate because in many cases, we see that a big-scale conflict sometimes is easier to solve compared to a small-scale conflict.³

THE ROLE OF PAKIGDAIT, INC.

Before explaining the role of Pakigdait, Inc., in the peace process of Kakai Renabor conflict, I will briefly explore its commencement and its initial hopes. It began from a war policy of Estrada administration. On March 17th, 2000, two thousands guerrillas of the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) occupied the municipal hall and the town of Kauswagan, but the day after, the government troops confiscated the town. This war revived the old feelings of hostilities between Christians and Muslims in the city.

In the midst of conflict, Christian and Muslim religious leaders attempted to build peace and harmony. On March 17th, 2001, they launched the first declaration of the Pilgrimage of Peace. This launching is arranged by various religious leaders such as Muslims, Roman Catholics, Philippine Independent Church, United Church of Christ of the Philippines, Seventh Day Adventists, and the Assembly of God. They concurred to form an inter-religious council to build peace-building in the region. They understand that peace process would bring hope and wisdom though it is painful.

It is written in the brief history of Pakigdait drafted by. Antiquesa that Pakigdait’s work for peace is anchored in the framework of reconciliation. Reconciliation is to be seen here as both a process and a goal. It is a process of building and rebuilding relationship between individuals,

³ For instance, compare the big-scale conflict between Moslem and Christian in Ambon, Maluku which is finally reconciled and rightly solved with the small-scale Sunni-Shiite conflict in Sampang that is not reconciled yet until today.

groups, and communities. It is a process of building relationship between antagonists. It is a goal that everyone in Kauswagan must strive and work for. This relational dimension involves the emotional and psychological aspects of conflict and the need to recognize past grievances and explore future independence. In the process, reconciliation could create a space for encounter of parties, a place where the diverse but connected energies and concerns driving the conflict can meet, including the paradoxes of truth, mercy, justice and peace. From this framework, Pakigdait hope to work with various families, groups, communities, institutions and churches who dream for a just and lasting peace (MPI, 2013).

In the context of Kakai Renabor's conflict, Pakigdait has been involved to facilitate, to empower the people, to give hope, to provide linkages among various stakeholders, and to encourage the participation of the community. The activists of Pakigdait believe that the community must be active participants in their journey towards healing. Pakigdait believes that the interest and willingness must come from them. They are now in the process of elevating the economic conditions of the community and, at the same time, strengthening the gains of peace-building initiatives in Kakai Renabor, Tubod, (Interview Sheila Olenas, 23/9/2013).

Pakigdait had a community consultation who talks to both conflicting parties. They made a conflict mapping sessions with the community to know who the violent actors are, and who could assist in developing the conflict resolution. Based on the conflict mapping session, strategies are also formulated by themselves. Such strategies would function as the direction or steps for the conflict resolution. The participation of all stakeholders is very important.

In addition, Pakigdait conducted some following interventions and supports in Kakai Renabor: (i) making a socio-economic conflict analysis and the culture of peace to the community, (ii) conducting a conflict mapping session with the community, (iii) striving a peace process,

anchored by the Barangay Development Planning Session, especially on the formulation of their vision, mission and goals, (iv) developing a Bayanihan Peace Center to serves as a venue for dialogues, and the conflict resolution. The Bayanihan Peace center is a product of collaboration of diverse stakeholders such as the provincial government, the municipal government and the military, (v) provision the Learning Farm for the Farmers Association and the Sustainable Agriculture Training for the Farmers. The learning farm somehow raised the economic status of the farmers. It equipped farmers with some additional knowledge on the sustainable agriculture and to actually plan on their learning farm. Beside these economic development, the learning farm also served as a venue for them to interact and to work as one solid team, (vi) provision the Rice Trading project for the Farmers, and (vii) conducting a Play Therapy Session for children of the Kakai Renabor, Tubod.

Pakigdait supposes that the entire project at Kakai Renabor would give the residents a certain hope that they would regain their past glory, and to diminish the stigma that their village is an "awful village". Pakigdait always provides a new hope and a better future even though it is very challenging. Discussing the conflict means to reopen emotions and reopen old wounds but as time goes by it could potentially juxtapose two conflicting parties.

CONCLUSION

Recently, Christians and Muslims of Kakai Renabor live harmoniously and work effectively to improve their life. They succeed to block all bad-memories of conflicts and seeking for a better future. The provision of farming and rice trading initiated by Pakigdait command them to construct the communal life and creating collective understanding. They suppose that new life would not be achieved only by blocking the past but also by preparing the future. This conflict transformation is accomplished by developing and maintaining the good inter-

religious relations. As the third party, Pakigdait has completed their function to intercede and to reconcile the tensions between the two conflicting parties and creating a glimmer of hope toward harmony. Pakigdait believes that the process of elevating the economic conditions of Kakai Renabor people, and strengthening the gains of peace-building initiatives are two indispensable factors. They implemented what Walton (1969) and Fisher (1972) argued on the essence of third party, that is, to facilitate problem solving through improving communication and analyzing the basic relationship between the parties, rather than by encouraging or imposing specific settlements on substantive issues. The unique identity of the approach has been captured by the term, third party consultation (Fisher, 1983, 302).

In his book, *The Resolving Conflict*, Max A Eggert and Wendy Falzon explain four basic steps in the mediation process: (i) to open, (ii) to discover, (iii) to unite, and (iv) to close. *To open* means that mediator's roles and the way the mediator would like to move forward in the process of resolution set out the whole process. The rules of engagement are agreed upon, along with how the parties would behave one another, how there should be a mutual respect, and ensuring the absence of blaming. *To discover* means to know the needs of each party, aspirations and concerns; mis-perceptions should be clarified at this stage. Every effort is made to help the parties in understanding both their own and other stakeholders' positions. *To unite* means to encourage, to generate and to evaluate options for seeking the best win-win solutions. Possible concessions and bargains could be suggested and reviewed here. Tentative agreements and bargains could be held and time frames could be agreed upon. *To close* is to capture the mutual agreements, ensuring that all parties are satisfied and the resolution is acceptable, pragmatic and perceived by two parties as fair (Eggert & Falzon, 2014, 73-74).

When the people of Kakai Renabor decided to live in harmony and healing all historical wounds, they actually decided to reopen injuries by the process of reconciliation and accomplishing such thing by a mutual agreement. They stepped further on a fair resolution which is acceptable and applicable. Kakai Renabor is an imperative lesson that we could learn how to solve conflicts fairly.[]

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