

Collective Action for Political Stability and Business Confidence: The Case of Marawi City, Philippines

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Abstract

Corruption persists in electoral democracies where there is a strong correlation among financial values, power, and social rankings (Pippidi, 2013; Shao, Ivanov, Podobnik, & Stanley, 2007; Posado-Carbó, 2000). Most developing economy and country contexts have established systems of elite capture of political and economic landscapes that entrenches engagements in illegal practices to reinforce and expand the formal authority and power of oligarchies (Lara & Champain, 2009). This prompts collective action as a mechanism to combat corruption to prevent it from becoming a barrier to economic growth and social progress.

The case focuses on Marawi City, Lanao del Sur in the Philippines, locally known as the cheating capital of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) when it comes to electoral processes. Brigadier General Daniel Lucero, Commander of the 103rd Infantry Brigade of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), led a cross-sectoral election reform project to end corrupt electoral and political practices in Marawi City. Through new local governance arrangements, military-led cultural immersions in Maranao villages, and the use of the media, the city's voter's list was put to order which as a consequence, engendered political stability in the locality.

The research conducts a narrative inquiry on the locals of Marawi City, non-government workers, local government officials, and members of the military that were part or were involved in the reforms efforts of Lucero in challenging the corrupt local electoral practices of the said city. Furthermore, this narrative inquiry focuses on the role of leadership and stakeholder engagements in generating innovative solutions for community and economic development.

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1 Introduction

Practicing political and economic integrity is perilous and often futile in areas where corruption is systemic and where corrupt practices are often times accompanied or are effected with violent means. Citizens are thrust into a “social trap” (Rothstein, 2011) wherein corrupt behaviours are normatively adopted out of fear or force. In the southern island group of Mindanao in the Philippines where political control and economic foundations of power are intertwined (Lara and Champain, 2009), violent conflict is ubiquitous in the pursuit of political office where material, legal, and coercive means to exert influence and authority is the norm (Adam and Boer, 2015). Despite the proliferation of international aid and good governance programs in Mindanao for the past three decades, minimal impact is achieved in arresting crime and corruption and ending poverty (Adriano and Parks, 2013).

While Mindanao’s woes stem from institutional failure that engenders corruption as systemic and encompassing, the region’s contextual factors suggests that collective action is the issue rather than the principal-agent problem (corrupt actor betrays principals) when it comes to combating corruption (Klitgaard, 1988; Persson et al, 2013). Whereas systemic corruption is a collective action problem, there is no assumption of a “principled principal” and the existence of actors with the will for accountability depend on the number of individuals expected to engage in corrupt practices (ibid.).

2 Context of Marawi City



Figure 1 Map of Lanao del Sur locating Marawi City.

The political administration of the province of Lanao del Sur and its capital, the Islamic City of Marawi, is illustrative of the failure of formal governance structures and poor human development in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Local elite actors shape political and economic dynamics, promoting clientelism for security, justice, aid, and livelihood purposes (Adriano and Parks, 2013). Among the bottom ten provinces with the lowest rankings in the Human Development Index, nine come from Mindanao, including Lanao del Sur with a measure of 0.416 (Human Development Network, 2013). Investment, tourism, and general economic activity in Marawi City are almost nonexistent despite the fact that the locality has the most educated population among Muslim cities (Human Development Network 2005).

The complexity of Mindanao's multi-dimensional problem of poverty and cycle of violence has produced shadow economies (Schoofs and Lara, 2014) that are effectively related and relevant to the region's real economy, supporting both pernicious "entrepreneurs" and impoverished communities. Regular cycles of violent conflict and displacement aggravate the lack of income opportunities and additional shocks from dispossession, pushing communities into debt and crime (Concepcion et al., 2003). As such, the state of lawlessness itself becomes the new principal driver for shadow economies to thrive, especially in illegal drugs, arms trade, kidnapping for ransom, and informal land markets (Strachan, 2015). This is further compounded by predatory elites who reinforce conditions of lawlessness and conflict in their competition for political office and local economic power through sustained engagements in shadow economies (Strachan, 2015).

The study of Laut et al. (2013) on the graft and corruption practices among selected public officials in Lanao del Sur is insightful in understanding the value of securing electoral success among local elite groups. Their study shows the corrupt politicians perceive electoral success as means to regain electoral investments and expand formal authority and power over state resources, especially Internal Revenue Allotments (IRA) from the Philippine national government. IRA allotments in the Mindanao regions can amount to Php 1 billion, of which a crude estimate of Php 108 million go directly to the pockets of municipal or city officials (Laut et al., 2013). Furthermore, political power increases access to means of coercion that can be used for inter-clan retribution and the struggle for resources in both the formal and informal economies (de la Rosa, 2014).

As a result, political and resource-based issues are among the leading causes of violent episodes in Muslim Mindanao, accounting for 12% and 11% among 2, 758 violent episodes from 2011 to 2013 (ibid.). Election-driven consumption and post-conflict reconstruction spending also mark the economic growth of the area, sometimes to the extent that the normally depressed local economy compares or exceeds national growth (Lara and Champain 2009). As one of the capital cities of Mindanao, Marawi City is characterized by this volatile political and economic environment that has been decisive to its title as the cheating capital of ARMM when it comes to electoral processes.

3 Towards Understanding Collective Action in Marawi City

In support of increasing efforts to arrest crime and corruption and promote social progress in Mindanao, the study aims to examine supporting and limiting factors in engendering collective action that promote political stability and business confidence in complex environments such as Marawi City. The election reform project of Brigadier General Daniel Lucero will be the case of the narrative inquiry of this study, with emphasis on the role of leadership and stakeholder engagement in generating innovative solutions for community and economic development.

Corruption is an outcome or a response as to how a country crafts its policies and how its institutions conduct its operations given its cultural and economic-political-context (Svensson, 2005). From the supply side perspective, political and economic institutions similarly influence the extent of corruption, especially in terms of market restrictions and political competition (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2008; Holmberg et al., 2008). But contextual factors and the manner in which institutions are built, invariably becomes the pull and push factors of corruption especially in the the case of electoral democracies where competitive particularism is more prevalent vis-a-viz ethical universalism when it comes to corrupt elite behaviors (Mungui-Pippidi, 2013). In electoral democracies, corrupt elite behaviors may range from violent power grabbing, massive rent-seeking activities, unfair allocation of public resources to benefit the favored few and partiality in the rule of law.

Persson et al. (2013) argue that the widespread ineffectiveness of anti-corruption reforms and instruments stems from the assumption that all “principals” are honest and acting for the common good. The authors assert that in contexts where corruption is the rule, it is unlikely to find actors willing to behave otherwise even if they condone corrupt behaviors.

Rothstein (2011) calls the phenomenon of systemic corruption as the “social trap.” Contrary to arguments that corruption is culturally determined, there is increasing evidence that show that citizens in corrupt systems do not necessarily internalize corrupt practices as morally legitimate acts (Kobis et al., 2015, Widmalm, 2008, and Smith, 2007). Rather, the “system” is blamed for impelling citizens to engage in corrupt practices despite their condemnation of corruption as morally wrong (Badun, 2007). Drawing from the concept of “interactive rationality” in game theory, existing rather than ideal institutions inform “mutual expectations” in corruption (Rothstein, 2011).

In systemically corrupt environments, where “life is interpreted in terms of corruption”, the gains from erasing corruption become meaningless and are in fact, more costly if others cannot be expected to be morally upright (Persson et al, 2013). This is because the short-term costs of integrity are comparatively very high and there is little incentive in seeking accountability in normatively corrupt environments (della Porta and Vannucci, 2005). Hence, despite the presence of strong legal anti-corruption frameworks, there is little impact in curbing corruption and in some instances; new opportunities and incentives for corruption are created. It is under this premise that the collective action theory is emerging.

The collective action theory espouses that corruption is a self-reinforcing phenomenon and therefore, the success of anti-corruption reforms hinge on the normal expectations on corrupt behaviours (Rothstein, 2011). This discourse assert that systemic corruption is a “collective action problem of the second order” (Ostrom, 1998), wherein constructing new political and market institutions commonly prescribed to combat corruption is another collective action problem because systemically corrupt environments are dominated by corrupt agents and corrupt behaviours are normative (Persson et al., 2013). Institutions and instruments prescribed by principal-agent theorists and “good governance regimes” are seen as tautologies, overlooking the institutional inertia or path-dependency of corrupt systems for structures that co-vary with low levels of corruption (Bukovansky, 2006).

Rothstein (2011) proposes an “indirect big bang approach” to anti-corruption, wherein instead of reforming structures or incentives, the belief of citizens about the likelihood of others to engage in corrupt practices is targeted for change so that most citizens will expect others to behave more honestly and benevolently. This approach runs contrary to the prevailing “good governance regimes” that highlight the role and value of formal institutions and incremental change in anti-corruption reforms. Rather, this theory supports the importance of “informal institutions and non-incremental change” (North, 2006) or what Diamond (2007) calls “revolutionary change in institutions” in addressing systemic corruption.

However, the collective action theory serves more as a critique of the prevailing “principal-agent” and “good governance regimes” frameworks informing many of the failed anti-corruption reforms in developing countries. Although it presents insightful arguments for collective action, its proponents

recognize that the question of how to effect the transition of institutions from “particularism-personalism-partiality” to “universalism-impersonalism-impartiality” remains wanting (Persson et al., 2013). Johnson et al. (2012) affirms the need for more operationally-relevant research on anti-corruption reforms, especially in conflict-affected areas. They assert that while corruption literature is relatively thick, significant research gaps remain on anti-corruption, especially in terms of the operations, effectiveness, and impact of reforms. This research is an attempt to fill this critical gap and extend collective action discourse by exploring the supporting and limiting factors in curbing corruption through a case study of an election reform initiative in Marawi City. Furthermore, the roles of leadership and stakeholder engagements in the initiative are investigated to enrich the theory of collective action for anti-corruption.

4 Framework of Analysis

Based on the study objectives and the discussion above, the study adopts the Bridging Leadership¹ Framework as its framework of analysis in revealing the supporting and limiting factors as well as in exploring the roles of leadership and stakeholder engagements in curbing electoral and political corruption. Gavino (2011) summarizes the Bridging Leadership Framework as a theory for attaining social objectives and outcomes by enabling the leader to develop a sense of self-awareness relative to a specific societal divide that will prompt him or her to lead and sustain a collective response for the issue. The framework is disaggregated into three main dimensions of Ownership, Co-Ownership, and Co-Creation from which the case of the election reform initiative in Marawi City will be examined. Specifically, stakeholder engagement processes as well as leadership capital and style, and the prototype of the election reform initiative will be investigated.

¹ Bridging Leadership (BL) has its roots in a global research project of the Synergos Institute, a global non-profit organization headquartered in New York City with staff and representatives in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America. In 1999, Synergos launched the BL Program with the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) as its research partner in understanding BL as a leadership approach. A framework was developed for BL, which is defined as an approach to leadership characterized by the capacity to initiate and sustain a collaborative process designed to achieve meaningful social change through the collective action of multiple and diverse stakeholders (Pierce, 2002).

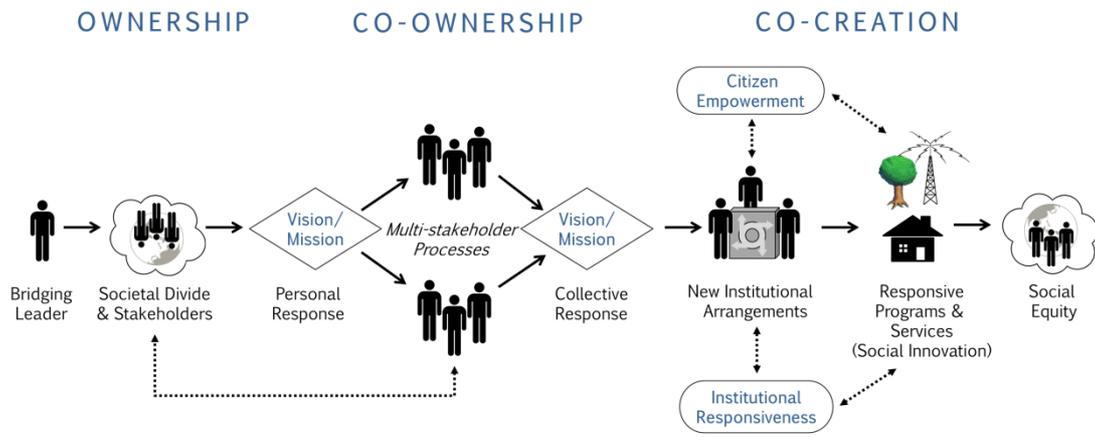


Figure 2 The Bridging Leadership Framework.

5 The Narrative of Change

The research examines the case of the election reform project in Marawi City of Former Brigadier General Daniel Lucero, Commander of the 103rd Infantry Brigade of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), launched during his Fellowship under the Mindanao Bridging Leaders Program (MBLP) of the Asian Institute of Management TeaM Energy Center for Bridging Leadership (AIMTEC).² In the process, Lucero was oriented on the Bridging Leadership Framework in designing and implementing his election reform project.

Wittmayer et al. (2015) explain that narratives of change are useful in conveying alternative ways of knowing and/or framing changes in social relations. By inquiring about how the respondents perceive their experience as key stakeholders of the election reform project as well as the process and outcomes of their participation, the roles of leadership and stakeholder engagement in curbing electoral and political corruption can be determined and supporting and limiting factors to the anti-corruption project can be identified. The results of the research could also provide evidence on the collective action theory and the value of the Bridging Leadership Framework as a paradigm for anti-corruption reforms.

Narratives will be triangulated (Yeasmin and Rahman, 2012) with documentary evidence, such as field visit reports and pictures. As such, the research will combine the advantages of qualitative and quantitative approach to not only validate research findings but also deepen and widen understanding of a phenomenon by incorporating several viewpoints and methods. This method is then appropriate given the abovementioned study objectives.

6 Supporting and Limiting Factors to Governance Structures and Enterprise Development

6.1 Trust

In Marawi City, the military is seen as another predatory elite group who are accomplices by local elites in electoral fraud. Upon his assignment in the area, Lucero carried out a set of military efforts to change

²The AIM TeaM Energy Center for Bridging Leadership (AIMTEC) is one of the Centers of Excellence of the AIM in Makati City, Philippines. The mission of AIMTEC is to develop Bridging Leaders who will address and diminish societal divides in Mindanao, the Philippines, and the Asian region. The Center offers research and training programs for both private and public sectors as means to attain the vision of a society without divides.

the negative image of the military and build trust with local groups. Under his leadership, members of the military were required to undergo cultural sensitivity seminars delivered by Muslim professors from the Mindanao State University (MSU), paying special attention to the collective sense of propriety and value Maranaos have for their women. Issues with respect for Maranao women have been a prolific source of violent conflict between the military and local communities, engendering distrust and insecurity. Through various trainings on Maranao culture, soldiers gained a deeper understanding of local peculiarities and no complaints were filed against any brigade soldier under the tenure of Lucero.

To further demonstrate that the military is working for the security of the locals, Lucero accepted more Maranao soldiers into his brigade. Out of the 11 staff of the brigade, six were Maranaos, followed by a recruitment of seven more Maranao personnel from the 4th Infantry Division. He also sought the cooperation of the academe, particularly the MSU system that houses 4 to six *barangays* or villages, considered to be strongholds of prominent corrupt officials. Lucero gave occasional lectures at the university to engage faculty members and students in discourse that earned their respect and trust. These efforts diminished existing tensions and strengthened trust between the military and the locals.

Furthermore, Lucero engaged the sultans and *datos* of the province, who have significant influence as leaders of extensive traditional and familial networks and are therefore, critical stakeholders in the area. He established rapport with them to earn their trust. Eventually, he was considered an “adopted son” of local sultanates and given the rank of “*Datu a Kalilintad*” or the title of “Prince of Peace”. The depth of his relations with the local sultanates is demonstrated in their formal petition to retain Lucero as Commander of the 103rd Infantry Brigade when a prominent political clan actively sought his removal in the area.

The case of Marawi City and its ability or inability to create spaces in developing an acceptable degree of trust in a community is a significant factor to the efficiency of social systems and the effectiveness of political and economic institutions (Fukuyama, 1995). By gaining the support of critical stakeholders, who have significant influence and resources, and aligning their diverse interests for a shared purpose that will be delved on later, degrees of trust in Marawi City improved. Basic values, such as fairness and honesty, form the foundation for ethically universal norms that are significant in constraining predatory elite behaviour (Mungui-Pippidi, 2013). The presence of a certain degree of honesty and fairness among key stakeholders in Marawi City as a result of the efforts of Lucero reformed normal expectations of corrupt behaviour. With clear demonstrations that the military, a powerful stakeholder in a systemically corrupt and conflict-ridden area like Marawi city, is honest and fair in monitoring and managing local peace and order, a greater sense of security among local groups was engendered that altered local corruption norms.

Abdul Gaffur Alonto, a public prosecutor in Marawi City and member of a prominent local clan, supports this argument by saying that “a general feeling of being safer” was present in Marawi City during the military command of Lucero that “boosted the confidence of locals to participate in his election reform initiatives and eventually, elect new leaders.” Happy Raagas, a local of the area and Program Manager of an international aid-supported development program, affirms the change in the collective psyche of Maranaos. She shared that locals “considered political patronage to be significantly diminished” after

the election reform project of Lucero to the extent that “prominently corrupt officials became more cautious of their actions and performance in City Hall throughout the electoral process.”

6.2 Dialogue

To deepen degrees of trust in Marawi City, Lucero launched a set of efforts to engage key local stakeholders in a dialogue on peace and order issues. He organized a Registration Summit that served as a platform for diverse local groups to create a shared vision for the upcoming elections. With key partners, the Summit took place on June 29, 2012 and was entitled “Forum on Partnership Building for Lanao del Sur Electoral Reform Initiatives.” It was an unprecedented event in the province that engaged hundreds of citizens and local leaders, including the national Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Commissioner. The Summit clarified the role of the military and managed stakeholder expectations for the upcoming General Registration that will put the voters list to order after the Philippine Congress annulled the Book of Registered Voters in ARMM on the basis of fraudulence and mandated the 103rd Infantry Brigade to govern peace and order in the locality for the conduct of a General Registration from July 9 to 18, 2012.

Lucero also installed feedback mechanisms through telephone hotlines and two-way radio groups that served as the citizens’ link to the military. These communication platforms were effective and relevant as the common media in spreading information to the general public. Lucero personally monitored these feedback mechanisms and regularly exchanged views and responded to questions raised by locals. This effort garnered much attention for its novelty, especially since it was the first occasion for a Brigade Commander to be openly questioned by locals. This deepened the trust of the public on the sincerity of the military for peace and order and significantly helped in the efficiency and responsiveness of the military to the security needs of the locals.

The case shows that dialogue reinforces the change of normal expectations on corruption and forms a “civic culture” as the sustained participation and political engagement of the people through platforms like the media or social movements, that is instrumental in installing normative constraints on corrupt behaviours. Gerard and Elinor (1998) and Yankelovich (1999) further ground this contention in their argument that dialogue transforms thinking systems and develop communities built on trust and respect through new behaviours and skills.

6.3 Results-based Management and Evaluation

The dialogue platforms installed undergird the needs-based and results-focused approach of the military brigade to local peace and order issues, contributing to their responsiveness. The telephone hotline became the means for the public to participate in the electoral reform process and constitute the peace and order issues that define their daily lives. Registration irregularities and election-related problems were raised through the hotline directly managed by Lucero, who in his formal capacity mobilizes his brigade to immediately respond to feedback and install preventive measures, while maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality to those who reported.

The presence of strong leadership is definitive to the successful integration of performance information in organization management, evaluation, and culture (Mayne, 2007). The direct involvement and leadership style of Lucero, which will be expounded in succeeding sections, in dialogue mechanisms supports the learning of the military on local peace and order issues rather than just external reporting. In this way, a results-focused culture in the military is developed, wherein the focus is on outcomes or the benefits achieved, as a result of outputs or the direct goods and services produced (ibid.).

Coupled with other electoral reform initiatives that will be elucidated later, the results-based management and evaluation of the military brigade resulted in the relatively successful conduct of the General Registration (Commission on Elections, 2012). The number of inexistent or locally known as “ghost” or “flying” voters in Marawi City was significantly reduced. From 66,988 registered voters in the old voters list, the number went down to 33,718. The General Registration also yielded significant variances in Lanao del Sur, which posted the highest reduction in number of voters among five provinces in ARMM – from 521, 969 to 350, 268. The average decrease among the provinces was at 23.8 percent (See Table 1).

Alonto stressed that the cleansing of the voters list “enabled opposition leaders to garner enough votes to win office.” He explains that this output generated impact to the political and economic state of Marawi City today when in the 2016 local elections; a new mayor took office and shifted the power dynamics in the area. Although Alonto cannot say that governance and market structures in Marawi City fully improved due to the persistence of violent conflict, he emphasized that micro entrepreneurship increased since the election reform project of Lucero and more social development efforts were implemented with the participation of diverse stakeholders, especially youth groups. He illustrated the political and economic changes by saying that there is increased activity in City Hall for the acquisition of business permits for stalls or franchises that serve school markets. In addition, he claimed that local government income from stalls in the public markets is relatively increasing with the exit of the clients of previous political leaders. He adds that graft and corruption among local officials are also perceived to be on a downtrend due to the political inactivity of elected officials who are clan members of the previous local administration. Alonto notes, however, that this political divide contributes to tensions and the persistence of violent conflict in the locality, in addition to restrictions on what the current local government can accomplish in terms of social development.

Province/City	Before (April 2011)	After (July 2012)	Variance	
			Total	Percentage
Lanao del Sur	521, 969	350, 268	171, 701	33%
Marawi City	66, 988	33, 718	33, 270	49%
Tawi-Tawi	175, 255	125, 084	50, 171	29%
Sulu	341, 536	249, 705	91, 831	27%

Maguindanao	644, 251	535, 956	108, 295	17%
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Table 1 Changes to the List of Registered Voters (Commission on Elections, 2012).

6.4 Enforcement

Another critical factor to the changes in the electoral and political processes in Marawi City is the enforcement of the rule of law through the formal capacity and unique strategies of the military brigade in promoting their reform agenda and addressing resistance. During the ten-day registration, the AFP caught 30 itinerant or “flying” voters claiming to have been coerced by their landlord, a reportedly close relation of a prominent local politician, to register in Marawi City instead of their proper precinct or face eviction. In addition, truckloads of itinerant registrants were intercepted in the nearby municipalities of Saguwaran and Malabang as well as the nearby provinces of Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, and Iligan City.

Moreover, Lucero employed social marketing strategies by capitalizing on the Maranao “tarpaulin culture”, wherein tarpaulins or streamers line city road sides or hang over city streets to raise awareness among the public on the need to participate in the General Registration and to promote the “*Kontra-Salimbut*” or anti-cheating initiative. The tarpaulins contained encouraging messages to boost the morale of the public for integrity as well as information on penalties imposed on violators based on government or religious laws. This effort appeared to be effective deterrents since the predominantly Muslim population of the city and province did not want to lose their eligibility for a passport through a criminal record that will prevent them from travelling to Mecca, a religious aspiration among all Muslims.

6.5 Partnerships

Partnerships are another integral factor to the election reform project of Lucero in Marawi City. As a project launched under a Fellowship program informed by the theory of Bridging Leadership, the project is conceptualized to be a collaborative process in addressing systemic corruption in the conflict-affected area of Marawi City. The collaborative aspect of Bridging Leadership is rooted in the premise that the complexity and interconnectedness brought about by globalization increases the difficulty for any group to achieve a goal individually (Dulany, 1997), as demonstrated by the entrenched societal divides characterizing Marawi City and Lanao del Sur.

The case affirms this contention as the resources, influence, and networks of partner-stakeholders in the election reform project of Lucero significantly contributed to the fulfilment of the project and the realization of its desired societal outcomes. Upon his assumption of military command in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur, Lucero collaborated with Radio Forum, a network of 28 groups with an estimated 700 members each that utilized two-way CB radios as their source of information on current events in the province. Limited access to television and radio made this media the most common communication platform in the area. Lucero tapped this strategic platform to communicate the reform agenda headed by the military brigade to an extensive network of civilians.

With the help of the media and despite tensions borne out of the resistance of local government members, Lucero was also able to get publicly announced commitments from local government officials

to invest in closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras for the forthcoming General Registration. The CCTV cameras were installed by brigade soldiers in polling precincts around the province to guard the elections against anomalies and given the environment of impunity, provide proof for proper convictions should there be electoral violations committed. As a result, Lanao del Sur is the first province to install 100 security cameras in the polling precincts.

As the General Registration grew near, on July 5, 2012, hundreds of individual advocates and community social organizations (CSOs) converged at Plaza Cabili, Marawi City to rally against cheating or "*salimbut*". This was followed by a motorcade or caravan participated by an estimated 500 motorists. An advocacy summit against electoral cheating, especially for the forthcoming elections, was also conducted. Entitled "*Kasalimbago sa Elections 2013*," the event convened an estimated 500 participants from government agencies and local partners and stakeholders such as local chief executives of ARMM and Lanao del Sur and CSOs.

Lucero also initiated the formation of the Multi-Sectoral Advisory Board (MSAB), composed of 21 members from seven key sectors of the media, academe, business, local government, youth, religious groups, and civil society in the Maranao areas. The MSAB served as a platform for sharing views and generating solutions towards improved governance in the province. Subsequently, the Board also increased the credibility of the military brigade in settling incidences of *rido* or clan wars. Through this local coalition, new stakeholders (the Department of Education, the Commission on Elections, and Civil Society Organizations) were engaged for performance information on local electoral processes. This effort contributed to the bridging of years of distrust and blame that stalled the realization of solutions to address electoral problems in the locality.

The coalition building efforts of Lucero for electoral reform in Marawi City were also instrumental to the sustainability of his efforts. In the months leading to the May 2013 elections, pocket meetings were organized by different groups to discuss anti-cheating and open dialogues on electoral anomalies and poll-related violence were also conducted. Furthermore, the Lanao del Sur People's Council (LDSPC), a convergence of 63 non-government organizations and People's Organizations and key partner of the reform project, vowed to continue pushing for electoral reforms and good governance in Marawi City and the entire province of Lanao del Sur after Lucero was promoted and re-assigned. Alonto and Raagas confirm the fulfilment of this vow as key member-partners of the election reform project continuously collaborate with the incumbent local government and other critical stakeholder-partners for social development programs in the area.

Partnerships with the national police and national government agencies were also forged that enabled the military brigade to maximize available resources for addressing the systemic nature of corruption in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur. In collaboration with the Philippine National Police (PNP), a significant decrease (41 percent) in the index crimes or physically-pursued crimes committed in Lanao del Sur from July 2011 to July 2012 was achieved. Police Senior Superintendent Romeo Magsalos personally acknowledged the contribution of the army as a supporting agency to law enforcement in the improvement of the security situation in Lanao del Sur.

The military brigade also supported the Land Transportation Office (LTO) in implementing land transportation laws that contributed to the increase of the agency's revenues by 31 million pesos in 2011. Moreover, they supported the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in their campaign against illegal logging. From January 15, 2011 to August 28, 2012, checkpoint operations, mobile patrols, and visits to different "hotspot" logging areas were conducted, resulting to the confiscation of around 200,000 board feet of round logs and flitches in Lanao del Sur. A number of cutting tools were also confiscated and 12 sawmills in Maguing, Bubong, and Kapail in Lanao del Sur were closed. Around 20, 000 tree seedlings were also planted by the brigade in different municipalities in the province with the cooperation of different local government units and civic service organizations.

To further curb the various incidence of systemic corruption entrenched in the area, the military brigade worked closely with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and the MSU to apprehend various crimes. Small contingents were sent to patrol the MSU and protect the students and university professors against kidnapping and different crimes. Working with PDEA, the brigade contributed to the apprehension of ten drug pushers, including two local policemen. In 2011, two buy-bust operations were also conducted by the drug enforcement agency with the security support of the brigade.

With the gains of partnerships entail costs as well that can limit the possibilities for the election reform project. With the involvement of the military brigade in the anti-logging campaign of the DENR and the high-profile raids of the PDEA against drug dealers who were reportedly close to, or alleged to be relatives of prominent corrupt officials, the military unit lost three soldiers and a local child when unidentified armed men ambushed the patrol unit around the MSU campus. This event was but the culmination of several incidents that created tensions between Lucero and prominently corrupt elites; and significantly marred relations of the military brigade with the local government as Lucero was actively excluded from the Marawi City Peace and Order Council meetings. Furthermore, a petition for the relief of service of Lucero was filed by the city government to the national office of the AFP on the grounds that he was "the worst slaughterer of the Maranaos", signed by 90 *barangay* captains in Marawi City.

The case demonstrates what Rothstein (2011) calls the "self-correcting behaviour of systemic corruption" that challenges the change in corruption norms. Nonetheless, the relationships established with partners through regular and deep engagements proved to be significant when the national government appeared to intervene and reconcile Lucero with local government leaders. More fruitful public engagements ensued thereafter in the forms of covenants for peace and development in Marawi City and a good governance workshop initiated by local government leaders in MSU. The electoral reform narrative of Marawi City exhibits the role and value of social capital and civil society as normative constraints to predatory elite behaviour (Pippidi, 2013). Lucero's coalition building efforts organized and mobilized a dense network of voluntary associations that promoted engagements in formal and informal anti-corruption initiatives for shared interests, purposes, and values, changing the normal expectations on corruption (ibid.).

6.6 Sense of Urgency

The authors assert that the sense of urgency characterizing the election reform project of Lucero is a definitive factor to the process and outcomes of the project. The reform project was launched in the context of a fast approaching national election (in May 2013) that increased the relevance of the issue to the interests of key stakeholders. The authors see this as a source for the “big bang approach” the nature of the project seemed to take when the different interests of diverse stakeholders converged for the shared vision of orderly and peaceful elections and prompted their active engagement in the election reform initiatives launched by Lucero and his partners.

The increased relevance of shared visions on election reform also paved the way for effective partnerships that maximized the resources and gains of the reform initiatives launched. Regular stakeholder engagements borne out of the urgent nature of the shared vision sustained the call for integrity as well as normal expectations on the corrupt behaviours of locals that we argue, contributed to the impact of the election reform project to systemic corruption in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur.

6.7 Interplay of Formal and Informal Institutions

Concurrent with the changes in the collective psyche on corruption in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur are formal institutions that interplayed *for* the election reform project. On June 11, 2012, the Philippine Congress approved Congressional Joint Resolution No. 03 that annuls the Book of Registered Voters in the ARMM. The ARMM voters list was deemed fraudulent, said to contain “hundreds of thousands of fictitious voters”, and was identified as instrumental in electoral cheating in the region. The Resolution provided for the conduct of the General Registration from July 9 to 18, 2012 to clean up the voters list. The COMELEC also later issued Resolution No. 9445 that deputized the 103rd Infantry Brigade and its operationally controlled units, to take charge of the security concerns that could arise in the General Voters’ Registration.

This platform served as the basis of the stakeholder engagements launched by the military brigade and also served as a co-constituting factor with belief systems on corruption to the change in the normal expectations on corruption in the area.

Borrowing from Durkheim’s concept of collective effervescence, the authors argue that the suspension of social norms on corruption through the election reform interventions launched by Lucero enabled the emergence of new concepts and beliefs about corruption in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur. Durkheim asserts that the intensity of collective life (or participation in collective action) changes the conditions of psychic activity and as a result, “man feels himself transformed and consequently, he transforms the environment” (Buehler, 2012). Pickering (1984) extends Durkheim’s discourse and distinguishes two distinct functions of effervescence: the first is a process of effervescent assembly from which new ideas or changes emerge while the re-creative function renews communal bonds and reaffirms collective representation (ibid.). Based on the narrative of election reform in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur above, the case demonstrates this idea and the interplay of formal and informal institutions for impact in systemic corruption.

6.8 Command Structure

The command structure in the military is seen as both a supporting and limiting factor to the project and its political and economic outcomes. The presence of the military provides the public with an alternative source of security against the persistent violent conflict and corruption norms in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur regulated by predatory elite groups. However, the unique culture of the military for hierarchy and command also makes it vulnerable to abuse and corruption. With the unique inclusive and participatory leadership style of Lucero that will be discussed further later, the command structure of the military translated the efficiency and effectiveness of military-led interventions. This was exhibited when Lucero's command for cultural sensitivity among the military brigade pervaded the private lives of his soldiers. The brigade soldiers were barred from having any romantic relationship with Maranao women and were also ordered not to wear inappropriate attires, such as short pants or *sandos* when in the presence of Maranao women. These instructions were satisfied as evidenced by the absence of complaints and violent repercussions between locals and the military on these bases.

On the other hand, this command structure itself in the military also interrupted the ability of the military brigade to fulfil its greater mandate of securing peace and order in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur. Raagas shared that during the height of tensions between Lucero and certain local political leaders, higher military authority ordered Lucero and his military brigade to seek reconciliation with the very individuals and groups allegedly responsible for the death of three brigade soldiers and a child, as well as for the persistence of shadow economies and violent conflict in the area they are mandated to govern. This became a moral dilemma for Lucero given the command structure of the military wherein orders seem to take precedence over values like integrity. The apparent intervention of the national government to reconcile Lucero and prominently corrupt elites, however, proved to override this problematic instruction. Raagas and Alonto also affirm that this critical event disturbed local political and economic power dynamics that resulted into some positive social outcomes described above.

7 The Role of Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement in Anti-Corruption

7.1 Leadership Capital

The authors argue that the election reform project and its outcomes took effect because of the unique mix of values, attributes, expertise, education, experiences, and networks that constitute the leadership capital of Lucero as Commander of the 103rd Infantry Brigade of the AFP. Lucero was at a strategic position in Philippine society that enabled him to acquire and mobilize valuable resources for his election reform agenda. He has extensive knowledge and skills in security, cultural sensitivity, and stakeholder engagement through his education and personal and work experiences. He graduated from the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) and took his first postgraduate studies in International Studies under a government-sponsored scholarship grant. He took his second masteral course in International Studies, specializing in International Security, at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra, where he earned an award of distinction for his thesis on “The Role of Culture in One’s Perspective on Security.” Lucero was also among the pioneering scholars of the United Nations Leadership Training for Peacekeeping as well as the United States Department International Visitors Leadership Program.

In debt of gratitude for his government-sponsored education through public taxes, he formed a personal mission-vision to repay this debt through his honest military work. He also had a wealth of experience in media engagements in his capacity as Chief of the Public Information Office and overall Spokesperson of the AFP. The extent of his communication skills were demonstrated when Lucero allayed public fears during the attempted coup of 300 soldiers in the country’s business capital and outmanoeuvred the mutineers in the media throughout the incident, preventing them from gaining public support and sympathy. As AFP Spokesperson, Lucero registered an unprecedented 1, 104 television and radio interviews, 94 talk show television appearances, 29 press conferences, 27 speaking engagements as a resource person, and 591 press releases in print, broadcast, and wire media services.

Lucero also had a deep and broad understanding of the political, historical, and cultural peculiarities of Lanao del Sur, especially Marawi City. He read books and documents about the customs, traditions, religion, and social systems of Marawi City. In addition, he learned the Maranao language. His understanding of the social system in the locality deepened his sense of ownership to the cause of reforming the rampant electoral fraud in the city that hindered the over-all development of the area. Furthermore, his unique leadership capital was useful in generating the “buy-in” of key stakeholders in his reform project, as exhibited by the narratives above.

7.2 Authentic Leadership

Authentic leaders create lasting value in an organization through a sense of self-awareness, identity, honesty, and self-discipline to get results (George et. al, 2007) . They also establish long-term, meaningful relationships and empower others to lead (ibid.). These traits for authentic leadership are demonstrated by Lucero. An environment and instruments for self-awareness and exploration of identity were provided during his Fellowship with AIMTEC. In several sessions, Lucero examined his leadership lifeline and conducted a capital inventory for his change project. Meanwhile, his sense of honesty emanated from his own self-awareness and sense of identity as a public servant.

Throughout his military career, he had been assigned all over the Philippines and had also travelled abroad. These experiences not only shaped his worldview but also expanded his networks that he was able to tap for his election reform agenda. His extensive understanding of social systems also provided Lucero the capacity to recognize the interests of others and determine his engagement strategies based upon them.

More importantly, Lucero exhibited his empowering leadership style by providing opportunities for others, especially his own soldiers, to acquire the same capitals for leadership he had. He exhibited this capacity in the various trainings he provided his brigade soldiers as well as when he solicited the participation of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), two major separatist movements in Mindanao, for reform in electoral processes.

The stakeholder engagement narratives in the electoral reform of Marawi City and Lanao del Sur above further support that in the “bridging” process led by Lucero, each stakeholder had the opportunity to define their leadership through the roles they occupied in the process of co-creating change (Reed, 2010). In other words, Lucero as a “bridging leader” was distinguishable in the leadership and change process, in part, by his collaborative or “facilitative” behaviour (Pierce, 2002). Following these contentions, the authors argue that the unique leadership style of Lucero, rooted in his own personhood, shaped the formal and informal institutions of integrity in corruption-ridden Marawi City and Lanao del Sur throughout the processes of his election reform project.

7.3 Collaborative Advantage

The authors further argue that stakeholder engagements in the election reform project processes generated what Kanter (1994) calls a “collaborative advantage” definitive to the political and economic outcomes in the state of corruption in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur today. Growing recognition of the value of partnerships undergird the notion of collaborative advantage, wherein synergy or potential supernormal gains are generated as a result of collaborative activities or productive partnerships (Vangen and Huxham, 2013). The concept of collaborative advantage captures the four distinct components of normative constraints on corruption (values, social capital, civil society, and civic culture) which are essential for the development of sustainable good governance (Mungui-Pippide, 2013).

The authors argue that stakeholder engagements embedded in the election reform project processes in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur generated a synergy through a series of collaborative and productive

activities led by Lucero. This synergy among critical stakeholders in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur became the driving force for change in normal expectations on corruption and the relative achievement of the desired outcomes of the project, as exhibited by the narratives above. The whole process also became an opportunity for the stakeholders to re-examine their roles in the community and to make meaning out of these roles. It was also critical that these roles were being examined as the change process was taking shape into more concrete interventions that are now subject to reflection for future practice of collective action.

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