

Policy Brief: Deradicalization initiatives in conflict areas in the Philippines



Executive Summary

This policy brief encapsulates the essential discussions and outcomes from the Round Table Discussion on Deradicalization held on May 21, 2024, at the Astoria Plaza Hotel in Ortigas, Pasig City, organized by the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy with support from the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.



Atty. Nasser Marohomsalic of the National Amnesty Commission and convenor of the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy delivers the welcome remarks in the Round Table Discussion. See Annex A for his full speech.

The event convened over 80 stakeholders from diverse sectors including government, non-governmental organizations, academia, and the military. The gathering emphasized a collaborative approach to addressing radicalization in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, highlighting its complexity and the multifaceted efforts required to effectively counter it.

Key insights from the discussion recognized radicalization as a multidimensional issue influenced by ideological, psychological, and

socioeconomic factors. Experts from academia and civil society stressed the importance of transformative approaches that aim to fundamentally alter ideologies and behaviors rather than merely disengage individuals from extremist groups. These interventions need to be nuanced and tailored, considering the unique cultural, social, and individual factors relevant to each case.

Significant gaps were identified in the current deradicalization efforts, notably the lack of coordinated efforts among various stakeholders. The need for better alignment between military and civilian initiatives was a major point of discussion, with attendees including former Senator and former Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) Secretary Gregorio Honasan and officials from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) underscoring its importance for sustainable outcomes. Insights from regional models, such as Indonesia's community-based programs discussed by Johari Efendi from the Habibie Center, also highlighted the value of adapting strategies to specific socio-political contexts to enhance their effectiveness.

The day-long discussion resulted in the following key recommendations to strengthen deradicalization initiatives:

1. **Intersectoral coordination:** Establish stronger collaborative mechanisms among government agencies, the private sector, and civil society organizations to develop a comprehensive national deradicalization strategy. This strategy should integrate efforts across law enforcement, military operations, educational programs, and community engagement.
2. **Monitoring and evaluation:** Implement robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess the effectiveness of deradicalization programs and facilitate necessary adjustments. This would help in understanding the impact of various strategies and in making informed decisions about policy and program directions.
3. **Contextual and empirical approaches:** Advocate for deradicalization interventions that are locally driven and empirically supported, ensuring that they are relevant and effective within the specific contexts they are implemented. This approach should focus on the underlying causes of radicalization, such as economic disparity and social injustice, to ensure sustainable change.

In his address at the gathering, former Sen. Honasan emphasized the complexity of radicalism and terrorism, advocating for a response that goes beyond traditional military action. He highlighted the necessity of addressing both the visible and invisible forms of violence, incorporating aspects of social and economic injustice that contribute to extremism. Honasan called for a unified approach that integrates the full spectrum of societal resources, from local community efforts to national and international collaborations, aiming to create a just, peaceful, and inclusive society.



Former Senator and DICT Sec. Gringo Honasan discusses the complexities of addressing radicalism and terrorism.

The Round Table Discussion underscored a collective commitment to deepening the understanding of the pathways to radicalization and to developing effective strategies that promote a just, peaceful, and inclusive society. The collaboration among different sectors is crucial to the successful implementation of these strategies, highlighting the need for a united approach to combat the complex challenge of radicalization.

Understanding deradicalization

Deradicalization is a vital transformative process that not only extricates individuals from extremist influences but also significantly alters their ideological and behavioral perspectives.

Dr. Rommel Banlaoi of the Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence, and Terrorism Research explained in his lecture that true deradicalization requires a complete transformation both ideologically and behaviorally, fostering a durable renunciation of violent ideologies and supporting positive reintegration into society" (Banlaoi, 2024). Former Sen. Honasan supported this line of thinking, emphasizing that such comprehensive approach highlights the depth and complexity of effectively changing an extremist's outlook and reintegrating them into society (Honasan, 2024).

The deradicalization process involves several steps, starting with preventing individuals from joining violent extremist networks and culminating in addressing the psychological and social foundations of their radical views. Tailored interventions at each stage address both the push and pull factors of radicalization, from socio-economic grievances to ideological commitments, aiming for a state where former radicals can lead violence-free lives and contribute positively to their communities.

Adaptability to the cultural dynamics of targeted individuals is crucial, ensuring interventions are not only effective but also respectful of individuals' backgrounds, which helps reduce resistance and enhance acceptance of new values and norms. This long-term strategic commitment requires ongoing support and resources. Successful deradicalization programs depend heavily on collaboration among multiple stakeholders, including government agencies, community leaders, psychologists, and families, addressing all aspects of an individual's life from mental health services to socioeconomic advancements.

Theoretical foundations and global perspectives

Deradicalization strategies vary globally, reflecting the diverse cultural and political landscapes. Mr. Johari Efendi from the Habibie Center in Indonesia explained that their community-based programs "are deeply rooted in local traditions and religious teachings, focusing not only on disengagement but also on fostering community reconciliation and integration" (Efendi, 2024). This approach, integrating local cultural and religious practices, contrasts with more structured Western programs that often include formal psychological counseling, vocational training, and legal aid.

In Southeast Asia, the communal and family-oriented culture influences deradicalization programs to be more community-centric, involving local organizations and leaders and reintegrating individuals into the community through acceptance and assistance. This

integration contrasts with Western approaches, which emphasize individual autonomy and psychological care and often employ multidisciplinary approaches to reintegration that lack the community engagement crucial in many non-Western contexts.

Cpt. Sherhannah Paiseo-Bahjin of the Research and Doctrine Development Department of the AFP detailed the stages of radicalization in her presentation "Clearing the Fog," identifying them as the adoption of an ideology, the belief in violence as a legitimate method, and the engagement in violent acts (Paiseo-Bahjin, 2024). Understanding these stages is essential for developing effective deradicalization programs that target individuals at different points in their radicalization journey.

Deradicalization in the Philippine context

In the Philippines, the challenge of deradicalization is intricately linked to the country's history of internal conflict, with Mindanao being a significant focal point. It is crucial that a coordinated approach is taken, according to Lt. Col. Jan Chavez-Arceo of the AFP. He stressed, "The effectiveness of our deradicalization initiatives in Mindanao depends on harmonizing military efforts with comprehensive civilian strategies to ensure the peace process is inclusive and promotes societal healing" (Chavez-Arceo, 2021). Coordination is vital not just to stop violence, but also to address the underlying social and political reasons for radicalization.

The Philippines' socio-political landscape, marked by decades of conflict and negotiation, presents unique challenges for deradicalization programs. Atty. Nasser Marohomsalic, an official at the National Amnesty Commission, believes that redressing historical grievances is key to combating radicalization by redressing historical injustices. "In order to combat radicalization effectively, we must acknowledge and address the historical injustices that marginalized many in our communities, especially in Mindanao," he explained (Marohomsalic, 2024). Deradicalization efforts must be viewed through this perspective to avoid appearing superficial to the affected communities.

Due to the Philippines' geographical and cultural diversity, deradicalization strategies must also be tailored to the specific needs and contexts of the various regions rather than

Sidebar: Deradicalization Discussions

During the comprehensive Round Table Discussion on Deradicalization held on May 21, 2024, a dynamic open forum facilitated insightful exchanges among participants from various sectors including government, local communities, NGOs, and international bodies. Here, we highlight key questions from the audience and the nuanced responses provided by the panelists, reflecting a broad spectrum of strategies and insights into tackling radicalization.

Q: How do we address the complex socio-economic issues that lead to radicalization?

A: Dr. Acram Latiph emphasized the critical need for an integrated approach that not only boosts local economies but also preserves cultural identities and empowers communities. He highlighted the paradox of natural resource wealth in areas like Sulu juxtaposed with extreme poverty, which often drives radicalization. Sustainable development strategies must, therefore, include significant improvements in education, job opportunities, and healthcare to effectively mitigate these foundational issues of radicalization.

one-size-fits-all. By adopting a regional approach, interventions are more likely to be culturally sensitive and effective. Local leaders in Mindanao, for instance, have a crucial role to play in the deradicalization process. Their endorsement and involvement lend credibility to the process.

Creating a sustainable and effective deradicalization framework requires integration of these efforts across military, civil society, and local government levels. By promoting socio-economic development and political inclusion, this integrated approach not only addresses the immediate challenges of extremism, but also builds long-term resilience against radical influences.

Nuanced approaches

Gail Malone of the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IJ) emphasized in her virtual talk the critical importance of individualized prosecutorial strategies in addressing radicalization within criminal justice systems. Drawing from her extensive experience, including her tenure as the U.S.

Department of Justice's Resident Legal Advisor in Benin, Togo, and Senegal, Malone stressed that legal prosecution should be balanced with opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration. Such strategies are vital, particularly when dealing with returnees from conflict zones. Everyone's background and actions must be meticulously evaluated to determine the most appropriate legal and rehabilitative response, ensuring justice while addressing the root causes of radicalization (Malone, 2024).

Malone highlighted a new initiative funded by Canada aimed at countering the financing of terrorism, illustrating the necessity of global cooperation in tackling terrorism-related issues. This initiative underscores the IJ's commitment to enhancing the capabilities of criminal justice practitioners by promoting individualized prosecutorial strategies. Such strategies ensure that each case is handled with a nuanced approach, balancing legal prosecution with rehabilitative opportunities, thereby weakening the operational capacities of terrorist organizations. The focus on financial aspects of terrorism highlights how economic measures can significantly disrupt the operational capabilities of extremist groups (Malone, 2024).

Early intervention is a key component of effective deradicalization efforts. Gail Malone underscored the critical

Sidebar: Deradicalization Discussions

Q: What metrics are most effective for measuring the success of deradicalization programs?

A: Dr. Mark Torres suggested that effectiveness should be gauged through a combination of immediate disengagement from extremist groups and long-term metrics such as social reintegration, psychological health, and notably, reduced recidivism rates. These indicators provide a comprehensive understanding of both short-term successes and the enduring impact of deradicalization efforts.

Q: How can we utilize technology to combat the spread of extremist ideologies online and ensure program continuity amid changes?

A: Brig. Gen. Taharuddin Ampatuan discussed leveraging advanced monitoring tools and enhancing digital literacy to disrupt online radical activities effectively. He underscored the importance of maintaining these initiatives through constant updates to technology and methods, ensuring they remain effective regardless of political or economic shifts. Embedding these programs within national security strategies can provide the necessary framework for sustained support and adaptation.

importance of initiating de-radicalization efforts as soon as individuals are taken into custody. She pointed out that waiting until the end of a person's sentence to begin these efforts is counterproductive. Instead, de-radicalization in custody should involve a suite of tailored services that address both the risks posed by the incarcerated individuals and their specific needs. These services aim to reshape their ideologies and behaviors away from violence while preserving their fundamental religious and cultural beliefs (Malone, 2024).

Malone's approach also involves collaboration between criminal justice practitioners and various sectors, including government, social services, and civil society. This multidisciplinary approach is essential for providing comprehensive support needed for effective de-radicalization and reintegration, starting from the earliest stages of incarceration. By involving multiple sectors, the program ensures that all aspects of an individual's rehabilitation are addressed, from psychological support to educational and vocational training. Such a holistic approach is critical for addressing the complex needs of individuals undergoing deradicalization, thereby enhancing the likelihood of successful reintegration into society. This collaborative effort underscores the need for cohesive and integrated policies across different levels of governance and society (Malone, 2024).

Prof. Karl Alvin Hapal of the UP College of Social Work and Community Development shared insights that align with Malone's approach, emphasizing the need for comprehensive and continuous interventions to address radicalization among persons deprived of liberty (PDLs). Hapal's work specifically focuses on those from communities affected by "Operation Tokhang" and victims of "red tagging." He explained that radicalization is a gradual phenomenon deeply embedded in historical contexts of marginalization, oppression, and systemic neglect. Effective deradicalization requires addressing these root causes through sustained support and comprehensive interventions (Hapal, 2024).

Hapal recounted his experiences at the Special Intensive Care Area (SICA II) jail in Metro Manila, which houses high-risk detainees, including those involved in the Zamboanga siege of 2013. He described the diverse backgrounds of the detainees, ranging from actual combatants to individuals wrongfully

Sidebar: Deradicalization Discussions

Q: Can you provide examples of community-based initiatives that have successfully countered radicalization?

A: Highlighting the effectiveness of localized efforts, Dr. Rommel Banlaoi pointed to the role of peace councils, which have successfully mediated conflicts and supported at-risk youth. These councils demonstrate how empowering local leaders and integrating community insights can actively build resilience and counter extremism.

Q: What are the primary challenges in reintegrating former militants, and how are these addressed?

A: Dr. Latiph addressed the reintegration challenges, particularly the social stigma that complicates the return of former militants to society. He advocated for community-based acceptance programs that facilitate dialogue and promote understanding, paired with economic incentives that help integrate these individuals back into the community, ensuring their transition is both smooth and sustainable.

arrested due to unfortunate circumstances. This diversity challenges the simplistic view that all detainees are hardened extremists. Instead, many are victims of systemic injustices, and their radicalization can often be traced back to these experiences of injustice and marginalization. This understanding is crucial for developing tailored interventions that address the specific needs of each detainee (Hapal, 2024).

Psychological and sociocultural dynamics

Understanding the psychological and sociocultural dynamics of radicalization is crucial for developing effective deradicalization programs.

Cpt. Paise-Bahjin highlighted the biological and psychological vulnerabilities that make youth particularly susceptible to radicalization. She pointed out that the human brain, specifically the prefrontal cortex responsible for higher-order thinking and decision-making, does not fully mature until around the age of 25. Until this development is complete, the amygdala, which governs emotions, often plays a dominant role in decision-making processes. This physiological aspect makes young people more impulsive and emotionally driven, which extremist groups exploit by appealing to their emotions rather than reason. The absence of a fully developed prefrontal cortex means that youths are more likely to make decisions based on immediate emotional responses rather than long-term rational considerations. Given these vulnerabilities, parental guidance and community support are crucial in helping youths navigate these formative years. This support can mitigate the emotional and psychological pressures that make young people susceptible to radical ideologies (Paise-Bahjin, 2024).

Paise-Bahjin also emphasized the need to differentiate between terrorists and criminals to formulate appropriate counterterrorism and deradicalization strategies. Terrorists are driven by ideological motives and engage in violence to further their political, religious, or social goals. Their actions are intended to instill fear and achieve broad societal changes. In contrast, criminals engage in violence for personal or financial gain. This differentiation is vital for developing targeted interventions that address the specific motivations and behaviors of different groups. Understanding these distinctions allows for more effective and tailored deradicalization efforts (Paise-Bahjin, 2024).

Sidebar: Deradicalization Discussions

Q: What are the preventive measures against the rise of online radicalization to protect vulnerable groups?

A: Gen. Ampatuan elaborated on preventive strategies, noting the enhancement of online surveillance and collaborations with social media platforms to remove extremist content swiftly. These efforts are crucial in preventing the spread of radical ideologies, especially among susceptible populations.

These discussions reflect a robust consensus on the need for a multi-layered and inclusive approach to combat radicalization effectively. By integrating economic, psychological, technological, and community-driven strategies, the insights from this roundtable provide a roadmap for developing comprehensive and adaptive solutions to prevent and counter the spread of extremist ideologies.

Prof. Hapal meanwhile underscored the impact of jail conditions on the psyche of PDLs. The harsh environment in facilities like the Special Intensive Care Area (SICA II) in Metro Manila, coupled with prolonged detention without trial, exacerbates feelings of hopelessness and resentment. Hapal noted that these conditions can intensify radicalization as detainees become more disillusioned with the justice system. The lack of adequate mental health support and absence of programs addressing trauma contribute to the deteriorating psychological state of detainees, making it crucial to implement comprehensive psychosocial support systems within these facilities (Hapal, 2024).

Holistic and tailored deradicalization programs

Effective deradicalization programs must be holistic and tailored to the individual's history, motivations, and vulnerabilities.

In his public address at the Round Table Discussion on Deradicalization, former Senator and DICT Secretary Honasan underscored the need for a comprehensive strategy to tackle radicalism and terrorism. Drawing on his unique experiences from both his military and political careers, Honasan emphasized that extremism is fundamentally rooted in ideologies, necessitating a response with more compelling and positive ideas to be effectively combated (Honasan, 2024).

Building on this framework, it becomes evident that effective deradicalization programs must be both holistic and tailored to individual histories, motivations, and vulnerabilities. Cpt. Paiso-Bahjin emphasized that providing individualized treatment programs that address the specific needs and circumstances of each person is essential. Such programs must consider factors such as age, gender, marital status, religion, culture, education, and the nature of their ideological commitment. This personalized approach ensures that interventions are relevant and effective for everyone, thereby promoting long-term change (Paiso-Bahjin, 2024).

Former Sen. Honasan also articulated the importance of addressing not only the visible forms of violence, such as armed conflicts, but also the invisible forms such as poverty and social injustice. These are often the breeding grounds for terrorism.

This holistic approach aligns with the views of Prof. Hapal, who argued that effective deradicalization requires addressing the socio-economic, psychological, and familial needs of persons deprived of liberty (PDLs). Providing mental health care, facilitating family and community support, and offering educational and vocational opportunities can help reintegrate PDLs into society as productive and engaged citizens, addressing the root causes of radicalization such as economic disparity and social injustice (Hapal, 2024).

Additionally, the research by Malone on early and tailored interventions provided practical applications of this strategy. She presented case studies demonstrating how nuanced prosecutorial strategies, which include psychological counseling and vocational training, can successfully reintegrate high-risk detainees back into society. These cases underscore the effectiveness of early interventions and targeted support in mitigating the risks

associated with radicalization and enhancing prospects for successful rehabilitation (Malone, 2024).

Former Sen. Honasan called for a unified approach to security that transcends traditional military solutions and incorporates social and economic development. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive, all-encompassing strategy that involves all stakeholders and leverages the full spectrum of community, national, and international resources. His reflections point towards a future where security and development are interlinked, advocating for a world where every individual, community, and nation collaborates to create a stable, peaceful, and prosperous global society.

The day-long discussion peppered with insights from on-ground deradicalization practitioners underscored the complexity of addressing radicalism and terrorism. A holistic, collaborative, and proactive approach that integrates social, economic, and technological strategies is essential for achieving long-term peace and security. This multifaceted strategy, as proposed by Honasan, calls for a substantial reevaluation of current practices and seeks to foster a more inclusive, peaceful, and equitable global community.

Academic and practical insights on deradicalization

During the Round Table Discussion on Deradicalization, a panel of distinguished experts from the academia and deradicalization program implementors shared their specialized insights into the multifaceted issue of violent extremism in the BARMM. Their profound understanding of the region provided a rich backdrop for their presentations.

Dr. Acram Latiph from Mindanao State University offered an in-depth analysis rooted in his extensive research on economic and conflict studies. He illustrated how poverty, unemployment, and systemic inequality, collectively act as a breeding ground for extremist ideologies. Employing the "violent extremism tree" metaphor, Dr. Latiph depicted socio-economic grievances as the roots that nourish radical behaviors. He stressed that only through economic policies that tackle these core issues can we prevent the growth of radical sentiments. Advocating for policies that ensure access to legitimate employment and equitable economic growth, Dr. Latiph emphasized these steps as essential to dismantling the environments conducive to extremism (Latiph, 2024). He further insisted on the necessity of culturally sensitive deradicalization efforts that incorporate local norms and involve community leaders in traditional conflict-resolution processes (Latiph, 2024).

Dr. Mark Anthony Torres from the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology explored the psychological mechanisms that sustain extremism. He analyzed the construction of "enemy images"—psychologically and socially constructed depictions of adversaries as inherently evil or sub-human. These depictions facilitate the rationalization of extreme measures. Dr. Torres showed how such images are propagated through parental narratives and further solidified by community leaders and educators, embedding deep-seated biases from a young age. He advocated for community storytelling workshops and educational reforms aimed at presenting balanced historical views to disrupt these deep-

rooted enemy images and reduce the susceptibility of the youth to extremist ideologies (Torres, 2024).

In one of the open forums during the event, Dr. Mario Aguja from Mindanao State University-General Santos City critiqued the narrow scope of traditional counterterrorism strategies and championed a "whole-of-nation" approach. He argued that integrating educational, healthcare, and economic developmental aspects enhances the societal infrastructure, thus fighting terrorism and bolstering societal resilience against radical ideologies more effectively

Dr. Christine Yambao of Western Mindanao State University addressed the specific vulnerabilities of youths in conflict-affected areas that are exploited by groups like Abu Sayyaf for recruitment. Her extensive research indicated that a critical lack of educational and religious infrastructure combined with a normalization of violence deeply affects these youths, making them prime targets for recruitment. She noted how children in these areas grow accustomed to violence, which becomes a normalized backdrop of their daily lives. Dr. Yambao emphasized the need for psychosocial support tailored to these unique community challenges, advocating for comprehensive community-driven initiatives that can address both the immediate and extended needs of affected populations, thereby fostering sustainable peace and rebuilding communities (Yambao, 2024).



Various stakeholders from civil society and the government actively engaged each other to discuss effective ways to address radicalization.

Cultural and narrative changes

Dr. Torres and Dr. Latiph both highlighted the crucial role of shifting cultural narratives and societal norms that have historically supported violent practices. They proposed that community-driven engagement and education are vital in promoting non-violent conflict resolution strategies. Dr. Latiph shared compelling anecdotes from his fieldwork, revealing how personal and community experiences of extremism provide essential insights into the socio-political dynamics at play. He emphasized that empowering communities to create

their own narratives of resilience and resistance against extremism can be a potent tool in the broader fight against radicalization. These narratives, rooted in the community's experiences and cultural frameworks, not only foster a sense of agency but also build hope among community members, making them less susceptible to extremist ideologies (Latiph, 2024).

Dr. Torres also stressed the importance of promoting accurate and unbiased historical documentation. Supporting local historians and researchers in crafting factual accounts of past conflicts is pivotal in diminishing the impact of skewed narratives and fostering a more cohesive and understanding society.

The comprehensive insights from Drs. Latiph, Torres, Aguja, and Yambao presented a dynamic and multidimensional blueprint for combating violent extremism in the BARMM. Their strategies, addressing economic, psychological, educational, and cultural drivers of radicalization, advocate for a holistic approach that ensures counterterrorism efforts are not only effective but also culturally sensitive and economically viable. This strategic alignment aims to foster a resilient and prosperous community and promote long-term peace and stability in the region.

Recommendations for strengthening deradicalization efforts

The Round Table Discussion on Deradicalization provided profound insights into the multifaceted nature of radicalization in the Philippines. The deliberations confirmed that effective deradicalization extends beyond countering extremist ideologies, and necessitates addressing the intricate tapestry of socio-economic, educational, psychological, and cultural factors that contribute to radicalization.

Drawing from the depth of discussions and expert insights, several targeted recommendations emerge to enhance deradicalization efforts in the Philippines:

- **Enhance community engagement:** Deepen the involvement of local communities in both the development and execution of deradicalization programs. Manlupig of Balay Mindanaw highlighted, "Local leaders and community elders hold the key to changing hearts and minds. Their involvement can transform deradicalization from a top-down effort to a community-owned process" (Manlupig, 2024).
- **Strengthen socio-economic development initiatives:** Tackle the root causes of radicalization by improving access to economic opportunities. Initiatives should focus on creating sustainable livelihoods and reducing poverty, which are often exploited by extremist groups. Dr. Latiph underscored this by noting, "Providing stable, rewarding employment can not only draw people away from radical paths but also restore hope and a sense of purpose to vulnerable populations" (Latiph, 2024).
- **Expand educational programs:** Broaden educational efforts to foster critical thinking and resilience against extremist ideologies. Prof. Hapal stressed, "Education is our most powerful weapon against radicalization, equipping our youth

with the capacity to think critically and empathize with others" (Hapal, 2024). These programs should also include elements of digital literacy to combat the spread of extremist content online.

- **Bolster psychological support services:** Offer comprehensive mental health support to individuals at risk of radicalization and those undergoing deradicalization. Such support is crucial in addressing the psychological wounds that may push individuals towards or keep them within extremist circles.
- **Utilize technology in monitoring and prevention:** Implement advanced technological solutions to monitor online behaviors and prevent the spread of extremist ideologies. Lt. Col. Chavez-Arceo discussed the potential of technology, "Innovative monitoring tools and algorithms are essential in the digital age, helping us to identify and intervene in potential radicalization processes early on" (Chavez-Arceo, 2024).
- **Ensure sustainability of programs:** Guarantee long-term funding and support for deradicalization initiatives to ensure they are not vulnerable to political and economic fluctuations. This includes embedding these programs within national security strategies to secure consistent backing.
- **Foster collaboration across sectors:** Encourage stronger coordination between government agencies, NGOs, international bodies, and private sector partners to unify efforts and share resources and knowledge effectively.
- **Commit to ongoing evaluation and research:** Develop robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impacts of deradicalization programs, which are vital for refining strategies and demonstrating their value. Dr. Torres suggested, "Continuous research and adaptation based on empirical data are crucial to keeping our approaches both relevant and effective" (Torres, 2024).

In the Round Table Discussion, there was a strong consensus on the importance of understanding and addressing the multifaceted processes leading to radicalization. There is only one path forward, and it requires a multifaceted strategy that respects the dignity and complexity of individuals and communities. In implementing these recommendations, the Philippines can effectively counter radicalization as well as foster a more inclusive, equitable, and resilient society.

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