



Climate Change Adaptation,
Dispossession, and Displacement
(CiCADD) Project



Research Institute for
Mindanao Culture
(RIMCU)

Upcoming International Conference Brings Mindanao Community Knowledge into Global Dialogue on Decolonization

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The International Online Conference, **"Towards Alternative World Making: A Dialog on Ending Imperialism and Dismantling the Coloniality of Power,"** will be held online from **August 22-24, 2026**, and will bring together scholars, researchers, activists, practitioners, and communities from around the globe. This three-day event provides a platform for discussion on decolonization, alternative futures, and the knowledge and practices that have emerged from the experiences of the Global Majority.

The conference is organized by The Pluriversity Lahore, the Center for Critical Peace Studies at the University of Management and Technology, and a group of international co-organizers. It aims to move discussions on decolonization out of the academic spaces and into conversation with marginalized communities, practitioners and initiatives across the Global South. The idea is to go beyond recognizing colonial structures and to imagine and develop alternative political, social, and epistemic alternatives.

The conference covers a wide range of interconnected concerns, including the coloniality of knowledge, intellectual imperialism and academic dependency, South–South dialogue and solidarity, traditional peoples' knowledge, social movements, alternative world-making, and ecology, climate, and disaster.

Contributing to this international conversation from Mindanao, Philippines, representing RIMCU and CiCADD project, Dr. Chona R. Echavez and Leah Wilfreda E. Pilongo will present the paper "Decolonizing Climate Adaptation from the Ground Up: Co-Producing Knowledge on Displacement, Dispossession, and Resilience in a Medium-Sized City in Mindanao, Philippines." The presentation draws from the Climate Change Adaptation, Displacement and Dispossession (CiCADD) study in Cagayan de Oro City and asks a basic but important question: *Whose knowledge counts when we decide whether climate adaptation has worked?*

Rather than positioning affected communities only as research participants or beneficiaries, the study approaches them as knowledge holders and co-producers of knowledge. Stakeholder consultations, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, transect walks, participatory

mapping and validation, and a household survey were brought together in an iterative research process in which knowledge was returned to communities and local stakeholders for dialogue.

The results suggest a need to scrutinize the typical metrics of adaption success more closely. Flood-control infrastructure and relocation can minimize the physical vulnerability to floods for some homes, but greater physical protection does not necessarily translate into increased resilience. Relocation can also affect livelihoods, mobility expenses, social networks, access to services, and the everyday life of a community. And so adaptation may lessen one type of vulnerability but create or transfer another.

The paper contributes a grounded perspective from Mindanao to the broader discourse on alternative world-making at the conference. It shows that decolonizing climate adaptation is not merely a matter of incorporating community voices into solutions developed elsewhere. It requires reevaluating who has the authority to define risk, define success, and conceive potential outcomes.

In essence, it is a simple transition from consultation to co-design, from beneficiaries to co-producers, and from adaptation for communities to adaptation knowledge and futures developed with communities.

The August conference offers an opportunity to place this experience from Cagayan de Oro in conversation with other struggles, knowledge traditions, and possibilities emerging across the Global South—bringing local experiences into a wider dialogue about how to make more just, inclusive, and community-grounded futures.