

# Informal Settlers of Metro Manila, Philippines Raise Their Voices on GDAMS

The poor, marginalized and homeless, such as thousands of informal settlers of Navotas City, Metro Manila, Philippines, bear the brunt of the negative impacts of government policies that do not prioritize provision of services to its poor population.

To commemorate the Global Day of Action on Military Spending in the Philippines, the Stop the War Coalition–Philippines (STWC), Peace Women Partners (PWP), and Samahan ng Mamamayan–Zone One Tondo Inc (SM–ZOTO Inc) brought together children, young people and women who conducted simultaneous workshops on art, music and theater to interpret what GDAMS means to them last April 13.

Ten children and young people designed posters on the theme: Pagkain, Trabaho at Edukasyon, Hindi Bala, Hindi Kanyon, (Food, Jobs and Education, Not Bullets, Not Cannons) which has been selected as the Philippine Call for the GDAMS campaign. The winning poster was created by Mary Joy Suarez, an SM–ZOTO volunteer who had to drop out of college. The group also made a streamer with the GDAMS slogan, which they paraded in the streets of Dagatdagatan before it was set up in the GDAMS forum held at an evacuation center in Pescadores, Navotas, Philippines.

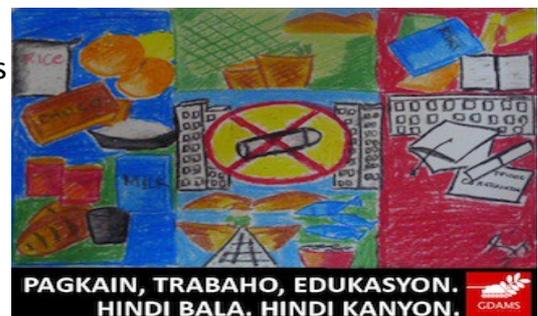


The Forum on GDAMS was attended by around 100 men, women and children, who have been staying in evacuation centers after they were displaced by typhoon Pedring that hit Navotas in 2011. Representatives from the GDAMS Philippine Organizing Committee, Atty. Cora Fabros of STWC–Philippines and Merci Angeles (PWP), spoke to the informal settlers about the global and national significance of GDAMS. Speakers from the community spoke on what GDAMS means to them, and on their demands from the government:



Pagkain, Trabaho at Edukasyon, Hindi Bala, Hindi Kanyon  
Food, Jobs and Education, Not Bullets, Not Cannons

The winning poster during the art workshop was created by Mary Joy Suarez.



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