



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR FOR EXTENSION SERVICES

University of Southern Mindanao Extension Program Profile (2024–2026)

The **University of Southern Mindanao (USM)**, located in Kabacan, Cotabato, operates its community extension services under the foundational mandate: **“Unity in Diversity and Sustainable Development in Mindanao through Quality and Relevant Education”**. Administered by the **Office of the Director for Extension Services**, USM’s extension initiatives from 2024 to 2026 represent a highly structured, multi-sectoral approach to regional development. By mobilizing specialized colleges, local campus units, and external funding streams, the university delivers targeted interventions to conflict-affected farmers, indigenous peoples (IPs), public school educators, and marginalized groups across Central Mindanao.

This profile details the strategic themes, operational frameworks, and institutional projects that comprise the USM Extension Roadmap over this three-year period.

Theme 1: Agricultural Innovation, Food Security, and Sustainable Livelihoods

Agricultural development serves as a major pillar of USM's extension operations, focusing on the transfer of technical expertise, capacity building, and enterprise development to improve food security and household incomes.

- **Sustainable Corn and Crop Production:** In 2024, the university launched **CORN PLUS (Promoting Local Upliftment through Sustainable Corn Initiatives)**, managed by Ms. Nenita E. Olero and Ms. Janice M. Bangoy with a **Fund 164** allocation of Php 150,000.00. This initiative was complemented by an externally funded project focused on the **Production of Organic Corn in Saniag, Ampatuan, Maguindanao**, led by Dr. Mary Joy S. Cañolas with a budget of Php 255,450.00.
- **Conflict Resolution and Livelihood Restoration:** USM implemented the **Going Bananas Project** in Carmen, Cotabato. Led by Mr. Rezin Cabantug and supported with Php 600,000.00 in external funding from partners including AidEnvironment and Treelife, this project restored agricultural livelihoods for conflict-affected farmers.
- **Provincial Agrarian Capacitation:** A cornerstone project in 2024 was the **Conduct of Re-Echo Training to Farmers’ Cooperatives/Associations on Soil Sampling, Analysis, and Fertilizer Management on Site**, funded at Php 3,282,217.00. Managed by Dr. Francisco Gil N. Garcia and a multi-unit team, this massive training reached farmers across the provinces of Maguindanao del Sur, Maguindanao del Norte, and the Special Geographic Area (SGA).
- **Livelihood Diversification and Food Technology:** The focus on practical food and feed technologies expanded into 2026. Prof. Sandra Joy P. Imlan led the **Empowering Bangsamoro Women through Kaong (Arenga pinnata) Syrup and Vinegar Production** project, backed by Php 50,000.00. To support aquaculture and animal husbandry, the university ran **BLUE FEEDS: Strengthening Blue Economy thru Feed Formulation Technology Skills Training** under Prof. Pia Amabelle M. Flores with a Php 50,000.00 budget. Additionally, the **Mushroom Livelihood Development Program** was deployed in Barangay Montay, Libungan, Cotabato by Prof. Basser L. Wagia to support oyster and *Volvariella* growers.
- **Urban Gardening and Healthy Products:** Institutional projects also included the **Natural Farming Systems Extension Project for Sustainable Community Garden in Barangay Pinamaton (Phase 2)** under Prof. Gelyn V. Amilbahar, as well as the **SMART SNACKS** project led by Ms. Janice M. Bangoy (Php 150,000.00) in 2024. Enterprise development

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for cultural food traditions was sustained through the **CBDEM-Delicacies** program led by Prof. Roy B. Gacus, progressing from a Php 60,000.00 baseline in 2024 to **Phase 3** in 2026 with a Php 100,000.00 budget.

Theme 2: Indigenous Peoples (IP) Empowerment and Cultural Preservation

Preserving traditional heritage while addressing socioeconomic challenges within indigenous communities represents a central commitment of the USM Extension Service.

- **The UNIK Kasunayan Program (2025):** Led by Glyn B. Gabano Magbanua, this umbrella program focused on integrated IP community development. It featured **Project 1: Empowering Indigenous Voices**, led by Prof. Anamarie Uyangurin, which consisted of developing communication skills for cultural masters, creating local-language disaster mitigation materials under Prof. Jovelyn F. Gesulga, and revitalizing the Bagobo-Tagabawa artistic tradition through sewing and breadmaking under Prof. Ma. Karysa F. Garcia. This transitioned into a dedicated **Phase II** in 2026 under the same core leadership (Php 50,000.00).
- **The HERO Program in Bongolanon:** Spanning tourism development and local upskilling, the **HERO (Harnessing Efforts for Recovery Operations) Program** in Bongolanon, Magpet, Cotabato was spearheaded by Prof. Avegale S. Roy. It established a strong local tourism brand under Prof. Roy and Prof. Apple Ureta, upskilled Manobo soft-broom makers using Tahiti Depollinators under Prof. Melecio Cordero, Jr., and restored local businesses under Prof. Analyn Gonzales and Prof. Jay-Ar Vildac.
- **Literacy and Local-Language Advocacy:** The **SULAT** project in 2026, led by Prof. Elangbai B. Dimasingkil (Php 50,000.00), strengthened understanding, literacy, advocacy, and tourism for B'laan youth, educators, and community guides. This was structurally supported by localized translation efforts, such as Dr. Radji A. Macatabon's 2024 project translating essential breastfeeding benefits and techniques into the **Wikang Teduray** (Php 60,000.00).

Theme 3: Health, Psychosocial Support, and Social Reintegration

USM addresses the biological, sociological, and psychological needs of diverse student and community populations, with a particular focus on vulnerable and high-risk groups.

- **Youth Mental Health Initiatives:** In 2024, Prof. Myka Ivana P. Sorilla directed a targeted intervention titled **Depression, Anxiety and Stress: Psychoeducation and Psychosocial Intervention for High Scoring Students of Gil Manalo High School** in Barangay Katidtuan, Kabacan (Php 60,000.00). This work was institutionalized and scaled in 2026 under Prof. Christine Joy B. Gacia as **Towards a Healthy Wellbeing – Phase II**, receiving a Php 50,000.00 budget to provide holistic mental health support, risk assessment, and physical wellness.
- **Civic Safety and Reintegration:** Civic and legal protection was promoted through the **Safe Spaces** project led by Prof. Mariz P. Balquin in 2024, fighting sexual harassment through education and empowerment (Php 60,000.00). In 2026, this framework was extended to correctional rehabilitation with the **Pathways to Reintegration** project, which empowered Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) through personal development and skills training.
- **Community Wellness and Physical Health:** Ongoing community health support was facilitated by **CHS CARES** under Prof. Agripino N. Agulo, Jr. In 2025, this included the

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traditional and alternative healthcare training component of the UNIK healthy habitats project, alongside **Gameplan 2026**, a sports development and competitive readiness program for secondary schools led by Prof. Moreno B. Java Jr. (Php 50,000.00).

Theme 4: Educational Literacy, Pedagogy, and Technology Transfer

USM acts as a direct developmental partner to the Department of Education (DepEd) and remote barangays, raising local literacy standards and training the next generation of educators.

- **Linguistic and Basic Literacy Programs:** Basic competencies were directly targeted in remote sectors, notably through the **LiNumBarSi (Literacy and Numeracy in Barangay Simone)** project in 2026, led by Prof. Debbie Marie Verzosa (Php 36,000.00), and the **BALABAG Extension Program** in 2024, building community capacity in partner barangays.
- **In-Service Teacher Capacitation:** Professional development for active educators was sustained through **Project STAR-CAMP** in 2026, led by Prof. Paul John B. Ongcoy, which capacitated in-service teachers with contextualized science and mathematics pedagogies (Php 36,000.00). This was complemented by the Graduate School's **Project LEAD (Leadership & Education Advancement through Development)**, led by Prof. Ongcoy and Prof. Eimer M. Estilloso, supporting DepEd educators and social leaders.
- **STEM and Robotics Integration:** Science and engineering skills were delivered directly to schools through **Project CEInTRix (Science Education and Innovation Through Robotix)**, run by Engr. Maricel G. Dayaday to foster early technological literacy.

Theme 5: Institutional Monitoring, Evaluation, and Digital Infrastructure

To sustain and measure the long-term impacts of its regional programming, USM has developed robust monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge-dissemination platforms.

- **Knowledge Transfer and Colloquia:** In 2024, the **SPARK** project (Scholars Presenting Advanced Research Knowledge), led by Dr. Mary Joy S. Cañolas (Php 220,855.00), established a reliable forum for public research dissemination through Colloquia, Kapihan, and TekTalks. It worked alongside **CONNECT** (Php 322,700.00), which formalized collaborative networking for community transformation.
- **M&E Metrics Standardization:** To ensure professional oversight, USM introduced standardized evaluation parameters. This was driven by the **UNIK 2025 Project 5** on monitoring and evaluation under Prof. Glyn G. Magbanua, and consolidated into the 2026 project, **Monitoring and Evaluating the Progress and Impact of USM Extension Projects**, led by Ms. Rahima A. Cabunto (Php 129,000.00).
- **The EKPCCH Project:** Centralizing all program achievements, USM funded the **Extension Knowledge Portal and Communication Hub (EKPCCH Project)** in 2026 with Php 400,000.00. Led by Ms. Ritchel O. Torres and a multi-disciplinary team, the portal serves as a live, centralized digital hub designed to track, coordinate, and share the collective impacts of USM's extension roadmap.