

The Mindanao Displacement Dashboard is a monthly publication of the Protection Cluster in Mindanao, Philippines which is co-led by UNHCR with the Department of Social Welfare and Development. This publication aims to provide an overview of the protection environment of displacement incidents in Mindanao for each month. Displacement incidents were collected with the support of Protection Cluster members in Mindanao.



Lupon, Davao Oriental AFP vs NPA Armed Encounter

An armed encounter between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the New Peoples' Army (NPA) was reported at Sitio Marganda, Barangay Calapagan in the municipality of Lupon, Davao Oriental province on 01 March. The firefight displaced

some 130 families (estimated 650 persons) from their homes including villagers from neighboring sitios of Bajada, Sampaguita and Waling-waling for fear that they might get caught in the crossfire. Classes at elementary and high school levels were

cancelled as the schools were used as evacuation centers for IDPs. Some IDPs also stayed in the barangay hall while others fled to their relatives' homes in as far as Mati City. The IDPs returned home after three days.



San Miguel, Surigao Del Sur Military Operation against NPA

About 33 families (estimated 172 persons) from the Manobo community of sitio Barobuan, Barangay Carrmata in the municipality of San Miguel fled their homes

on 12 March following an armed encounter between the 2nd Special Forces of the AFP and the NPA. The incident came after local security forces reportedly signed a

declaration with the provincial government "to liberate the province from rebel insurgency". The province still hosts the biggest displaced IP population in Mindanao.



Al Barka, Basilan AFP vs ASG Conflict

Since launching its Focused Military Operation in the island provinces early last year, the AFP has continued its pursuit operations against members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and other lawless elements. On 24 - 26 March, the AFP along with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)

and the Barangay Police Action Team (BPAT) engaged the ASG in armed clashes at Barangay Danapah in the municipality of Al Barka, Basilan province causing some 1,755 families (estimated 7,020 persons) to flee their homes. As per the situation report of ARMM Humanitarian Emergency Action

and Response Team (HEART) dated 29 March, the number of displaced may be as high as 8,755 persons. The majority of the displaced families are staying with their relatives while others are being sheltered in identified evacuation centres such as health centres, Islamic schools and municipal halls.



Lack of disaggregated information of the displaced population due to conflict hampers a targeted humanitarian response especially to persons with specific needs.
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Maguindanao Protracted Displacement: AFP's LEO against BIFF

In March 2016, several thousand Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) continue to live in substandard conditions in evacuation centers and host communities without adequate level of material support.

Since the end of February 2016, the number of IDPs in the province of Maguindanao has climbed from 6,822 families (estimated 34,110 persons) to 7,768 families (estimated 38,840 persons) in six (6) municipalities (Datu Salibo, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Guindulungan, Shariff Aguak, Shariff Saydona Mustapha and Talayan) affected by the Law Enforcement Operations (LEO) launched by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in Maguindanao.

There are two primary reasons for the increase in the number of displaced during the reporting period. First, the pre-emptive evacuation of 1,418 families (estimated 7,090 persons) from Guindulungan and Talayan on 02 March due to the presence of the military and the subsequent fear of armed encounters with the BIFF. Second, the displacement of around 606 families (estimated 3,030 persons) in Barangay Madia in Datu Saudi Ampatuan on 22 March as a result of a firefight close to an evacuation center.

During that period, seven (7) incidents of armed confrontation with BIFF were recorded. BIFF continues the harassment of military detachments and setting of roadside bombs, including in areas where civilians also regularly commute. IDP

leaders and barangay officials reported during protection monitoring missions of UNHCR that military shelling close to civilian areas and evacuation centers in Barangay Madia and Sambulawan have caused destruction of civilian dwellings and properties. Minor injuries among civilians and the death of an elderly due to cardiac arrest during mortar shelling in Datu Saudi Ampatuan have also been reported.

The substandard living conditions in evacuation centers is causing increasing concern as displacement gets prolonged. Most of the displaced families live in unpartitioned, cramped spaces and provision of assistance such as food, drinking water and medicine is limited. The drought brought about by El Niño has compounded the already dire situation of IDPs. This condition compels the IDPs to visit their farms during day time amidst the dangerous security situation, as well as women and girls to work as household help for extremely low wages in order to be able to provide food for their families. Likewise, IDPs in home-based settings find themselves either sharing space with their relatives or building makeshift shelters made of patched tarpaulins and tattered tents along highways.

IDPs interviewed explained their reluctance to return due to their fear of armed encounters between the AFP and the BIFF combined with uncertainty regarding the duration and geographic scope of the Law Enforcement Operations.



Makilala, North Cotabato NPA Harassment

Some 50 families (estimated 250 persons) were forcibly displaced when suspected members of the New Peoples' Army (NPA) attacked the detachment of the 72nd Infantry Battalion in Sitio Alang-alang, near a civilian

- populated area in Barangay Kisante, Makilala municipality, North Cotabato on 31 March. A seven-month-old baby was killed by a stray bullet amidst the encounter while two minors were hit by shrapnel shells.



Guindulungan, Maguindanao Power Struggle

Alongside the Law Enforcement Operation in Maguindanao, minor and random firefights are also being reported among civilians. On 28 March, armed clashes took place between men who are allegedly affiliated with the BIFF and a local official in Barangay

Bario Muslim, Guindulungan municipality that triggered the displacement of around 370 families (estimated 1,850 persons). The groups are reported to be locked in a power struggle. The displaced families took shelter with their relatives in the adjacent barangay.



Pagalungan, Maguindanao Political Tension

Approximately 610 families (estimated 2,434 persons) were forcibly displaced on 30 March due to armed clashes in Sitio Tuka, Barangay Damalagak in Pagalungan, Maguindanao. Tensions started when members of a group of the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) was attacked by armed men reported to be affiliated with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), allegedly as a result of a land dispute. Local authorities predict that the

fighting might escalate as both parties have been observed to augment their numbers. Meanwhile, the IDPs have sought refuge in host families in the neighboring town of Pikit, North Cotabato and some have built make-shift shelters at the town hall of Pagalungan. The Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO) has identified the immediate needs of IDPs as water, food and medicines.

Butig Protracted Displacement

Civilians who were forced to flee their homes at the height of the fighting between the AFP and a radical group in Butig, Lanao del Sur in February 2016 are reported to be slowly returning to their places of origin as of mid-March.

Nevertheless, as per information provided by ARMM Department of Social Welfare and Development on 23 March, around 4,712 families (estimated 22,949 persons) remain displaced in schools, madrasahs and host communities. They are reportedly still hesitant to return due to fear that fighting may flare up again as members of the Maute group still remain at large.

Although local authorities have provided emergency assistance to some IDP communities, Protection Cluster members in the province report persistent assistance gaps in the evacuation centers and host communities. This particularly pertains to food assistance as a majority of the displaced rely on their farms for living, which they currently cannot access. Plastic sheeting is also needed; some families have been observed to use sacks and personal garments as shelter coverage. Immediate psychosocial activities are also reported to be a critical need for those displaced who suffer from trauma.

Zamboanga City Protracted Displacement

Thirty (30) months following armed conflict between government forces and a faction of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) that displaced 120,000 people in Zamboanga City, durable solutions continue to be elusive for about 3,947 displaced families (estimated 22,976 persons) who remain in transitory sites and among the host community.

Conditions remain difficult for the 2,723 families (estimated 15,338 persons) in transitory sites who are beset with concerns related to poor access to health services, lack of electricity, and inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities. Access to water has become a serious concern in transitory sites as El Niño continues to cause widespread water shortage across the province. Local authorities are trying to respond to this concern by trucking water to transitory sites. However, authorities' ability to fully fill the water gap in transitory sites remains limited as their resources are overstretched in responding to water shortages across the city.

Meanwhile, a significant number of home-based IDPs who are not yet included in the government beneficiary list continue to be in need of support, particularly relating to food, livelihoods and durable solutions. The City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO) has agreed that the initially re-profiled and verified 1,224 home-based IDP families (estimated 7,638 persons) will be used as an official reference for any government rehabilitation assistance. It is recommended to continue the re-profiling of the remaining identified 3,148 families (estimated 15,740 persons) by the city government to include them in the master list.

The slow progress in the implementation of the Zamboanga Roadmap to Recovery and Reconstruction (Z3R) programme, primarily attributed to the lengthy process of acquiring access road and the delays in the installation of sanitation and other facilities in completed permanent shelters, has stalled relocation, while the inclusion of the most vulnerable and landless displaced population in the

government's rehabilitation programmes has not been initiated pending the validation of those 'untagged' or thus far unregistered IDPs. By the end of March, the pace in the construction of permanent shelters has not improved since February and stands at 45% (2,949 shelters) with only 19% of completed shelters awarded. There is still no timeline or concrete information given to IDPs as to when they will be allowed to move to permanent relocation sites.

Regarding the process of awarding permanent shelters to achieve durable solutions, Protection Cluster continues to advocate for the full implementation of the Code of Beneficiary Selection and its Implementing Rules and Regulations that were adopted by the City Council in May 2015, as well as the activation of the Committee on Arbitration, Awards and Beneficiary Selection and Grievance Committee in order to ensure that basic protection standards are met.

DISCLAIMER

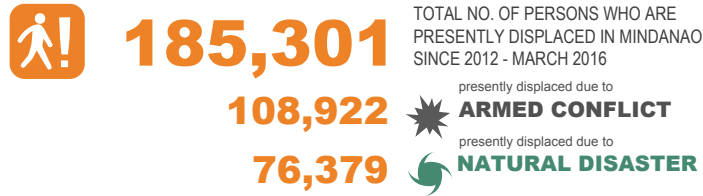
The Monthly Mindanao Displacement Dashboard aims to provide a starting point for information and analysis that can help protection agencies, policy makers and other stakeholders concerning instances of forced displacement or solutions (repatriation, resettlement, integration). The number of people displaced / affected may differ from the number in need of humanitarian assistance. To the extent possible, the terminology used in the Dashboard reflects the *UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* and other sources of international law and practice. The information reported in the Monthly Mindanao Displacement Dashboard has been received from members of the Protection Cluster across Mindanao. Consequently, unreported cases of forced displacement and solutions are not reflected. Updates will be provided as and when more information is received from members. Although efforts are made to verify the data, the UNHCR Mindanao, Philippines takes no responsibility for the incompleteness or inaccuracy of the information. The information provided in this Monthly Mindanao Displacement Dashboard does not necessarily reflect the views of UNHCR or any individual member of the Protection Cluster.



The *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* note that “internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.”

Durable Solutions - UNHCR with Protection Cluster members continue to identify communities that are subjected to protracted displacement over the course of the year to ensure all IDPs are identified and the appropriate attention and resources can be obtained to support finding a durable solution to their displacement.

CURRENT NUMBER OF IDPS IN NEED OF DURABLE SOLUTION



CLARIFICATIONS

Typhoon Pablo displacement - A large number of IDPs remain displaced from Typhoon Pablo in December 2012 in Eastern Mindanao, Region XI who are still in need of a durable solution. Many of these families remain in temporary shelters where local authorities have been slowly obtaining access to land and constructing permanent housing for these IDPs. As of October 2015, there are still an estimated 76,379 IDPs in need of a durable solution in this region.

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS CAUSING DISPLACEMENT IN 2016

	TOTAL IN MARCH 2016		TOTAL SINCE JAN 2016	
	INCIDENTS	DISPLACEMENT (persons)	INCIDENTS	DISPLACEMENT (persons)
ARMED CONFLICT incidents with displacement	8	22,497	21	126,790
NATURAL DISASTER incidents with displacement	0	0	0	0

DISPLACEMENT MOVEMENT IN MARCH 2016 (see details in boxes)



LEGEND

