

Withyou

What's Inside

Hope Beyond Borders

Global Refugee Forum, Cities #WithRefugees

Faces of Hope

Hope in Mindanao

Quick Impact Projects, Share the Gift of Hope



In Brgy. Salman, Ampatuan, Maguindanao, a local sewing and textile business was established on Oct 2019, with the help of Community and Family Services International (CFSI), one of our local protection partners, and in partnership with the local government unit. © UNHCR/Dervin Villarosa

Dear valued donor,

As we look back at the year that passed, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude and honor you for all that you have made possible.

2019 has not been without its challenges, and families continue to flee here in the Philippines and beyond our borders. But you have journeyed with them every step of the way, giving hope to the most vulnerable families at their time of greatest need. **In the face of conflict and calamity, you make them hold on to hope.**

Throughout the year, you have given immediate life-saving aid like solar lamps, kitchen sets, and sleeping mats to families who have fled armed conflict in areas of Mindanao. In places like Syria and Bangladesh, your generosity keeps hope alive for those who still live in transitory sites and face a lack of safe shelter, clean water, and sustainable livelihood.

For more than 190,000 individuals who still live in displacement in Mindanao, your committed support means they can continue to recover and rebuild their lives in dignity and safety. Thanks to you, a group of women in Maguindanao are now running their own sewing and textile business, and a fishing community in Agusan del Norte now feels safer because of newly installed street lights.

You have helped fund thirty of these Quick Impact Projects this year. Your help has also made it possible for us to supplement the protection provided to refugees by the Philippine government, as well as its efforts to support those who are stateless or at risk of statelessness.

The coming year will no doubt bring its own set of challenges as we continue to tackle the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time. But we welcome the new year with new hope because we know we can count on your kindness and support, as we work towards durable solutions for those who need our help the most.

We wish you a meaningful and joyous season, and a blessed new year!

With our warmest regards,

Your UNHCR Philippines family.



Around the world, more than 70 million people are forcibly displaced by violence and persecution. The first ever **Global Refugee Forum**, which will be held on 17-18 December 2019 in Geneva, aims to accelerate actions by governments, the private sector, international institutions and organisations, the non-governmental sector, and civil society in implementing the new **Global Compact on Refugees**.

The Philippines is among the nations that endorsed this global compact, a blueprint that calls for greater support for refugees and the countries that welcome them. To support the Philippine Government in this, UNHCR Philippines works with various sectors of society. Together, we assist and empower refugees to become self-reliant, and enable them to meet their basic needs in a sustainable and dignified manner. One of our partners in the academe, De La Salle University, recently offered a scholarship for English language training to Sunshine, a refugee.



"I want to thank UNHCR who decided to collaborate directly with the refugees from now, and also to thanks to the Philippine government for granting us the warm stay here and to the Filipino people who are warm and friendly. On behalf of the refugee community present here in Philippines, I say

Maraming maraming salamat po!"

- SUNSHINE

Solidarity #WithRefugees

9 cities in the Philippines have signed a statement of solidarity #WithRefugees and joined cities all over the world in promoting inclusion and helping the displaced to help themselves.

SANTA ANA Pampanga
- Mayor Norberto Ross Gamboa

SANTA MARIA Bulacan
- Mayor Russell Pleyto

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SAN JOSE DEL MONTE Bulacan

SANTA ROSA Laguna
- Mayor Arlene Arcillas

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CAINTA Rizal
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Hope for those who are at risk of statelessness

We all want to belong. But for the children, women, and men who are stateless or at risk of statelessness here in the Philippines, the act of belonging doesn't come automatically. Without formal documentation, they cannot easily access health care, schooling, nor housing. They cannot move as freely, nor prove their identity. Thanks to recent UNHCR-supported projects, **they now have a glimmer of hope.**

The **SAMA BAJAU** are an indigenous and nomadic ethnic minority group in the southern part of the Philippines. There are 10,000-15,000 Sama Bajau living in Zamboanga alone, 85% of whom have no birth certificates. A [pilot project](#) that seeks to register 1,500 Sama Bajau commenced in October 2019, with the first batch of birth certificates [turned over this December](#).



"The future is clearer and brighter. It's like you are giving us a kerosene light to brighten our path."
- WANITA ARAJINI

"It will make it easier to have the chance to apply for jobs and find work."

- PIRINA



"I'm top of my class. When I get a good job, I will move my family somewhere else."
- JOLLY TORI



The Philippines joins the international community in its commitment to end statelessness. A signatory to the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, the Philippines is the first Southeast Asian country to adopt international legal standards to keep stateless people from falling into legal limbo. It is also the only country in the region to have signed a National Action Plan (NAP) to End Statelessness.

Aside from the Sama Bajau, other population groups at risk of statelessness include unregistered children, foundlings, children of Filipino descent in migration situations (e.g. the Middle East and Sabah), and persons of Indonesian descent residing in Southern Mindanao.



More than 500 people in the Philippines are **FOUNDLINGS**. They lack identity documents as Filipino citizens, causing difficulties in applying for jobs and even getting married. UNHCR supports the Philippine Government in providing citizenship for foundlings, as part of broader efforts to tackle statelessness.



"As soon as I get a birth certificate, I will marry my partner and become a legal Filipino family."
- RAMIL FELINO



"I feel incomplete as I don't have any document to hold onto. I want to feel like a true Filipino, not a stray."
- RAFAEL ROXAS

Hope for those who are forced to flee

In other parts of the world, hundreds of thousands of innocent people are displaced due to conflict, violence, and persecution. Dropping temperatures, rains, and the harsh winter season are now adding to their suffering and putting many lives at risk. UNHCR teams and partners continue to be on the ground, providing life-saving aid to those who had to leave everything behind.

Amidst these difficult circumstances, hope abounds. For every woman, man, and child forced to flee, there is a story of strength and resilience. We honor them and continue to work together to help rebuild their lives in dignity and safety.

"Now it's winter, all we want is to feel safe... I just wish for one sweet day in our lives, without suffering any harm."

- NADIRA WALU

Syrian Refugee (Bardarash Camp, Dohuk, Iraq)
Single mother who fled the recent conflict in northeastern Syria



"I feel like crying when I see this. We didn't have freedoms in Myanmar. We do here, but I miss my students. Many who completed Grade 6 are here in the camp, working as volunteers with organisations."

- NUR ALAM

Rohingya Refugee (Kutupalong Refugee Camp, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh)
Former headteacher who fled the violence in northern Rakhine State, Myanmar



Faces of Hope

Light in the Darkness

Barangay San Roque, located in Kitcharao, Agusan del Norte, is far from any busy metropolis. Every day, the men take their boats out to fish and the women sell wares. The children play or go to school. And every day, all of them try to be home before sundown.


“Before there were no street lights in our place, it’s very dark outside. Children and even adults like us are afraid to venture outside at night,” says Maricel Rangas, a 38-year-old health worker and mother.

Her fears are not unfounded. Many of them have experienced and reported theft. Worse still are the incidents of rape and killings. All these crimes happen at the dead of night, when it’s too dark for anyone to see.

The villagers eventually had enough and decided it was time that their barangay becomes a safer place. Consultations were held with partners and municipal officials including those in the Mayor’s Office, Municipal Risk Reduction Office, and Municipal Planning Development Office. They proposed a simple, but effective solution – street lights.

This Quick Impact Project (QIP) was funded by UNHCR Philippines, in partnership with ACCORD. Four months after the initial consultation, Barangay San Roque now has 30 new street lights. Aside from being a crime deterrent, the street lights also benefit the fisher folk who often have to get up before dawn in order to earn a livelihood.

The villagers will work to ensure that the lights do not go out. They have agreed to collect PHP 5 from each household for maintenance. Together with their community officials, everyone will be responsible for making sure that the street lights will remain functional.







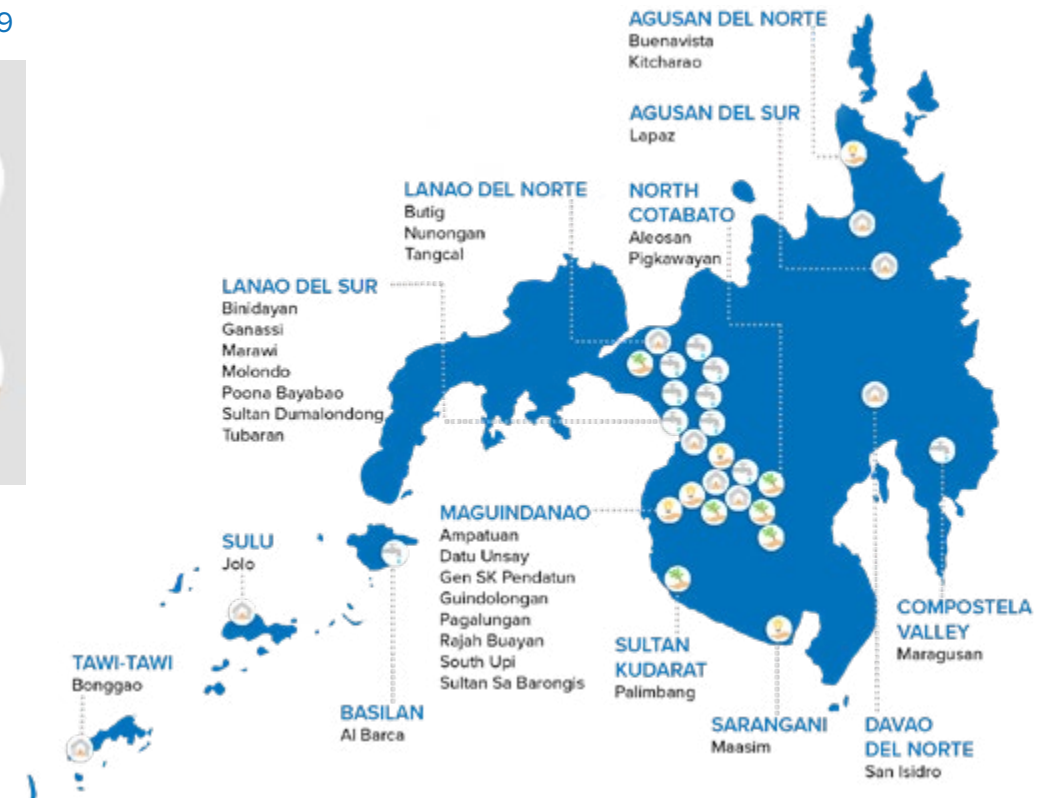
The installation of 30 new streetlights in Brgy. San Roque is one of the Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) implemented in Mindanao for 2019. These projects are made possible through the support of donors like you, and are implemented in collaboration with partners like ACCORD.

“The children are no longer afraid. For a mother like me, my worries are lessened.”

30,000+ INDIVIDUALS

are benefiting from the 30 Quick Impact Projects you helped fund this 2019

Covering four sectors:

196,528 INDIVIDUALS are currently displaced in Mindanao

Source: Protection Cluster Displacement Dashboard, Oct 2019

They flee due to conflict and calamity. Many still live in evacuation centers and transitory sites, short of basic needs, livelihood and education opportunities.

The recent earthquakes have put even more lives at risk, adding new displacement and suffering to a people who have already endured so much.

This season of giving, we invite you to bring hope and cheer to forcibly displaced families in Mindanao.

donate.unhcr.ph/sharehope

Share the *Gift of Hope*

P10,000 can deliver low-cost high impact projects so that forcibly displaced families will have hope for a better future.

P5,000 will help us provide core relief items like blankets, tarpaulins, and sheeting so families can have a safe place to sleep

P3,000 will help us deliver much needed items such as kitchen sets and hygiene kits for the forcibly displaced families

Maraming salamat!

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This 2019, you have given help, hope, and home to forcibly displaced families here in the Philippines and beyond.

Thank you for your generosity and support.

SHARE THE

*Gift of
Hope*

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