

In this issue

- Zamboanga and Basilan emergency P.1
- Monsoons cause flooding in Luzon P.2
- DRR ramp up in Bopha areas P.3

HIGHLIGHTS

- Rising displacement in Zamboanga and Basilan
- Insecurity prevents return of IDPs
- Southwest Monsoons cause havoc
- Developing preparedness at community level

FIGURES

Displacements

Estimated # of affected people	248,845
# of displaced Zamboanga	73,148
# of displaced Basilan	13,540
Injured	158
Deaths	90

Source: Protection Cluster, 17 September 2013

FUNDING

Bopha Response

67.8 million
requested (US\$)

64% funded

Mindanao excluding Bopha

27.4 million
requested (US\$)

17% funded

Source: Financial Tracking Service



Almost 97,000 people displaced by fighting

Large displacement in Zamboanga and Basilan

The week-long conflict in Zamboanga city and Basilan province between elements of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has affected about 249,000 people, according to the Protection Cluster (17 September).

The crisis area has seen at least 83,148 displaced in Zamboanga city (71,576 inside 33 evacuation centres with 11,622 outside the centres). The number of displacements more than quadrupled since last Thursday as government authorities issued a forced evacuation order and fighting continued.

There are an estimated 13,540 displaced people in seven evacuation centres in Basilan; 4,579 inside evacuation centres and 8,961 outside the centres (Protection Cluster, 17 September).

Initial rapid needs assessments, conducted by non-government organization partners in Zamboanga city evacuation centres, reported overcrowding and lack of basic facilities in the centers. Many of the displaced are living in makeshift tents in open public areas or sleeping in the open along the sidewalks with inadequate WASH facilities. There are reports of child birth deliveries in the centres and along the highway, without adequate assistance.

Water containers, hygiene kits, mats, blankets and medicines are all required. Although there are reports that food stocks are sufficient to meet the current needs in the centres, the sudden influx of displaced is posing challenges in food distribution due to a lack of personnel and equipment.

Zamboanga and Basilan Emergency Situation Report available on: <http://bit.ly/198uaDU>

Continuing insecurity prevents return of IDPs

Intermittent clashes continues in Maguindanao and North Cotabato

Fighting between the AFP and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) which intensified since last July continued in Maguindanao and North Cotabato provinces during the past month, causing further displacement and preventing families returning home.



Datu Piang, Maguindanao (4 September 2013) – Children affected by AFP-BIFF conflict in a transition site two months after displacement
Credit: OCHA

In Pikit municipality, North Cotabato, 411 families (2,055 people) still remain in evacuation centres while 1,472 families (7,360 people) are outside the centres according to the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office on 2 September. While local authorities are generally able to provide immediate relief assistance, prolonged displacement has strained available resources of host communities.

During a field visit to a transition site in Datu Piang municipality, Maguindanao on 4 September, families displaced by the conflict continue to live in makeshift shelters and experience water, sanitation, hygiene and protection concerns. Dang and her two children who fled from their village in Shariff Saydona Mustapha municipality over two months ago are still unable to return home. "We are afraid to go back home; mortar shelling and fighting happens almost every day," said Dang, "We are surviving by gathering *kang kong* (water spinach) by the marsh and we sell it at the local market." Concern over the presence of unexploded ordnance devices in areas affected by the on-going conflict was also reported by field partners.

According to the Protection Cluster, at least 2,000 people are in a protracted displacement situation in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and 90,800 experienced multiple displacements as of July. In Region XII, which includes North Cotabato, 20,800 people were displaced multiple times while protracted cases are still to be verified.

39th round of peace negotiations conclude

Substantial progress in the discussions towards finalizing the annexes on power-sharing and normalization to the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro concluded in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The 39th round of Exploratory Talks between the negotiating panels of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) were conducted between 22 and 25 August 2013.

The peace panels discussed the composition of the Independent Commission on Policing and the possibility of convening the body during the next meeting according to the GPH-MILF joint statement. The talks also provided an opportunity for observers from the Philippine House of Representatives and the Bangsamoro Transition Commission to hold informal dialogue. The next round of negotiations is due to be held in September.

Southwest monsoon cause flooding in Luzon

Humanitarian response in Manila and beyond

Heavy rains caused by the southwest monsoon fell in August and left 60 per cent of Manila under water with 600 mm of rain recorded by the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services (PAGASA) over a 24 hour period in Manila Bay. Also adversely affected were the low-lying areas of Pampanga, Bulacan, Laguna and Rizal.

The rains, which started on 17 August, left 27 dead and four missing while damage to infrastructure and agriculture was estimated at more than US\$15 million. There were 689,527 families, almost 3.1 million people affected while 1,831 houses were damaged, 625 of which were beyond repair (National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC), 30 August 2013).



Lunchtime for children at an evacuation centre set up after the Southwest Monsoons (21 August 2013)
Credit: OCHA/Orla Fagan

In Manila, the stock exchange closed and schools turned into evacuation centers. There were 5,761 families (23,364 people) inside evacuation centres while 5,192 families (26,907 people) opted to stay with friends or family (NDRRMC).

The Humanitarian Country Team provided targeted relief support to complement national authorities' response efforts. WFP provided logistical support and 50 tons of high energy biscuits – food assistance for 125,000 people over two days. IOM were involved in mapping the location of evacuation centres, identifying needs and gaps as well as camp management and coordination.

USAID provided \$300,000 in assistance with an additional \$500,000 through WFP for warehousing and logistic services to support government efforts. Local businesses also pitched in with donations and services to affected people in their area.

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities ramp up in Bopha-affected areas

Strong government coordination mechanisms required for next disaster

Nine months after the 4 December 2012 landfall of Typhoon Bopha (locally known as Pablo), humanitarian partners are scaling up disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities. The goal is to help build the resilience of vulnerable communities against disasters including the increasingly serious impact of climate change.

The Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (a section of USAID) recently launched Project Andam, for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (DRR/CCA), a partnership between Catholic Relief Services, Plan International and WFP. Project Andam will encompass a number of disaster preparedness and DRR activities from the provincial to the *barangay* level in Bopha-affected areas. This includes working with provincial and municipal governments to integrate DRR/CCA into municipal and *barangay* development plans; working with community leaders to establish early warning and response structures; as well as supporting youth in raising awareness of DRR/CCA in schools and communities.

AusAID is funding 'Project Climate Twin Phoenix' (PCTP), a partnership between UNDP and provincial governments to assess the area's vulnerability to natural hazards. This complements Project Andam in the eastern Mindanao provinces of Davao Oriental, Compostela Valley, Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Sur. The analysis of PCPT will contribute to evidence-based mitigation measures and contingency planning at the provincial and municipal levels. The USAID-funded Growth with Equity in Mindanao project also provides infrastructure, livelihoods and capacity building support to reduce Pablo-affected communities' risk to future disasters.

Provincial and municipal governments in Pablo-affected areas acknowledged the need for clear and strong government coordination mechanisms to prepare for the next disaster. As a result OCHA is providing support in establishing and strengthening existing government coordination structures.

At the request of the Davao Oriental Provincial Government, a presentation was made to the municipalities hardest hit by Typhoon Bopha focusing on coordination structures and their role in disaster response. Following the presentations, UN OCHA held a workshop with the Davao Oriental Provincial Government on institutionalizing the cluster approach in its existing government structures as a way of improving preparation for the next disaster. At their request, similar workshops are scheduled for the Davao Oriental municipal governments.

Disaster response and DRR activities will continue to be supported in Davao Oriental until the end of 2013. OCHA recently closed its offices in Compostela Valley and Agusan del Sur and will be closing its Davao City office in October, however support will continue for disaster response and DRR activities from its sub-office in Cotabato City and country office in Manila.

Weather orientation benefits schools

Understanding the weather forecast is a considerable life-saving strategy in the Philippines and was requested by communities in the aftermath of Typhoon Bopha. As part of disaster preparedness measures and in response to the communities' requests,

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PAGASA teamed up with OCHA to deliver weather orientation around typhoon-affected areas.

So far these orientations were delivered to more than 22 communities and in recent weeks Save the Children, with the Cateel school district supervisor teamed up with OCHA to adapt the weather orientations for children. In the first week of September the first orientations were delivered to Grade 4 and Grade 5 in the Cateel Elementary School, in Davao Oriental.

Cateel was one of the most severely hit areas when Typhoon Bopha struck and parts of the elementary school are still operating in a temporary learning site under canvass. The typhoon destroyed four of the school buildings and one building still requires reconstruction.

The Cateel District Supervisor and school principal welcomed the weather orientation and requested further orientations be conducted to reach more children and teachers. School Principal, Mr. Melvin Rellon felt that the weather warning signals were extremely important in saving lives.

Ms. Ardith Rendon, the newly-designated District School Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) team coordinator, committed to study the data provided by OCHA, with a view to conducting the same lesson in other schools. Rendon felt that this greater understanding of the weather signals would aid her in the DRR planning for the district.

In Brief

Civil-military courses conducted in Quezon City

The NDRRMC through the Office of Civil Defense requested OCHA's support to put together a civil-military coordination course. The course was designed for state actors to gain a better understanding of the United Nations humanitarian civil-military coordination concept, principles and how its practical applications could be adopted to the Philippine context. With support from Red R Australia and AusAID the course was held on 3 to 6 September at the Daza Park, Camp Aguinaldo Quezon City with a total of 26 participants.



Children in Cateel Elementary School attending a weather orientation class (September 2013).
Credit: OCHA

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