

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Nearly 70,000 people fled their homes following armed encounters between the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the government forces in central Mindanao.
- An estimated 124,000 people displaced by conflict across Mindanao in 2014.
- Philippine Congress passed House Bill 5062 to enhance the protection of children in disasters and emergencies.



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## FIGURES

### Displacement in Central Mindanao

# of affected people	69,700
# of IDPs in evacuation centres	46,400
# of evacuation centres	45
# of house-based IDPs	17,200

Source: LGU-MSWD, MDRRM Officers, ARMM-HEART

### Zamboanga Crisis

# of IDPs evacuation centres	6,700
# of IDPs in transitional sites	12,400
# of house-based IDPs	11,300

Source: DSWD, CSWD, IOM-CCCM, GADM, OSM

## Armed conflict in Mindanao continues to displace people

### About 46,400 people take shelter in 45 evacuation centres across Maguindanao province

A clan feud between families reportedly associated with the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) triggered an armed encounter in Pagalungan municipality, Maguindanao province in central Mindanao on 9 February 2015. Nearly 35,000 people fled their homes fearing the continuation or escalation of the fighting that could spread to the nearby municipality of Datu Montawal and Sultan sa Barongis, according to the authorities.

Displacement further increased on 27 February, when the government forces launched an 'all-out offensive' against the BIFF. This recent conflict is affecting over 35,300 people in the municipalities of Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Shariff Aguak, Datu Salibo, Shariff Saydona Mustapha, Datu Unsay, Rajah Buayan, Mamasapano and Datu Hoffer Ampatuan in Maguindanao. It is difficult to reach the affected people due to continued military operations.

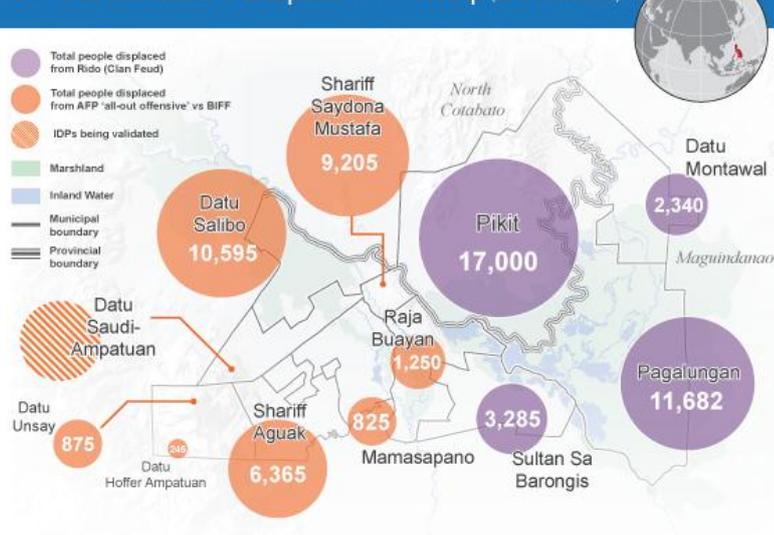
Nearly 70,000 people are now displaced in central Mindanao as a result of a series of armed clashes in February. This figure is expected to rise as the government continues to verify the situation. Local authorities and humanitarian partners report that an estimated 46,400 people are in 45 evacuation centres and more than 17,200 are hosted by relatives or friends. The municipal and regional authorities are providing food to the affected municipalities.

With the prevailing insecurity, it is uncertain when the IDPs can safely return home.

### Mamasapano incident

On 25 January, an armed encounter between the Philippine National Police, MILF and the BIFF during a government law enforcement operation in Mamasapano municipality,

### Central Mindanao Displacement Map (as of 2 Mar 2015)



Source: GADM, OSM, MDRRM-Pikit, MSWDO-Pagalungan, ARMM-HEART

Maguindanao, displaced some 1,300 families (6,600 people) and resulted in at least 11 civilian casualties (five civilians dead including a girl). The majority of the displaced returned home as the fighting stabilized. Those in Mamasapano fled their homes again with the new fighting in February.

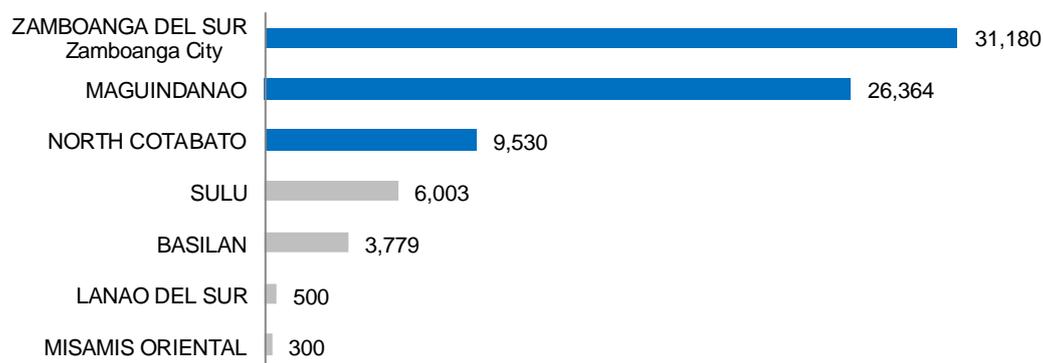
The Mamasapano incident led to the suspension of the congressional hearings on the Basic Bangsamoro Law (BBL) and investigations on the incident began. The Government peace panel has been firm in its resolve to pursue peace with the passage of the enhanced BBL and through sustained peace process with the MILF.

### **An estimated 124,000 people displaced by conflict across Mindanao in 2014**

Armed conflict, violent clan feuds and generalized violence caused multiple displacements across Mindanao from 2012 to 2014, particularly in areas around the Liguasan Marsh in the provinces of Maguindanao and North Cotabato. In 2014, an estimated 124,000 people were displaced by conflict according to the Protection Cluster. The majority involved security operations of government forces against the BIFF.

While the overall number of monitored conflict incidents has declined since 2012, more than 100,000 people are directly affected by conflict annually. Communities in central Mindanao are particularly vulnerable, accounting for over 60 per cent of the total conflict-affected population. Insecurity constrained the delivery of longer term assistance in these areas where livelihood assets were often destroyed, further eroding coping capacities of the already impoverished communities. At the end of 2014, more than 77,000 were still without durable solutions including some 30,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in Zamboanga City.

Mindanao: People remaining displaced by conflict that took place from 2012 to 2014



Source: UNHCR Displacement Database

## **Zamboanga: Meeting the health, education WASH and livelihood needs of the displaced**

*International aid agencies and local civil society continue to work with the authorities to address humanitarian needs of 30,000 IDPs in Zamboanga City.*

International aid agencies and local civil society continue to work with government line agencies to address humanitarian needs of over 30,000 IDPs in Zamboanga City. IOM is constructing 400 additional single detached units in Mampang for over 6,000 IDPs still in the Grandstand Evacuation Center. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Action Against Hunger (ACF), in coordination with the City Health Office (CHO), is undertaking supplementary and therapeutic feeding programme in the transitional and evacuation sites while UNICEF is supporting the integrated management of acute malnutrition.

ICRC, Philippine Red Cross (PRC) and UNICEF are working with the City Health Office and Zamboanga City Water District to address the needs in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

UNICEF is providing educational supplies for students and teachers of Zamboanga East West Central School, which is still being used as an evacuation centre. In Mampang transitional site, Department of Education (DepEd) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) collaborated with CFSI and UNICEF, which constructed four temporary learning spaces, to ensure that the children continue their education. DepEd deployed teachers and provided school supplies to school-aged children. DSWD also provided six *jeepneys* (public transport vehicles) at the site to ferry students from Mampang transitional site to schools.

Challenges remain for livelihoods as affected people await permanent relocation. Various government organizations provided skills trainings and non-government organizations such as CFSI and Integrated Resource Development for Tri-People, Inc. are providing livelihood support to IDP families.

## Protecting children through policy change

*“We want to see children being better prepared for disasters, less child casualties and fewer children falling behind in their education.”*

*Ned Olney,  
Country Director,  
Save the Children*

Disaster deprives children of stability and support. They are traumatized, made homeless or forced to live in unsuitable, temporary accommodation. Their education is also disrupted. They need extra protection at this time of extreme vulnerability.

In response to these concerns, Save the Children started working closely with the Philippine Congress to draft a bill to enhance the protection of children in disasters and emergencies.

The bill includes but is not limited to the following measures.

- A Comprehensive Emergency Program to protect children and support their immediate recovery.
- Heightened surveillance against child trafficking and other violence against children in the aftermath of disasters and calamities.
- A system of restoring civil documents for children and their families to better access services and protect against exploitation.
- Increased participation of children in disaster risk reduction planning and post-disaster needs assessments.
- Less disruption of education activities with the reduced use of schools as evacuation centers and the proper use of temporary learning spaces.
- Better data collection and reporting related to the affected children- to better understand and respond to the specific needs.
- Child-centered training of first responders for community/ barangay leaders, school personnel and rescuers.



Credit: Save the Children. Capiz (January 2015). Children of Sta. Fe Elementary School sign a banner for the passage of the children in emergencies bill.

The bill will ensure that systems to protect children from danger and harm are in place and their right to life is protected by law. Children will be better prepared for disasters, leading to less child casualties and fewer children falling behind in their education.

Entitled “The Children’s Emergency Relief and Protection Act”, the proposed bill was passed unanimously by the House of Representatives at the beginning of this year. The bill is now with the senate where a working group is analyzing the implications of implementing such a bill.

## Communities are better prepared for typhoons

The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) VIII and OCHA conducted an after action review (AAR) of the response to Typhoon Hagupit (locally known as Ruby) that struck Eastern Visayas (Region VIII) in December 2014. A series of community consultations and a one-day

### Key recommendations of the after action review for Typhoon Hagupit

- Integrate accurate early warning in communication with communities and evacuation procedures, and use various platforms to disseminate the information (e.g. radio, print, face-to-face interaction)
- Strengthen communication protocols with appropriate installation of emergency communication equipment
- Include pre-disaster profile of high-risk areas, hazard risk analysis and monitoring in information management, which can inform the updating of local government contingency plans
- Establish assessment framework with a coordinated and inclusive approach to analysis, including the use of a standard assessment tool by both government and humanitarian community
- Clarify issues such as the prerogative of local government units to request assistance outside of government structures and triggers for requesting assistance from the international humanitarian

workshop for government and humanitarian actors held in mid-February found that communities were better prepared for typhoons than before.

### Disaster-affected communities reflect on what went well

Communities related how there was no sense of complacency among them from the time they received the early warnings on TV, radio, common services project newsletters and from their *barangay* (village) officials. They feared that Typhoon Hagupit might be as devastating as Typhoon Haiyan and willingly evacuated from hazard-prone areas.

Whilst there was uncertainty over the information on the projected path of the typhoon, teenagers followed the typhoon's track through social media and were involved in preparing emergency supplies for their families.

There was strong coordination between the municipal/city government and *barangay* officials. Municipal/City/*Barangay* Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils (DRRMC) were activated immediately and resources were mobilized to pre-position food aid, medicines and to ready evacuation centres. Hotlines on information about the typhoon and where to get help were established prior to the typhoon's landfall. Communities stressed that the *Barangay* DRRMCs should engage community members in preparedness planning so that they can become active participants in disaster risk reduction. They recommended that the provincial and municipal government should build more disaster resilient evacuation centres and not rely on school buildings.



Credit: OCHA, Tacloban (February 2015). Children share their Typhoon Hagupit experience.

Key findings of the AAR will inform policy review, revision or amendment at the national level. The report of the AAR will be available around mid-March.

The Government of the Philippines will participate in the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (14-18 March, Sendai, Japan) and share lessons from its experiences in response to natural disasters.

*Communities voice willingness to actively engage in local authorities' preparedness planning and disaster risk reduction efforts.*

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