



A GENDER SNAPSHOT OF THE MARAWI CONFLICT



START
NETWORK



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THE COVER



A woman displaced from the May 2017 Marawi siege participates in a 'family conversation' conducted by Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation (AMDF) in Saguiaran, Lanao del Sur, December 2017. In these sessions, women, men, girls and boys living in evacuation centres take time to 'breathe' by joining family-centred activities that include debriefing sessions and learning about protecting themselves from any abuse or harm while they are living in temporary evacuation sites. As of December 2017, there were still around 3,000 displaced families seeking refuge in neighbouring municipalities of Marawi, uncertain whether there will still be a chance to go back and rebuild their lives inside the Islamic City. (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Martial Law was declared in Mindanao when government troops and ISIS-inspired militants clashed on May 23, 2017. It was unexpected in the Marawi community. These factors created a unique context for the displacement of the Marawi constituents.

This report aims to provide a gender analysis of the situation of internally displaced individuals (IDPs). It seeks to (a) inform about efforts on early recovery, (b) highlight the need for gender responsiveness, and (c) surface why women's rights must be protected and promoted in situations of emergencies.

In addition, it seeks to provide information and analysis based on the following objectives:

- Provide an overview of the gender context among the different groups (women, men, girls, boys) before, during and after the conflict from four response areas in Lanao del Sur and Norte;
- Identify the different gender needs, risks and vulnerabilities of specific groups of peoples as a result of the conflict's impact, including how it changed gender roles and responsibilities, access to, control of, and decision-making over opportunities and resources;
- Identify opportunities to address both practical and strategic needs to facilitate and enable empowerment; and
- Propose recommendations to partners and other stakeholders on early recovery and rehabilitation intervention, gender responsiveness, and the protection and promotion of women's rights.

Key findings show to what extent women, men, elderly, young boys and girls were vulnerable in the context of the Marawi crisis. This is linked with discussions on the decades-long conflict in Mindanao.

The concerns and state of the IDPs in the evacuation centers and host homes were gleaned from the focus group discussions, key informant interviews and validation workshop sessions. Considering the impact

of the conflict on the IDPs, discussions on their situation were categorized using humanitarian themes such as water sanitation and hygiene (WaSH), food security, livelihoods and cash, gender-based violence (GBV), sexual and reproductive health services (SRHS), legal assistance and identity, shelter and non-food provision, family reunification and management of the dead and missing, information on humanitarian aid and responses, education, and psychosocial support.

1. WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Health care and availability of potable water are priorities in humanitarian responses in any form of disaster. In this report, it was found that there was not enough supply of potable and non-potable water in evacuation centers (ECs) especially during the first five months of the crisis. This lack of water was detrimental, affecting the sanitation and hygiene in ECs. IDPs accessed water from different sources including community deep wells, water pumps, spring water, *masjid** water supply and NGO provision. Some IDPs in evacuation centers also had to buy bottled mineral water for drinking to minimise cases of water-borne diseases, such as diarrhea. While access to toilets improved, women expressed the need for more toilet supplies and water containers. They also raised concerns over the poor ventilation in toilet facilities and the lack of proper lighting in the pathways leading to the toilets. Elderly women also raised their concerns about the distance of the toilet facilities from the centers, which was seen as a problem because of their age, and because of safety concerns when they walk along the unpaved and dimly lit paths to access these toilets.

2. FOOD SECURITY

Food rations for the Marawi IDPs were among the first responses from individuals, the government and non-government agencies. This report found that food supplies were not sufficient. FGD participants expressed concern over how food donors prioritized IDPs in evacuation centers, resulting in the inability of many home-based IDPs to access food rations.

*Masjid also known as Mosque is a place of worship for Muslims

Many of the home-based IDPs also did not receive information about when rations will be distributed and how to access them. Both home-based and evacuation center based IDPs noted that food distribution was disorganized and chaotic.

While food rations are now dwindling, food packs that are distributed are not enough to feed entire families. Women shared that the rice distributed was of poor quality. To respond to pressing needs, some women had to borrow money from their relatives, while most of them expressed the need to access livelihoods. In some instances, they bartered the contents of the food packs in order to buy more appropriate food to meet the health and nutritional needs of their families. Husbands also said they needed means to be able to provide extra food for their families.

3. LIVELIHOODS AND CASH

Livelihood programs are among the most urgent needs of IDPs. The region is considered to have the highest poverty rates in the country prior to the conflict. The crisis only exacerbated the conditions of the poor. This report found that cash is the preferred

assistance or aid by most IDPs. This report also found that cash-for-work programs and other livelihood activities were available mostly for men, and not for women. The FGDs revealed that skills training provided by the government did not match the interests or cultural context of the Meranao people who are mostly traders by profession. As such, they emphasised the need to access capital to fund small businesses that will help them rebuild their lives.

4. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

In the ongoing crisis, cases concerning gender-based violence among IDPs increased. There were incidences of gender-based violence perpetrated in evacuation camps and host homes. This report found that among displaced populations, young men and women are the most vulnerable to various forms of violence. During the FGDs, 184 respondents said that violence against displaced women and girls occur in evacuation centers and host homes. While this is the case, it was also found that there is no proper reporting mechanism for GBV cases among IDPs. When cases are reported to the police or the Barangay Peace Action Teams (BPAT), these



A woman who fled to an evacuation center in Barangay Buru-un, Iligan City receives kitchen utensils and water container a week after the onset of the Marawi siege. (Photo: Humanitarian Response Consortium)

are settled amicably between and among the families of the victim and perpetrator, or through the *Ijma* and *Taritib*, the Meranao traditional conflict resolution process. In some instances, GBV cases are settled through forced marriages, especially when these involve minors.

5. SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES (SRH)

Among the most neglected and least prioritized health issues in the crisis are those in relation to sexual and reproductive health. This report found that there is a dearth of information on, and a lack of available and accessible services on sexual and reproductive health. The report also found that IDPs do not regularly visit doctors for reproductive health check-ups unless they are pregnant. This may be because it is taboo to talk about anything related to SRH, especially in the Meranao culture. Further, some IDPs are hesitant to practice family planning methods; and fewer said they want to avail of family planning services. Some married women have also used folk/ herbal medicine in order to avoid pregnancy.

SRH issues and concerns of IDPs worsened during the emergency because healthcare facilities and structures were destroyed, and services disrupted.

6. LEGAL ASSISTANCE /IDENTITY

Legal assistance is a pressing need for IDPs, particularly for long-standing residents who owned livelihoods and operated businesses located in the main battle area. They need legal assistance to address the loss of their property and to recover their assets, as well as to access important documents such as land titles and leases, and birth and marriage certificates that may have been lost or destroyed during the conflict.

During the FGDs, they shared that Martial Law limited their mobility because they lacked proper identification cards and certifications.

Mothers also raised concerns over the need to access the official registration and other important school documents

of their children so they can go back to school. To address this, birth registration must be undertaken. Mothers have also raised concerns over the need for the official registration of their children and to recover other school documents so that they can send their children to school.

7. SHELTER AND NON-FOOD PROVISION

The Marawi crisis resulted in the displacement not only of low-income families, but also middle class and wealthy families. This report found that more than 90% are home-based IDPs, and most of those who are in evacuation centers are from the main battle area or ground zero. Some of the issues raised in relation to shelter and non-food provision during the FGDs included the lack of proper ventilation and lighting in tent cities, the lack of privacy in the evacuation centers, and culturally inappropriate and gender insensitive provisions. For example, conjugal rooms in evacuation centers exposed sexual activities of couples, subjecting many Meranao women to shame and embarrassment.

Shelters are also located in hazardous areas and are made from flimsy materials, with many of the IDPs sleeping on concrete, with little protection from natural elements, especially in cases of turbulent weather conditions. Waste and garbage disposal have also been problematic as there is no proper system in place to manage this. IDPs also receive little, if any, information about upcoming natural disasters, as well as progress or updates about the situation in Marawi.

Further, as most IDPs who owned their lands and homes in Marawi prior to the conflict do



A man carries relief items for a distribution at the Buru-un evacuation center, Iligan City, Lanao del Norte (Photo: Humanitarian Response Consortium)

not have access to their land titles, they fear not being able to reclaim their properties. This is aggravated by the lack of information about rebuilding and rehabilitation, increasing fear and insecurity among them, especially about reparation of their lost properties.

8. FAMILY REUNIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE DEAD AND MISSING

FGD participants confirmed that there are reports of some family members who went missing at the time of the siege. Some did not file reports for their missing loved ones in fear of being implicated or associated with the Maute Group. While participants did not have firsthand experience of family members missing or dying, they did say that they heard such stories from their relatives. There was a case of a deaf mother who has not been able to find her missing children as of the time of writing. According to the respondents, there are no cases of family reunification, although they are aware that different organisations are looking into this matter.

There have also been deaths from health concerns and trauma. In Muslim culture, the dead are supposed to be buried within twenty-four hours. This was difficult to observe in the first five months of the crisis, when little to no support was available to families. There were also reports of some deaths not directly related to the crisis, but because of the conflict and Martial Law, returning the bodies to their hometowns to be buried became difficult.

9. INFORMATION ON HUMANITARIAN AID AND RESPONSES

Typically, in response to crises including the Marawi case, humanitarian aid comes as logistical assistance provided to save lives; alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity. While most IDPs were able to access basic humanitarian aid provided by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and other national and international agencies, respondents said that home-based IDPs had difficulty accessing these. The same can be said about relevant information on humanitarian aid and responses because while IDPs in ECs receive information from camp managers and leaders, home-based IDPs rely on text messages and social media for

information. They also raised concerns about systematizing information dissemination so that fake news and inaccurate data are filtered.

10. EDUCATION

Among the most difficult challenges confronting IDPs is the education of children and youth. Some IDPs who remain in tent cities have not been able to send their children to school because of the lack of access to educational institutions. Some of them have deliberately stopped sending their kids to school because of the lack of financial means and the loss of important legal documents. Some mothers reported they feared losing their children if they sent them to school. They also affirmed that children who are attending schools in Iligan City experienced bullying when they are tagged as ISIS-kids.

11. PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

Displaced women, men, elders and children require psychosocial support (PSS) from trained individuals in order to overcome trauma brought by the conflict in Marawi. The FGDs found that while psychosocial support is urgently needed by all IDPs, intervention had to be age-appropriate, and culturally and gender sensitive. Government should also make sure that these services are accessible to home-based IDPs. There is also a need for stories of healing and reconciliation.

These findings only underline that there is still much to do in terms of aiding those displaced. The snapshot contains issue-based recommendations, as well as policy recommendations that remain critical and need to be acted upon swiftly and efficiently by humanitarian actors and national and local government agencies.



A couple staying at the Buru-un evacuation center in Iligan City receive relief items a week after they fled from Marawi City (Photo: Humanitarian Response Consortium)

INTRODUCTION

On May 23, 2017, militants attacked different parts of Marawi. As recounted by the national media and by residents, members of the Islamic State-inspired Maute Group attacked the city and clashed with government forces. These men raised a black flag with an ISIS logo in front of the Amai Pakpak Hospital, while other members of the group took over different parts of Marawi-- including the city center (Dansalan), the city's church; and burnt down Dansalan College buildings and properties. Aside from these satellite attacks, the local priest Fr. Chito Soganub and other civilians were taken hostage by the group. The Marawi Siege has been longest urban battle in the modern history of the Philippines.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who was in Russia at the time of the attack, 2017, placed the entire island of Mindanao under Martial Law to respond to the pressing issues of safety and security. This caused the immediate evacuation of the people of Marawi,

who feared Martial Law and being caught in the crossfire between government forces and the Maute Group.

On May 24, 2017, thousands of people from Marawi fled to the nearby cities of Iligan and Cagayan de Oro, seeking refuge. The evacuation of people from Marawi to Iligan turned a 45-minute drive through the Marawi-Iligan Highway into a 10-hour *hegira*. This exodus was brought about by circulated texts of an alleged bombing in the city and alleged abduction and execution of men and women unwilling to support the ISIS-inspired militant group.

The displacement of the people of Marawi started on the day of the evacuation and continued until the end of May, when the bombing of the main battle area started. The number of the displaced as reported by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on June 9, 2017

was more than 290,000 individuals, 13% of whom were in the 49 evacuation centers in the nearby municipalities and cities, while 87% were outside evacuation centers or in host-homes.

Analysis of the conflict in Muslim Mindanao shows that the conflict between the Moro groups seeking the independent statehood of Mindanao and the Government of the Philippines has persisted for decades, and is multi-faceted. Conflict in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) involves numerous armed groups, clans (*rido*), criminal gangs and political elites (Strachan, 2015 p. 2). All these conflicts have contributed to the numerous displacements happening in the entire region.

At present, thousands of internally displaced persons are gradually returning to areas within Marawi City that the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has confirmed to be safe areas. Despite their return, humanitarian needs of the affected population remain and will continue well into 2018, and even beyond. Moreover, there are still thousands of displaced persons in evacuation centers. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Region 12 is the agency assigned to provide assistance programs for all returning IDPs in Marawi City.

Figures released by the DSWD Bulletin show that the number of IDPs has reached 353, 921 individuals as of December 3, 2017. Approximately 26, 450 individuals have already returned to the cleared areas of Marawi and neighbouring municipalities (DSWD, as cited in the 11th issue of OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin, Philippines, 2017-2018). Remaining IDPs— home-based and those residing in evacuation camps are from ground zero and other uncleared areas.

Of the total number of IDPs, there are over 31,000 learners (boys and girls) who were displaced by the Marawi conflict. Education interventions including psychological first aid for learners is still needed in host communities and evacuation centres. Psychosocial interventions must be urgently scaled-up to reach children, and identify vulnerable ones and provide referral services, including

alternate care (OCHA Bulletin, Issue 11, 2017-2018).

Data has shown the differential impact of conflict on men, women, boys and girls. Hence, Oxfam and its partners deemed it necessary to conduct a gender analysis that can provide a picture of how women, men, boys, and girls were affected by the siege and the entire Marawi Crisis.



A new mother who gave birth after fleeing from Marawi City takes refuge in an evacuation center in Balo-i, Lanao del Norte (Photo: Angela Casauay/Oxfam)



Meranao men in Balo-i participate in cash for work activities facilitated by the Humanitarian Response Consortium (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)



Mother and son receive relief items including mats, water container and kitchen utensils during a distribution in Iligan City (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

GENDER SNAPSHOT OBJECTIVES

This report aims to provide a gender analysis of the situation of internally displaced individuals. It seeks to inform efforts on early recovery, and ensure gender responsiveness, and the protection and promotion of women's rights. It seeks to provide information and analysis based on the following objectives:

- Provide an overview of the gender context among the different groups (women, men, girls, boys) before, during and after the conflict in the four response areas in Lanao del Sur and Norte;
- Identify the different gender needs, risks and vulnerabilities of specific groups of people as a result of the conflict's impact, including how it changed gender roles and responsibilities, access to, control of, and decision-making over opportunities and resources;
- Identify opportunities to address both practical and strategic needs to facilitate and enable empowerment; and
- Propose recommendations to partners and other stakeholders on early recovery and rehabilitation intervention, gender responsiveness, and the protection and promotion of women's rights.

METHODOLOGY

This report employed a qualitative method, where Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and Key Informant Interviews (KII) were utilized. FGDs were conducted with Marawi IDPs (126 male and 165 female respondents) in November 22, 2017 at Saguiaran, Lanao del Sur; November 23, 2017 at Sakura Hotel, Iligan City; December 16, 2017 at the tent city at Pantar, Lanao del Norte, and December 17, 2017 at Pacalundo, Balo-i, Lanao del Norte. Key informant interviews were likewise conducted among responders, volunteers, and socio-civic organizations in Marawi City in order to supplement data gathered from the FGDs. A validation workshop was conducted with 50 participants composed of IDPs, camp leaders, representatives of local government units (LGUs), and CSO members on February 3, 2018 at the Crystal Inn Hotel.

Secondary data analysis was done through a review of reports and surveys previously conducted by partner organizations including the Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation Incorporated (AMDF) and the United Youth of the Philippines – Women (UnYPhil-Women). Results from the AMDF's Family Conversations were also utilized. Other relevant data were taken from bulletins of government agencies and humanitarian actors, and reports from national news agencies; and literature from various reports produced by Oxfam's partner organizations, namely the Community Organizers Multiversity (COM), Humanitarian Response Consortium (HRC), and Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services (IDEALS) were also reviewed.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

FGDs were conducted to identify different gender needs, risks and vulnerabilities of specific groups of people as a result of the conflict's impact, including how it changed gender roles and responsibilities, access to, and control of, as well as decision-making over opportunities and resources. The following themes were covered:

1. Water Sanitation and Hygiene
2. Food Security
3. Vulnerable Livelihoods and Cash
4. Gender-based violence
5. Sexual and Reproductive Health services
6. Legal assistance / identity
7. Shelter and Non-Food Provision

8. Family reunification and Management of the dead and missing
9. Information on humanitarian aid and responses
10. Education
11. Psycho-social support

FGD AREAS

The FGDs were held in the strategic areas near Marawi City, where majority of IDPs are settled. These are the municipalities of Saguiaran, Pantar, Balo-i and Iligan City.

In Saguiaran, the FGD was held at *Maito a Basak Madrasah*, with 65 participants including home-based IDPs. In Pantar, it was held at the tent city evacuation center attended by 78 participants, with no home-based IDPs. In Balo-i, the FGD was held in Barangay Pacalundo, with 83 participants from both the evacuation centers and home-based groups. Lastly, in Iligan City, there were 65 participants who were home-based IDPs. There were also participants who were based in homes in the same compound or from nearby barangays. They were gathered at the Sakura Hotel for the FGDs.

Table 1 below shows the distribution of male and female FGD participants (men, women, boys and girls and the elderly women) in the response areas where the FGDs were held:

Table 1. Respondents by Sex Group and Area

Participant	Saguiaran	Pantar	Balo-i	Iligan City	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Male	32	37	34	23	126	43%
Female	33	41	49	42	165	57%

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KII)

Further, to get a detailed picture of the different gender needs, risks and vulnerabilities of IDPs, the research included KIIs with individual responders of local responding organizations, NGO officers, LGU members, educators and other humanitarian responders.

Respondents included representatives of organizations, NGOs and local governments, and other humanitarian responders. The respondents are:

1. Normilah Lininding Alonto, District Supervisor in Saguiaran
2. Sapiyah Macaantal Abdulmoin, Chief of Staff, LGU Saguiaran LDS
3. Ali Yusoph, President, Ranao Council OGOP Response
4. Johaniah Yusoph, DAR IO and S'bang Ka Marawi Co-Anchor
5. Alimoden Macalipot, DSWD Reg. 12 Information Officer
6. Atty. Ali Zedney Ditucalan, Dean, College of Law, Mindanao State University
7. Naseeha Omar, SRH Lead Trainer of AMDF
8. Johairah Meris, Volunteer Documentor
9. Abdul, a father from Balo-i
10. Mohammad Salahudin U. Samporna, DSWD IO

VALIDATION WORKSHOP SESSION AND PARTICIPANTS

The results of the FGDs and KIIs were validated through a workshop on February 3, 2018. Fifty participants took part in validating the results and providing supplement relevant additional information regarding issues encountered by the IDPs in the four areas where the FGDs were conducted. Attendees were EC and home-based IDPs of Saguiaran, Pantar, Balo-i and Iligan City,

along with their camp leaders and LGU representatives and CSO partners.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation, Inc. (AMDF)

Established in 1994, Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation (AMDF) is a Muslim feminist organization with a strong presence in Lanao del Sur and extensive experience in human rights, child protection and peace and development. They advocate for gender justice and women's rights in the context of Islam and local culture, as well as for women's meaningful participation in peace-building, good governance, poverty reduction and sustainable development.

United Youth of the Philippines-Women, Inc. (UnYPhil-Women)

United Youth of the Philippines-Women, Inc. is a non-stock and non-profit women youth organization duly registered to SEC in 2004. The primary goal of UnYPhil-Women is to provide assistance to women who are subjected to violence, sexual and physical abuse, trafficking and other forms of discrimination. The organization prioritizes women's role as guardians of wisdom and humanity, and in the pursuit of preserving and protecting the rights of women and children. The organization acts as a vehicle to facilitate the issues and concerns of both women and children for a healthy, abuse- and discrimination-free society, with equal opportunities to education in a peaceful community.

Oxfam

Oxfam's vision is a just world without poverty: a world in which people can influence decisions that affect their lives, enjoy their rights, and assume their responsibilities as full citizens of a world in which all human beings are valued and treated equally.

Oxfam sa Pilipinas has been working in the country for over 30 years. In the Philippines, our goal is to contribute to the eradication of poverty by supporting women and other vulnerable groups in saving lives and building livelihoods, enhancing their resilience to crises, shocks and stresses, and making their voices heard to hold duty-bearers accountable.



Women engaged in a focus group discussion in Lajiao del Sur

KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Marawi crisis has multi-faceted effects including the dismal living conditions of IDPs, dwindling humanitarian response, human rights violations, legal concerns and health issues. Because of these, it is important to analyse the current status of IDPs and the corresponding challenges they face. What follows is a discussion of the issues raised per thematic area. This is supported by data and information gathered from desk research.

INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED

The Department of Social Welfare and Development issued a report (no. 49) under the Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center of the Disaster Response Assistance and Management Bureau (DREAMB) reflecting the following figures:

- a) **78,593** families or **384,139** persons have been displaced by the armed conflict in Marawi. As per accumulated data: **73,235** families or **357,349** persons of which were from 95 barangays in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur; while **5,358** families or **26,790** persons were from 13 barangays in the Municipality of Marantao, Lanao del Sur.
- b) **75** Evacuation Centers are currently open with **3,463** families or **15,994** persons

It is seen from these numbers that a majority of IDPs (around 300,000 individuals) were hosted by other families and friends or have rented spaces outside Marawi, while only a few were settled in evacuation areas. This may illustrate the Meranao cultural tradition of hospitality and strong sense of community and willingness to assist within their relatives and clan members. The Meranaos are typically clannish and they have interesting kinship membership (n.a., "Maranao", 2012).



Mothers from Pantar evacuation center join a session psychosocial and reproductive health while in the facilitated by the AMDF (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

CONFLICT BACKGROUND

The Marawi crisis is rooted in the complex conflict situation in Mindanao. The conflict, also referred to as the Bangsamoro struggle, has spanned more than four decades because of the Moro people's clamour for independence from the Philippine government. (Strachan, 2015 p. 2).

Days before the siege, the news of a probable attack of Islamist insurgents in Lanao was disseminated through text messages and news reports. However, due to the proliferation of fake news and misinformation, not all of the residents of Marawi believed this, thus, ignoring it, while going about their daily activities.

MARTIAL LAW AND GOVERNMENT APPROACHES TO THE CONFLICT

A significant trigger of the evacuation to nearby municipalities and cities was the declaration of Martial Law. When President Rodrigo Duterte placed Mindanao under Martial Law at 10:00 P.M. on May 23, 2017, the people of Marawi recalled the Martial Law days of the Marcos regime, when abuses and human rights violations were rampant. People feared the possibility of being misconstrued as members of the insurgent group and being detained.

Proclamation 216 of 2017 declaring Martial Law was met with various fearful reactions from the communities because of its potential implications, such as closed borders, military check points, curfews, suspension of the Writ of Habeas Corpus, all of which pose difficulties for humanitarian responses. Martial Law in Mindanao was a response to an escalating armed resistance against the government's operations to capture Isnilon Hapilon, senior leader of the Abu Sayyaf, and Maute Group operational leaders Abdullah and Omarkhayyam Maute. It was declared hours after the fighting broke out, entailing the suspension of the Writ of Habeas Corpus (House Joint Resolution No. 13).

According to Atty. Zedney Ditucalan of the Mindanao State University (MSU) College of Law, "...the tension on the rule of law and war on terror has heightened because of Martial Law. People need to be educated of the Martial Law and the limits of the government so that people become aware of their rights."

Despite concerns and opposition to Martial Law, the government extended it to December 31, 2017, after the extension was ratified by the House of Representatives and the Senate in August 2017. This is justified by the Constitution which states that the President can declare Martial Law for an initial period of 60 days and ask for its extension in case of rebellion, invasion or when public safety requires it. The Senate voted 14 for extension, against four votes of non-extension, while the House voted 226 against 23, respectively.

Despite the extension of Martial Law, the government of the ARMM continued its services to the IDPs through their community program called ARMM Heart. This program has actively coordinated response activities for the immediate needs of IDPs from Marawi City and nearby areas. Three regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Councils (DRRMC) have been working together to provide relief in evacuation sites and to call for more support from other regions, government, and even non-government agencies.

The ARMM government issued IDPs with a Disaster Assistance Family Access Card (DAFAC), including those who are home-based, in the following areas:

- Marawi City
- 29 towns in Lanao del Sur, including Saguiaran, Marantao, and Malabang
- Maguindanao
- Cotabato City

Meanwhile, the DRRMC of Region 10 served IDPs in the following areas:

- Iligan City
- Cagayan de Oro City
- Towns in Lanao del Norte, including Pantar, Linamon, Sultan Naga Dimaporo

Furthermore, the DRRMC of Region 12 served IDPs in the following areas:

- General Santos City
- Koronadal City
- Towns in North Cotabato

With the 'Kambalingan' program of the government, thousands of displaced individuals were able to return to their homes in the cleared areas of Marawi, while DSWD Region 12 continues their support for families who also opted to go back home.

GENDER AND CONFLICT CONTEXT OF THE MARAWI CRISIS

Marawi City is the only city in Lanao del Sur, ARMM. The city is described as the Islamic City of the Philippines because of the dominance of Muslims and Moro practices. Marawi is an old and storied city with 400 years of history. It is Mindanao's kilometre 0—the starting point for all other baseline measurements for the entire island of Mindanao.

The conflict in ARMM has a long history and is known to be one of the root causes of social injustice in the region. It harks back to the turn of the 20th century when Mindanao became incorporated into national structures, and its lands were claimed for settlements. Communal strife intensified when ancestral land ownership was debated and not given attention by the Philippine government (Dwyer & Cagoco-Guiam, 2012). The conflict is compounded by the high prevalence of rido or clan feuds. Lanao del Sur has the highest prevalence of rido which was seen to increase dramatically in the years shortly before the Marawi siege (Magno in Adam and Boer, 2015).

Continued clashes between multiple armed groups and government forces caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people over the years. Several gender analyses by humanitarian responders and non-government organisations (NGOs) show that women's experiences are generally neglected in armed conflict situations and humanitarian action. However, Mindanao women do not see themselves as passive observers to the conflict. Women's groups and NGOs have actively

participated in finding ways of attending to women's and children's needs and participate in community conflict management at the same time.

Conflicts in Mindanao have greatly affected its population; and women disproportionately bear the brunt of the costs of the war. Among the gender issues reported during conflicts in Mindanao are mobility, displacement, economic burdens, psychological trauma, lack of participation in peace processes and governance, as well as in transitional justice mechanisms; and increasing vulnerability of young women and girls (Dwyer, & Cagoco-Guiam, 2012; Strachan 2015).

IMPACT OF THE MARAWI CRISIS

To identify the different gender needs, risks and vulnerabilities of specific groups of people, as a result of the conflict, including how it changed gender roles and responsibilities, access to, control of, and decision-making over opportunities and resources, this research was undertaken in the four response areas in Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte. This report aims to give a clear picture of the status of the remaining IDPs in different evacuation centers and host homes.

This report gives an overview of the current challenges encountered by the IDPs, including the increasing frustration of individuals who cannot go back to their normal lives due to the lack of support for their livelihoods. Most of the evacuees have depended on donations and rations distributed by government and NGOs. Details of this are discussed in the following subsections. The subsections of this report are as follow: Water Sanitation and Hygiene, Food Security, Vulnerable Livelihoods and Cash, Sexual and gender-based violence, Legal assistance / identity, Shelter, Reproductive health services, Family Planning, Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV, Family reunification and the Management of the dead and missing, Information on humanitarian aid and responses, Education, and Psychosocial support. Further, this report highlights the importance of interventions based on a sound understanding of the local context.



A young Meranao couple participates in Family Conversation session facilitated by the AMDF at the Pantar evacuation center (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)



Zhai Ibrahim, WASH facilitator from the Humanitarian Response Consortium, conducts a personal hygiene lecture to evacuees in Balo-i (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

1. WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Health care and the availability of potable water are priorities in humanitarian responses. In the case of the Marawi Crisis, water, sanitation, and hygiene must continue to be prioritized, given the number of IDPs still in evacuation centers and with host families.

According to respondents from Saguiaran, the access to non-potable water is through the water supply provided in their evacuation centers. In the case of Iligan City IDPs, especially those coming from Buruun evacuation center, they still have to purchase water due to a lack of access to water.

Home-based evacuees have access through the same distributor in each household. In some cases, the host families pay for water, while in others, IDPs who have the means contribute an amount commensurate to their use. In most households, water supply comes only at scheduled hours and access is relative to those who would want to have potable water. When they have the means, some IDPs opt to buy potable water from private distributors.

However, according to Saphia, AMDF Community Organizer in Saguiaran who was in Saguiaran from day one, "In Saguiaran, the IDPs do not pay for water. The sources for water are spring, the Red Cross, and water coming from the *masjids* nearby ECs and host homes."

Saphia also mentioned that WASH facilities are provided by various INGOs like Action Against Hunger (AAH), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Samaritan's Purse. However, the IDPs do not know how to manage the WASH facilities to maintain cleanliness.

Men and women in Saguiaran said that the water is safe for drinking, but there still remains a need for cleaner water from private distributors for their children's needs. Majority of the participants responded that they have access to clean water; and that the location of the water supply is accessible to women and children in the family.

Meanwhile, in the areas of Pantar and Balo-i, evacuees have a different experience. According to women respondents from Pantar, they get water from the supply provided by different organizations like the Humanitarian Response Consortium (HRC), Red Cross, Department of Public Works and

Highways (DPWH), and the local fire department.

The women confirmed that most of their family members— including the children— help the family to fetch water from the deep well or the electric water-pumps in their evacuation camps. They narrated that in the first few days of the siege, access was really difficult for all. They needed to queue for a whole day in order to get water, but as the number of IDPs decreased in the succeeding months, access became easier. Some of the challenges were power interruptions, during which electricity generators were needed to pump water for the entire camp. Otherwise, they would resort to manual water pumping provided in each camp. Naseeha, a Lead Trainer on SRH of AMDF, comments, “It is women who would often queue to fetch water. There is usually a long line and men do not have the patience to line up. However, the men assist by transporting water containers when filled back to their space in the ECs or in the host homes.” For women respondents, they see the contribution of their young male members in the family:

“Sakn na madakl ako i wata a mga ngongoda na siran e psag’b. Ipanag’b iran pn so mga kapitbahay ami.” (I have children (young men) who are big enough to fetch water for me and include some for our neighbors too.)

In both evacuation camps in Pantar and Balo-i, men and young boys affirmed that their access to water, comfort rooms and other sanitation and hygiene related facilities improved due to the decreasing number of IDPs in the camp.

Considering all the responses gathered, it can be implied that access to water, both in evacuation camps and host homes, is well established. In fact, in the OCHA report in June 2017, 80% of the evacuation centers in Iligan City have access to water. However, during the validation workshop, one of the camp managers expressed that water supply in evacuation centers is not enough. This resulted in IDPs arguing over water supply, as well as an increase in their vulnerability to different diseases.

As to the sanitation and hygiene of the IDPs, majority of the respondents from the evacuation camps said that they have privacy in using the toilets. The toilets provided are decent enough and clean. However, the limited number of toilets meant that people had to wait in long queues to use them, in turn having serious implications on sanitation and hygiene in evacuation centers.

According to Naseeha, “IDPs during the Family Conversations mentioned that some of the women and their children experienced stomach pain or constipation because they had to refrain from going to the toilet due to lack of water. Some said their teen daughters would refuse to eat to prevent having to go to the toilets.”

Aside from access to better toilets, most women are requesting for more toilet supplies and water containers for bathroom needs and have raised concerns over ventilation and pathways leading to toilets. For elderly women, the location of toilets is a barrier for their use especially at night. Most women in Pantar were thankful that because of the solar lamps provided, they had easier access to toilets during the evening. However, some elderly women said that their toilets have leaks and they get wet inside the toilets when it rains.

Further, there were concerns from the service providers during the data validation workshop that in the first four months, there were individual IDPs who got sick due to the lack of water and poor hygiene in the ECs. Many died because of diarrhea caused by their water intake. This is why some IDPs would resort to buying water from distributors near their ECs.

As of this writing, government services for de-sludging the waste from the toilets has ended, while toilets in ECs continue to fill as some IDPs remain in the camps. There is an urgent and serious need for septage management to prevent the practice of open defecation and the resulting hygiene issues.

Part of addressing the sanitation and hygiene of the IDPs is ensuring the availability of hygiene kits. Most of the humanitarian responders during the crisis included non-food packs such as hygiene kits for lactating mothers and young women and girls (S'bang Ka Marawi, July 12, 2017). In fact, *Paninindog sa Marawi* a response group consisting of partners and sister organizations of AMDF such as UnYPhil-Women, NISA, Pilipina, GZO-PI, Hasik, Oxfam, PBSP, CARE, MinCode, AADC COMultiversity, PCART, NCMF, MSU, and individual donors also distributed hygiene kits for women, men and children among other types of assistance.

2. FOOD SECURITY

Food rations for the Marawi IDPs were among the first responses from individuals, both government and non-government agencies. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is in charge of distributing food and non-food packs to all IDPs who have family access cards.

On May 24, during the exodus of the people from Marawi, Saguiaran residents prepared drinking water and snacks for evacuees passing by the highway of Saguiaran to Iligan. Some government officials of Balo-i even prepared simple packed meals for those who were in the Balo-i highway that evening.

According to AMDF, the LGU provided for breakfast, lunch, and dinner or *Iftar and Sohoor* during the Ramadhan in Saguiaran during the first three months.

Majority of the women from the evacuation camps and host homes said that food supplies for each family were not enough for their daily needs and that government support and NGO donations were dwindling each day. Food supplies from other donors had become scarce as well.

Aside from the scarcity of food packs, some women said that the rations were monotonous. The contents are the same in each ration, especially the National Food Authority (NFA) rice. They also raised concerns over the timing of the distribution, with some of them borrowing supplies from other IDPs when they run out. Others hoped they could have healthier variety so they would not have to eat sardines and canned goods everyday.



At the communal kitchen built for evacuees living in Balo-i evacuation center (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

“Ang DSWD lang lage ang nag-aabot ng tulong every 10 days tulad ng mga sardines, NFA rice (food pack)...ang problema lang naman namin ay pag na delay ang pag bibigay nila ng relief sa amin dahil nakakahingi kami minsan sa mga kasama naming evacuees pag may mga extra food sila. At sana maiba naman ang laman ng mga relief- imbes na sardines gawing daing na bulad o mga gulay...” (DSWD gives us food supplies every 10 days like sardines and NFA rice... the problem is caused by delays. We had to borrow extra food from other evacuees. We also hope that they can vary the food supply. Instead of sardines, they can give us dried fish or vegetables.)

The women IDPs sold some of the NFA rice and canned goods to groceries in order to buy other goods, or to give as school allowance for their children. They also bartered canned sardines fish or vegetables.

Prior to the conflict, most people from Marawi were engaged in farming activities. In the city centers, the Meranaos were involved in small businesses and trading activities. Most women confirmed that before the siege, they supported their husbands in finding food for their families. Since most of the

respondents are market vendors, they were confident in helping their husbands. However, with the crisis, there was no opportunity for them to help. They are mostly dependent on what is provided by the husbands and by donating agencies. Some of the women were upset when asked about the cash-for-work program of DSWD. Most of them affirmed that they were not prioritized and therefore had little capacity to find money to buy food and other supplies. Some women stressed the importance of livelihood programmes to allow them to earn money to buy food supplies.

“Sakn na banya di ako maka-repair sa walay na asara makatoon ako daan sa kawyagan akn para ana makan o pamilya aken.” (In my case, the repair of my house can wait for as long as I can have a livelihood to feed my family.)

When male respondents were asked about their responsibilities to provide food for the family, all of them agreed that both parents (mother and father) should find the means to feed the family. They affirmed that most of the time, it is the men who look for food and provide security for the family, while women help in the decision-making and as support her husband. They believe that women have better ways of finding means to provide food for the family. The challenge in preparing varied food is a sad reality in the evacuation camp. One mother narrated that:

“Pag wala na kaming pera, binibenta namin ang mga relief namin tulad ng sardines para lang may mga pera kami na nagagastos at naibibili ng ibang pagkain at iba pang kailangan.” (When we don't have money, we sell our relief goods like sardines so we can have money to buy other kinds of food or needs)



Young women receive kitchen essentials and hygiene kits in behalf of their families, in Balo-i Madrasah evacuation center (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

Other women respondents confirmed that they had to assist other IDPs due to the lack of food. According to Fatima, *“Di ami kabaraw so mga siringan ami igira da kakan iran na pembegan ami siran muna.”* (We cannot stand seeing our neighbours hungry. When we know they do not have something to eat, we initiate giving them food.)

Women worry much about their access to food when distribution is not well-coordinated with evacuation camps. For home-based IDPs, they have different complaints. They felt that their needs are not prioritized by the donors and DSWD.

“Lalayon kami den kalilipatan megay sa relief. Di kami pakatokaw igira aden a pkawit sa mga evacuation center o mga ped a organization.” (We are always left out when relief packs are distributed. We do not get information when other organizations give relief packs in evacuation centers) – **Male, Home-based IDP in Balo-i**

The IDPs also mentioned that some people accessing food rations were neither EC nor home-based IDPs, but poverty-stricken community members residing in the area. Some of the respondents raised concern over biases in the distribution of food packs, saying that relatives of local authorities, whether they were actual IDPs or not, received rations first before everyone else.

According to a female IDP who shared during Family Conversations conducted by AMDF, they queue instead of the men to maintain peace. They claimed that the men do not have the patience to stay in the food distribution line, and therefore conflicts would more easily arise.

They also complained about the kind of food, but they also said that they had a way to cope. They would mix better quality commercially-bought rice with the NFA rice.

“So NFA rice na psaogan sa margas mapiya o di na p’mbuyubog ka an makadak’l...”

(We mix good rice with the NFA rice, or we make rice pudding so it will feed the entire family.)

–Mother from Balo-i FGD

The above perspective is from a woman participant in the FGD held in Iligan City. Among other coping mechanisms mentioned was the borrowing of money from relatives. Finding any and all means to supplement the rations fell to the women, a practice affirmed by the elderly. This was especially true for the widows.

Unlike in other services, there were no priority lines for pregnant or senior women. The IDPs did not allow for pregnant women or senior citizens to cut the line.

In the case of *Paninindog sa Marawi*, identification of beneficiaries was done at least one day before the distribution of food, non-food items, or cash. Criteria for selecting beneficiaries are set; and coupons are distributed to the families. These coupons are presented on the day of distribution. Only those with coupons were allowed to join the queue.

During the validation sessions, some of the service providers observed that there are biases in providing assistance. These biases may have a bearing on who is prioritized in the distribution of food packs. Further, they confirmed that skin allergies and minor diseases were experienced due to excessive eating of canned goods like sardines.

The above scenario of women finding ways to feed their children was not new and unique to Marawi crisis. In the past conflict reports, women are always the ones finding ways. They may even limit their own nutritional intake in order to feed their children (Strachan, 2015).

However, among home-based IDPs, both men and women claimed food insecurity. They found ways to cope such as borrowing money from relatives. This resulted in new problems such as debt and highlighted the need for livelihood assistance.

3. LIVELIHOODS AND CASH

Livelihood programs are among the most needed interventions for IDPs. In the FGD sessions, majority of the women respondents affirmed that they needed livelihood programs. In fact, the crisis has aggravated an existing crisis of poverty in the ARMM. The women did not have access to any livelihood program during and after the siege. Further, their current livelihood means such as selling fruits, vegetables, cash for work, etc. are not enough to sustain family needs.

The male respondents who are fathers and husbands affirmed that they needed the means to generate more income so that they can bring food to the table and send their children to school. Some mentioned that they do not even have access to loans. They emphasized the need to access capital so they could resume their livelihood activities.

Many IDPs would sell the canned goods from the food packs just to have cash for other needs. They were honest enough to say that they want financial support from the government. There are immediate needs that require money such as electric fans (because it is too hot inside their tents), foam mattresses (because their beds do not have comfortable foam mattresses and are wet most of the time) among many others.

Some of the male respondents in Pantar and Balo-i mentioned that they would resort to borrowing money from relatives not directly affected by the crisis even if they knew that this was not a good practice.

Both evacuation center and home-based IDPs, including elderly women, expressed their wish for better livelihood assistance such as adequate capital to start a business.

“Ino mapiya a mibegay rekami so 5000 a supporta DSWD sa da mi pen kapakasoy sa ground zero ka anami mikapital pasin” (This is why we need the PHP 5,000 support from DSWD even if we are not back at the ground zero. We will need this for start-up capital.) –**Elderly woman from Pantar**

The request for livelihood is not new. In past calamities in the country, most, if not all IDPs would request for further help on livelihood. IDPs of previous calamities and in conflict stricken communities would usually resort to low-paying jobs for men and less dignified and risky cash-for-work for women (Oxfam, Haiyan Gender Snapshot, 2014).

As one government official in Saguwaran commented, there has been no livelihood program offered to the IDPs except for a training conducted by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and seedlings provided by the Department of Agriculture (DA). There were other stories about how livelihoods were stopped due to the declaration of Martial Law, because it hampered their mobility. Without the means for livelihoods, some women opted to become caregivers for children and the elderly to supplement their income.

In terms of gender roles and responsibilities, the traditional roles of men in society as bread winners were true in some communities in Lanao and Marawi before the crisis. However, in other studies, there were already mentions of shifts in gender roles due to other conflict-driven factors, such as *rido*. Many women, especially those in the education sector, support the family due to limited mobility on the part of men who are victims of *rido*. Some women also helped by being vendors in their little businesses.

This shift in gender roles and responsibilities among Meranaos and the displaced populations of the Marawi crisis is not a new issue. Despite women having the satisfaction of bringing income to the family, women fulfill a ‘double role’ because they must still accomplish daily household chores (Strachan, 2015).

In conflict situations, and especially in prolonged crisis, livelihoods are a necessity. This is not only an issue of economics, but an issue of safety, especially for women and children- money, or the lack of it, is seen as a significant factor in the occurrence of gender-based violence.



Family Conversation session facilitated by the AMDF in Pantar evacuation center (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

4. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

There were incidents of gender-based violence in both evacuation centers and host homes. Only a few have formally reported cases of violence against women; but this might be because, as most of the women claim, there is no proper mechanism to report gender-based violence in their areas or evacuation centers.

It was reported by a majority of women that incidences of child and early marriages in evacuation centers have increased. The women affirmed that these cases were consensual, saying:

“So wata o pud ami a bakwit na kiyabayaan skanyan kasi o gyoto a mama roo. Kunaba mambo tigul so babay a mikawing ko mama ka di siran di kinabayae. Choice iran oto a dowae.” (Our friend’s daughter was liked by a man in the camp. She was not forced to marry him for they liked each other,) – **Married woman from Iligan**

The above response is not unexpected, but should be viewed with alarm because of the vulnerability of young women in the evacuation camps.

Further, the women narrated that some of the known early marriages in the ECs and host homes in their areas were made as a means of amicable settlement of disputes.

According to AMDF and the Mindanao State University Community Development Department (MSU-CD), they have heard of different reasons pertaining to early marriages among IDPs. However, around 20% of the respondents (393 IDPs) said that because of ‘difficulty of life’ in evacuation centers, they had to resort to early marriages.

Early marriage is a form of violence against young women and girls. In times of conflict, all of the IDPs, including young men and women, go through psychosocial difficulties that would make significant life decisions, such as marriage, more a stressor than a mere life event. In some cases early marriage resulted in further forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), such as sexual violence (forced sex among couples or marital rape, and both physical and emotional abuse). It cannot be denied that Meranao culture allowed arranged marriages, which in turn, may have influenced this phenomenon (Maranao, 2012).

Moreover, AMDF and MSU-CD found in their survey that there are 183 IDPs who affirmed that there is VAWG in the evacuation center or host homes of Saguairan. This lower number of IDPs who said ‘yes’ on the existence of VAWG must not be taken for granted. They may be few but it is significant to note that there are cases of violence that need further study. Women in the validation workshop gave examples of GBV incidences they experienced or witnessed in the Pantar tent city. There were incidences of rape, peeping in the toilets and tents, as well as verbal abuse against them. Some of the young women felt violated when they were bullied by men who said that relief goods can be a *dorie* (wedding gift). Some would even say that they can marry a ‘*bakwit*’ (evacuee) girl for just PHP 5,000.00. As reported by OCHA in June 2017, there are no privacy



AMDF staff explains gender-based violence to women participants through illustrations during a Family Conversation (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

partitions in the five evacuation centers in Iligan City (OCHA, 2017).

Aside from sexual violence, there were also reports from the FGD sessions of cases of physical violence among children at the evacuation camp in Pantar. Some girls during the FGD in Pantar reported being aware of cases of violence, such as physical abuse from fathers and husbands. Some were even settled with the help of the DSWD Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) team and the BPAT in the barangay.

One of the respondents narrated that she suffered physical abuse from her own father:

“Si Omie na sumyong sa DSWD ka bapya skanyan na pranegen e Abie. Myagsumbong si Omie kiran, na myadakep o mga pulis... si Abie na kinausap skanyan o mga DSWD ago pulis o psowaan kun nyan saroman na kapakay na e kulong skanyan.” (My mother went to DSWD and told them about my case and even her case of abuse. She reported and the police responded. My father was warned not to do it again; otherwise he will be put in jail.) – **Girl, Pantar**

When asked if she has coped with the situation, she affirmed that she still suffers the same treatment from her father:

“Bapya man imanto na pranegen ako e Abie sa likod a ulo akn na psowaan akin na palagoy ako. Di ako baling sa walay taman sa gagawai e pakabaling akn.” (Until today, I experience physical abuse. He would even hit the back of my head. So, I would just run away and would go back late in the evening.)

This is but one example of many unreported cases of GBV, and only proves that more attention should be given to providing assistance to victims. It cannot be denied that male IDPs are also suffering psychosocial issues that would need to be addressed so that it does not affect their wives and children.

Physical violence towards young women is not unique to the Marawi crisis. In the Haiyan gender snapshot in 2014, male IDPs claimed that due to lower income, frustrations increase, which lead to their aggressive behaviour (OXFAM, OCHA 2014).

The government and responders have to take note that young people may have less resilience to physical and emotional stressors of conflict (Dwyer & Cagoco-Guiam, 2012). The above incidences may result to further problems and violence within evacuation camps or host homes if not well responded to.

Due to the set-up and limited space and privacy in the evacuation centers, women, girls and even men admitted that women do not have privacy even in the bathing facilities. They often see or feel there are peeping-toms in the temporary bathing areas or in the open bathing areas near the water sources of Saguiaran municipality. This was shared during the Family Conversations conducted by AMDF.

There are also reports to the Philippine National Police (PNP) Saguiaran of men hurting their children and wives. They were asked by the authority to refrain from repeating these acts. Some followed, some moved their family out of the EC, and others did not stop and the repeated abuse have not been reported to the police.

“Halos every day since pa nong first few months na banda ko salongan na miyaka dak-dakul. Kay myatimo timo kasi so mga tao ah, na kuwan parang mga vulnerable a mga tao na parang da pliyowan o iman iran a mapia. Lagged o mga sensitive ah. Maito-ito bon a di cran di mag-clash. Odi na mga wata, di makambobono na pampudan o mga loks. So pen so kha-karumae na di mbobono.” (Almost every day, there are many conflicts even the first few months. This may be because of the huge number of IDPs. They are all sensitive. They easily clash. Sometimes children fight and their parents get involved. Even spouses fight.) – **Saphia, LGU Chief of Staff in Saguiaran**

There are also cases of domestic conflict that have become violent. This may be due to lack of awareness and heightened frustrations among family members. In some cases, IDPs themselves affirmed that *Ijma* and *Taritib* or the Meranao traditional conflict settlement was applied in settling GBV related issues in the ECs and among home-based IDPs. There are also times when the local government, like the municipal Mayor, had to settle conflicts of IDPs in their municipalities.

In Iligan City, service providers observed violence between EC IDPs and host communities. There was mention of how host communities do not like the presence of the IDPs, claiming that the latter have contributed to massive pollution and improper garbage disposal in their community.

In the FGD sessions, individuals were named and specific cases were cited by other IDPs; but these remain unverified. This may be related to the culture of shame that is prevalent among the Meranaos and in the Muslim community.

In response, AMDF initiated a series of Family Conversations, aimed at heightening awareness on preventing violence in evacuation centers, and educating IDP families to protect women and girls from different forms of gender-based violence.

5. SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES

Among the more neglected health issues in this crisis is sexual and reproductive health. Information and services on these topics in the evacuation centers and among home-based IDPs were limited and/or problematic.

Women IDPs confirmed that most of them do not regularly visit doctors for reproductive health check-ups, unless they are pregnant. However, they affirmed that they do have access to skilled midwives, nurses, clinics, and birthing facilities. In Iligan City, most of the respondents affirmed that they can access health support from the Iligan City Hospital.

“Knaba kami regular a I makapagcheck up... So mga wata e permanente a masasakit dn...”
(We do not have regular check-ups. Our children are the ones getting sick.) – **Married Woman from Iligan City**

From the responses of IDPs, it can be inferred that not all of the women access or want to access reproductive health or even general health services. They see the needs of their children as the priority for health care.

There are other factors affecting the access of IDPs to reproductive health care. Some see the health care providers’ attitude towards them as an issue. They do not go for treatment since they are met with unfriendly health providers assigned to their areas.

Aya ami pkailay a problema sa ka-access sa mga health services na so mga health providers, miyamakarangirangit. Pka-discourage kami badn magpaconsult kami a gyoto a approach rkami o health provider. (We see a problem in accessing due to the health providers’ attitude. They seem to be very angry with us. We get discouraged when we consult due to their approach.) – **Married Woman in Saguiaran**

This situation calls for more action from sexual and reproductive health service providers. This may imply limited awareness on SRH issues and services. Even the young girls during the FGD in Saguiaran skipped answering the questions under SRH because of the lack of understanding and low awareness of the services available for them.

However, in the Iligan FGD sessions, some of the female respondents appreciated the services provided by the Iligan City hospital. They were able to access health care for free, especially pregnant women and lactating mothers.

Interestingly, in the Pantar and Balo-i FGD sessions, when respondents were asked about reproductive health, they associated this to general health needs. It means that not all of them are aware of SRH issues. In fact, in the validation session, the camp volunteers affirmed that they are afraid of seeing health representatives because of the fear of knowing their health issues, which may add to problems they face in the evacuation camps.

One of the respondents from Pantar was a very young mother and who narrated her experience in giving birth to her now two-month old child. She narrated that she gave birth in the tent city of Pantar and was assisted by a *'hilot'* (local midwife). She was married before the siege, but was not able to access the hospital at the time of her delivery. She also narrated that she did not have the chance to access reproductive health assistance during and after her pregnancy.

This is certainly not an isolated case, but a problem that calls for more reproductive health awareness program in all areas and societal contexts. This area of concern does not only pertain to women and girls, but also men and boys.

In Lanao del Sur, even before the siege the awareness and understanding of, and access to SRHS is the lowest, compared to other parts of the Philippines. In Saguwaran, particularly among the IDPs, AMDF holds Family Conversations on Health, Protection of Women, Recovery and Rehabilitation of Marawi City, with 20 families in each session. In this initiative, families share their SRH concerns and protection issues, among others while AMDF provides education on health and protection. This initiative has resulted in women coming forward to ask for SRH services.

The reasons behind the neglect of reproductive health are evident in the above narratives. However, in many conflict-affected areas, the increase in rates of pregnancy and reduced access to family planning services compound the problem.

Family planning is among the more challenging programs of health providers when it comes to Muslim communities. In the case of the Marawi IDPs, some said they do not practice family planning methods due to the notion that family planning is against the teachings of Islam. Only a few respondents said that they want to avail of the family planning services. Others have perceptions of negative side effects of the family planning services available for them.

Elderly women shared in the FGDs that they knew of some women in their tent city who practiced family planning. The married women IDPs have access to this service offered by the Department of Health and other organizations.

“Aden a available saya a service para sa family planning lagid o mga injectable, pills ago mga condom. Na sadn kon sa kabaya miki-inject na kapakay.” (There are available services here for family planning like injectables, pills, and condoms. Anyone can avail of the injectable if they want.) – **Pantar married woman**

There are married women who resorted to folk/herbal medicine in order to avoid pregnancy. As narrated:

“Sakn na mininom ako sa mga ipamakayaw a bolong lagid o raon a kopaya a ago raon a bayaba. Sii ko inikimbawataan akn ko ari-ari akn a wata na miyanginom ako rn dn.” (I use herbal medicine like papaya and guava leaves boiled in water. As soon as I had my youngest child, I took this medicine.)—**Pantar married woman**



Couple shares their commitment to support each other during the closing session of AMDF's Family Conversation (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

The anecdotes illustrate that many women are, in fact, willing to practice family planning (FP). This willingness can be supplemented by the dissemination of proper information.

AMDF provides information on where and how women can avail of FP services. This is usually done during community-based education sessions, and now through the Family Conversations. Some of the participants approached the team to avail of the FP services. It only proves that once women and their partners understand the importance of FP by knowing its benefits and demystifying its myths coupled with an open attitude, it is easy for them to decide in favor of it.

When women and men are aware of family planning, incidences of reproductive mortality can also be minimized. The same can be said of sexually-transmitted diseases (STD). Considering the global incidence of HIV infections among adolescents, awareness and proper reporting of sexually-transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV cases have to be prioritized (UNAID, 2016).

Sexually-transmitted infections and HIV prevention was among the priority programs of the Department of Health (DOH) when Marawi crisis started. There were updates given by the DOH Region 10 on a weekly basis to the *S'bang Ka Marawi* Radio Program in order to inform the IDPs of the programs they can access. In fact, there was an anecdote from the DOH Region 10 Information Officer that cases of STI were found among Marawi IDPs. However, because of the sensitivity of the matter, the details were kept confidential. There has always been a stigma attached to STI and HIV. With the Meranao culture of shame, these will not be discussed, to the detriment of those who are infected or are vulnerable to infection.

Women and men in the evacuation centers as well as home-based IDPs confirmed that there were no reported cases of STI and HIV in their area. However, everyone, especially the women in Pantar, expressed their thanks to international organizations like the Red Cross for making the information and services regarding STI accessible. There were even women who expressed their desire to be tested.

In other words, despite the stigma attached to it, if the IDPs were given ample information about this infection, they would go through the tests.

This positive outlook towards STI and HIV testing has to be taken seriously by the local government and humanitarian aid responders. Since early marriages among Meranaos are socially practiced, the younger population must be given more and better access to the information regarding Sexual and Reproductive Health.

SRH issues and concerns of IDPs are exacerbated in an emergency setting, where health facilities and structures were destroyed. The lack of access to health facilities and service providers, which were present prior to the Marawi conflict, worsened.

6. LEGAL ASSISTANCE / IDENTITY

Legal assistance is one of the most serious needs of the Marawi IDPs, majority of whom, if not all, were long-time residents, or were working in the city. There is a critical need for land titling, and the settlement of issues regarding the lease/ownership of residences and properties they had to leave behind when they evacuated.

According to an interview with Mr. Alimoden Macalipot, information officer of DSWD Region 12, the "difficulty in identifying the real recipients of the *Kambalingan* programs of DSWD is a challenge. This is the reason why we require two valid IDs during the release of the relief packs and cash."

The need for identification cards in this kind of crisis is highly significant. Marawi City is the only city within Lanao del Sur. Most of its constituents are neither natives of Marawi, nor land owners in the main battle area. The ability to verify one's identity and property ownership in the community is thus crucial because it is a requirement for support to be provided.

Before and during the crisis, the faces of individuals who were identified as terrorists in Lanao were publicly posted in checkpoints and strategic areas in and outside of Lanao. Because of this, it became a genuine safety and security issue to be able to verify one's identity when passing through each checkpoint.

Most of the responses provided by the government during the crisis require identification cards, or at least, a certification from local government units to assure valid identity. The mobility of people was hampered by the absence of identification cards and certifications preventing them from traveling from one community to the other.

Through the initiative of organizations like the Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services (IDEALS), a series of legal missions in Marawi and its neighbouring areas was undertaken to assist individuals to obtain proper legal identification. To assist in disseminating information regarding legal services, a radio program dedicated to the needs of the IDPs was

launched on June 12, 2017, entitled *S'bang ka Marawi* (Rise Up, Marawi) in Iligan City, Cagayan de Oro and now in MSU Campus, Marawi City.

Both men and women confirmed that most of their identification papers, like birth certificates and driver's licenses, were left in their homes. Due to panic and fear, many left everything behind, thinking that they would be able to go back as soon as the siege was over.

Women respondents confirmed the necessity to have their children's birth certificates and learning reference documents (e.g. cards, school learning number reference, etc.) in order for them to be enrolled in the schools in the areas where they have evacuated.

Men, on the other hand, were more concerned about the need for affidavits of their lost properties as well as the legal documents, such as land titles, passports, etc. that were burned down in the city.

In the FGD, most of the IDPs in the evacuation centers confirmed that they were made aware of the services that were provided especially on

identification card provision from different organizations (e.g. Philhealth, GSIS, Barangay, etc.). Some of the IDPs from the host homes were not as informed as those who are in evacuation camps. Many of the home-based IDPs did not know of legal services available.

The Saguianan LGU also provided identification cards to the IDPs, as well as barangay certification that they displaced and are temporarily relocating to Saguianan barangays. This addressed the need of the IDPs for identification in order to be able to travel in and out of Saguianan.

The Iligan participants confirmed how they had actively worked on the documents needed by their family. Women are mostly responsible these documents. Some have support from their husbands; but the task of safeguarding legal documents mostly falls on the women.

For legal concerns, most of the respondents affirmed that they report legal cases to the Barangay, DSWD and even to the police. They also confirmed that not all legal assistance services are available nor were information about these services disseminated.



Meranao mother participant in AMDF's Family Conversation in Pantar, Lanao del Sur (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)



A WASH session is conducted by a HRC staff to teach evacuees proper hygiene and sanitation in emergencies (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

The lack of access of the home-based IDPs to legal assistance is mostly due to a lack of information. However, even if some IDPs were aware, not all tried accessing the services. In the case of the Balo-i young boys and girls, they affirmed during the FGD sessions that they do not access legal assistance because it is their parents who find ways to provide the documents they needed.

“Bago pn maula-ula gya crisis na myamaka avail kami dn sa Birth Certificate Certificate ago Marriage Contract so mga loks ami. Aden pn a mga titolo o mga lupa ami ago so ped a mga properties ami na misosorat iran. So mga parents ami e myangwa sagyoto a mga documents.” (Before this crisis, our parents were able to secure our birth certificates and their marriage contract. They also have a land title and a list of our other properties. Our parents are the ones getting those documents.)

The above response is an indication that legal services known to IDPs are limited. They have insufficient awareness of the broader scope of legal assistance they can avail. Legal responders like IDEALS have reached different municipalities and cities in Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte in order to respond to legal grievances of IDPs.

The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos Lanao Office also provided Certificates of Tribal Affiliation to the IDPs who went to their office in need of any form of identification. This certification was honoured at security checkpoints.

The provision of DAFAC also raises certain issues for women, as found by AMDF. Usually it is the names of the male head of the household that is written at the top of the DAFAC; also, it is the males who get to access identification cards and other benefits from their Barangay leaders more often than women. Polygamous households had issues as well on how to list all the household members, including the multiple wives, in one card without raising conflict. These may only be a few cases; but they are very important as children and women in such households are doubly vulnerable.

Women IDPs also complained about the numerous requirements for Barangay certification of residency, such as multiple copies of pictures of individual family members. For families who lost everything and have limited resources, such requirements can be quite costly.

7. SHELTER AND NON-FOOD PROVISION

Food, non-food items and shelter are among the first responses needed by all disaster victims. In the case of the Marawi crisis, all the IDPs are victims regardless of income or educational attainment. Most of the evacuation centers during the first few weeks of the Marawi crisis did not have partitions to ensure privacy. Women and men have different privacy needs, especially for Muslim women. This may be the reason for a large number of home-based IDPs who refused to stay in the evacuation centers.

The issue around shelter became more evident when IDPs were asked about their properties in the main battle area of Marawi. What concerned the Marawi settlers and land owners was that not all of them have registered deeds or titles to their land and properties, as they were unable to bring most of their valuables.

Most respondents affirmed that they evacuated along with their families and have sought safety in the evacuation centers and host homes. However, there were cases where families had to evacuate even without some of the members of the family. Families were separated because the children were not with them when they evacuated; other adults were at work when the siege happened; while some family members chose to stay in their homes despite the fighting.

During the FGDs, when IDPs were asked about their living conditions in the evacuation camps, people spoke of the risks of living in tents. A mother from the Balo-i evacuation camp talked about how snakes would get inside their tents while they slept. In some cases in Pantar, men complained about the poor ventilation in their tents, which made them want to keep their tents open. However, this posed a higher risk for the children, as the open tents did not keep mosquitoes- which could be dengue carriers- away.

The inappropriateness of the use of conjugal rooms was also emphasised. This provision for married couples is not culturally and contextually appropriate to Meranaos and Muslim communities. IDPs instead requested plywood divisions. On the other hand, according to service providers, conjugal rooms were provided in order to lessen tensions between couples.

Camp managers spoke about the difficulty experienced by the IDPs in most evacuation centers. They use mats for sleeping, cushioning these with extra boxes in order to sleep more comfortably. They expressed concern regarding how the elderly men and women would sleep on the floor without proper bedding.

Many organizations responded to these problems by providing extra beddings, pillows and foam mattresses. However, not all ECs were provided with these, and not all IDPs were able to receive the same non-food items.

Some participants in the FGDs confirmed that they were renting spaces from land and home owners. When asked if they wanted to go back, most home owners expressed their desire to do so. The IDPs who were the vendors in the Marawi main battle area said that they would not return if they do not have money to fund their businesses again.

Among the more vulnerable were the elderly women. From the observations and responses of the respondents, elderly women were having difficulty accessing toilets due to distance from their tents. Also, most of them do not have the documents to prove their land ownership. Most of them had already settled there for several decades, without ever needing to present land titles.

“So rkami ron na walay ami, na da badn a titulo niyan ka kagya ko miyawna-una pn oto. Pero adn badn a deed of sale.” (Our home is ours- but we do not have a land title, only a deed of sale.) – **Married woman from Saguwaran**

Most of the land owners or natives of Marawi stayed in host homes or rented a temporary home for their families, instead of in the evacuation camps. This scenario is true for many government-employed IDPs who are willing and capable of living in areas outside of the evacuation camps. The challenge lies on their access to humanitarian aid in a prolonged crisis.

To illustrate, according to one of the volunteer researchers whose family stayed at the MSU campus:

“My parents rented a space in the MSU campus in order for them to be closer to work. They do not want to be in evacuation camps outside Marawi.” – Airah, a Research assistant who is an IDP herself from Lower Dansalan, Marawi City.

Among those providing support to IDPs is the Ranao Council, Inc. through their project RC OGOP (RC Helps) Program for Marawi IDPs. This civil society organization focused on the home-based IDPs within Iligan City, Balo-i and in Sultan Naga Dimaporo municipalities. The RC President narrated that there are different kinds of home-based evacuees.

“There are those who can afford to stay in hotels for several days; some can afford to rent apartments in Iligan; and there are those who were hosted by their relatives and friends in Iligan City. I, for one, was hosted by my wife’s relative and our co-RC member. We stayed with them for three months. Some of the worst-situated home-based IDPs were found in spontaneous settlements like madrasah buildings, abandoned lots and buildings and even in junk shops in Brgy. Santiago, Iligan City. It breaks my heart to see them but that is how they were in those days. Thank you to the Facebook viral posts, we are able to help other vulnerable individuals then.” – Engr. Ali Yusoph, RC President

The spontaneous settlements in Iligan and in other municipalities, as mentioned above, reached unacceptable numbers. These served as the sanctuaries of the IDPs while they were not yet allowed to go back to Marawi. Most of these areas are adopted by non-government organizations and other responders in order for IDPs to survive. The adoption entails sustained relief support (e.g. food supplies, health needs, cash and livelihood programs) from friends, government agencies and networks of the organization or responders. However, because they are not recognized evacuation centers or camps, they do not get much attention from the DSWD or from any government agency.



An evacuation center in Maria Cristina, Iligan City (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

Social media, especially Facebook, helped give these IDPs an avenue to be known and helped.

Some IDPs were able to assist their co-IDPs. Ms. Johaniah Yusoph, an IDP from Pangarungan village, and a DAR Employee and co-anchor of *S'bang Ka Marawi*, confirmed in her interview that she was able to assist her co-IDPs who evacuated to Tugaya, Lanao del Sur.

"I and my mother, who is a DSWD employee, had the chance to help all IDPs in Tugaya. I wrote to friends and relatives who are capable of helping our co-IDPs. Some helped and allowed me to distribute relief goods to some of the IDPs there. The challenge was heightened when Typhoon Vinta affected the Marawi IDPs there. Some even died during the disaster. Until today, I have been asking for more support from friends via Facebook."

The IDP Return Plan for the Marawi City local government, dubbed as "Kambalingan" indicates a total of 87,306 individuals from 27 barangays who have returned to their residences. On December 8, 2017, 309 housing units have been substantially completed at the transitory site in Barangay Sagonsongan, Marawi City. Other units are currently in various stages of construction. This has led to additional transitory sites to be built in Barangay Bito. The government aims to build temporary shelters for 50,000 families (UNHCR, December 2017). Further updates on the success of the IDP transfer are still expected from barangay officials.

More than temporary shelter for the IDPs- whether in the ECs, host home or renting out in various cities, most IDPs express the need for reparation of their lost property. They hope that the government would give cash incentives of about PHP 50,000 - 200,000 so they can build homes in their hometowns instead of renting or living with relatives. For those working in the government who also lost all their properties, they expressed that other programs (not only relief provision and small cash assistance) should also be considered- such as moratorium for loans, loans for IDPs with flexible and generous terms, and housing loans that allow building of homes in Lanao del Sur municipalities.

However, women IDPs in ECs have misgivings about the provision guidelines given by barangay officials. They learned that those people who are renting houses in the most affected area of Marawi will not be given houses at the Sagonsongan shelters. They were informed that they will be brought to their relatives in other municipalities.

Furthermore, male IDPs from Pantar affirmed that they are all required to vacate their tents in the Pantar Tent City by March for a military camp. This forced eviction of the IDPs in the ECs is yet form of displacement.

This may aggravate the heightening frustration of the IDPs in the evacuation areas. In fact, the participants in the validation workshop affirmed that they will not leave their ECs if they will not go straight to either temporary shelters or to their original homes in Marawi. These kinds of responses raise alarm bells for service providers. This must be given priority by the LGU and the TFBM.

At the validation sessions, it was revealed that there were international organizations that provided housing assistance for as long as the IDPs were the ones who will build their houses.

8. FAMILY REUNIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT OF DEAD AND MISSING

During a crisis or a disaster, most of the incidences of reunification occur only if an ample family reunification plan is made. In the case of the Marawi siege, many families evacuated for the sake of their children's safety. This need for safety also prevented the IDPs from bringing or securing their property at ground zero.

There are also cases reported in the media of family members who were left in the war zone, and are considered dead or missing.



Men ride a tricycle to home after relief item distribution in Iligan City
(Photo: Humanitarian Response Consortium)

From the FGD sessions, majority of the respondents were not aware of incidences of missing family members in their groups. However, there is one married woman from Iligan who narrated:

“So ipag akn ago so pakiwatan akn... Miyakapira dn kakasoyi o mga wata iyan a mama ka aya mapipikir iyan na kada bo na kagya ko makaoma kami sa Taraka na mini-announce dn a miyawafat gyoto a ipag akn ago so pakiwataan akn sa lcom. Dadn makowa so lawas iran. Di akn katawan o minireport oto sa proper authorities. Da ami den makowa ka didn kagaga soldan a Marinaut. Da miyaka-ogop rkami that time.” (My brother in law and his son were left behind. His family members tried to look for him; but when we reached Taraka, we learned that they died in lcom. We did not manage to recover corpses. I still do not know if they are reported this case to the proper authorities. We did not get the corpse because Marinaut is inaccessible; and no one had helped us in those times.) – **Married woman IDP in Iligan**

The City Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (CDRRMC) of Marawi is responsible for the management of cases of the missing and the dead, and have reported over hundreds of individuals buried in Makbarah, the Provincial Burial site in Marawi.

Service providers spoke of cases of dead people who were not claimed in the morgues of Iligan City; the local Imams had to find a way for these corpses to be buried in accordance with Islamic rites.

There is a case of a deaf and mute woman in an EC who had two missing children who have not been found. Another case mentioned was that of a missing nephew.

Management of the dead was among the difficult tasks of the service providers. It was difficult for them to find ways to bury the dead in the early days of the crisis. At the time, they could not even find the nearest route to Lanao del Sur municipalities for the burial sites.

9. INFORMATION ON HUMANITARIAN AID AND RESPONSES

Most of the respondents in this research stated that they had access to basic humanitarian aid such as that provided by the DSWD and other national and international agencies. In terms of information about humanitarian assistance, this was organized in the evacuation centers; home-based IDPs, on the other hand, had minimal or no access to humanitarian aid. Some home-based IDPs even had access to information only via text messages forwarded by friends and relatives. Some of the home-based IDPs specifically had issues regarding information about the cash-for-work program of the DSWD.

In the FGD sessions, almost all of the participants claimed that information did not reach the home-based IDPs.

“Kareregenan kami a mga home-based. Kadakelan ko pamemegayan na di rekami kisampay ka di ami katawan. Ba ta den pkaneg ko mg aped a bakwit.” (It is difficult for home-based IDPs like us. We do not get any help because we were not informed. We only hear about it from other evacuees.) – **Abdul, aa father from Balo-i during interview**

The above response is an example of the vulnerability of the IDPs staying with host families. They usually do not have proper access to information. This can be due to a lack of coordination by their host Barangay.

Some service providers during the validation workshop session affirmed that only the barangay chairpersons and camp volunteers are given information regarding relief operations. They would usually bring the relief packs to ECs, and not to host homes.

Nonetheless, there were organizations who tried their very best to maximize information dissemination. There were social media accounts created for IDPs; and there were tarpaulins installed and distributed in the ECs and host communities.

One of the best practices at the height of the crisis was the intervention conducted by the NGO IDEALS, Inc. when they implemented *S'bang Ka Marawi* radio program which also featured Facebook live coverage. The program was launched on June 12, 2017 as a platform for information dissemination and feedback mechanism in response to IDP needs. The organization even provided radio transistors and audio trumpets in the ECs to ensure the IDPs had access to information and knew about humanitarian responses available to them. IDEALS also trained IDP patrollers from different ECs and host communities to send status reports and provide feedback mechanisms from IDPs themselves. The Facebook live coverage and provision of hotlines helped the home-based IDPs and the relatives of IDPs here and abroad know about the situation of IDPs and the humanitarian services available.

10. EDUCATION

Education is one of the more difficult challenges confronting the IDPs, especially those staying in the ECs; their prolonged displacement prevents access to educational institutions. Concerns regarding the safety and security of school children have also been raised, as well as the concerns over pronouncement that there would be no support provided for this specific dilemma.

There are mothers who found difficulty in enrolling their children in school due to a lack of documents, financial support and the fear of discrimination. There are reported incidents of bullying, such as Marawi IDP school children tagged by classmates in Iligan as "ISIS-Maute" kids.

Aside from bullying, most mothers also worry about the financial needs of their children in school. Most mothers in the evacuation camps said that they let their children stop school for a while for a variety of reasons, including a language barrier in the host community.

"Bago so siege na so mga wata akn na di maka-klas sa Marawi Islamic Computer College (MICC) na iimanto na gumineksiran ka da budget iran. Psowaan iran emanto na kapangadi badn." (Before the siege, my children were studying at the MICC but now they all have stopped because of lack of financial support.)—**Married woman IDP in Iligan**

Aside from the lack of financial capacity, others mentioned that another factor was the distance of evacuation camps to the nearest school in the town.

"Kagya ko dapn katidawai na lima ko mga wata akn na di klas sa public school. Pero emanto na mingugunuk siran dn klas kay mawatan gya eskwelaan saya ago dapn a mga gamit iran." (Before the war, five of my children are studying in a public school. Now, they have all stopped due to distance, and our lack of financial means to send them to school.)

—**Married woman IDP in Saguiaran**

The schools near the ECs or host homes also do not accept late enrollees. There was a case in MSU Balo-i where high school students from other schools (non-MSU community high school) were not accepted for enrollment.

According to the Department of Education representative, Normilah Lininding Alonto, some international organizations provided educational support for IDPs.



Father and daughter evacuees in an evacuation center in Iligan City
(Photo: Humanitarian Response Consortium)

As of now na mappiya cran den, tinanggap namin sila sa school (Saguiaran Central Elementary School). Mini-separate cran baden sa classrooms kasi di ami ka-accommodate ka so mga regular classes... UNICEF ago Save the Children na myag provide cran sa "Temporary Learning Space" a para roo cran ma-accommodate. (As of now, the IDPs here are okay. We accepted them in school (Saguiaran Central Elementary School). We had to put them in a separate classroom because we cannot accommodate them in the regular classes. UNICEF and Save the Children have provided temporary learning spaces (TLC) so they can be accommodated there. –Normilah Alonto, DepEd District Supervisor of Saguiaran

Additionally, scholarships and support from close relatives helped them cope with the issue.

In an interview with the *S'bang ka Marawi* radio program, the Department of Education in Marawi City reported that the public schools in Marawi have opened satellite schools in Iligan City and in other municipalities in order to cater to IDP children. They even hired Meranao teachers to do away with language barriers for the mother-tongue based education programs in primary schools.

Currently, most of the educational institutions are back in Marawi, and have started operations since the *Kambalingan* program began. However, there is still a great need for continued support for education.

11. PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (PSS)

Displaced women, men, elderly and children require psychosocial support from trained individuals in order to overcome the trauma brought about by the conflict. The children will need specific support that is more structured and age-appropriate. Aside from the children, elderly women and men who are not as capable as the young men and women must be given proper spaces in order to air grievances, fears and even hopes.

Respondents were asked about their individual experiences from the first day of the Marawi siege up to the day of their evacuation. There were IDPs traumatized by being trapped in the war zone for prolonged periods of time, or losing loved ones along the way to evacuation and recovery.

Psychosocial support (PSS) programs by independent groups of psychologists (e.g. the LIFT: Leading Individuals to Flourish and Thrive group from MSU Marawi) in most of the evacuation centers and host homes in the nearby municipalities and cities are coordinated with DSWD. Most PSS services provide support activities that include identifying and referring individuals requiring specialized support through professional mental health services. Due to prolonged crisis and absence of livelihood among IDPs, the more psychologically affected may possibly need specific PSS programs.



During a relief items distribution in Iligan City (Photo: Humanitarian Response Consortium)



Preparing for relief items distribution in an evacuation center in Iligan City (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)

In Pantar, some women requested for more psychosocial support programs—they believe that, if given the chance to share their emotions, they get the chance to move on. There are those who requested that a separate PSS be done when they get back to their homes in Marawi City.

Psychosocial support services are needed by all of the population displaced by this crisis. Access to this type of service will not only develop self-confidence, but will also help ensure the displaced individuals of better mental and psychological health.

Both men and women are requesting for further psychosocial support services. Also, the IDPs in host homes, or those that are outside evacuation centers, require psychosocial support as well. Little or no services are availed of by the home-based displaced population in all areas covered by this study. This only points to the pressing need to inform everyone affected by the Marawi siege that there are psychosocial support services available to them.

In the *S'bang ka Marawi* radio program, LIFT coordinator, Prof. Aminoding Limpao of Mindanao State University already introduced the subject. The DOH Region 10 Information Officer explained the progression of responses: first, basic services and security have to be met before going through the psychosocial support activities; after which, individual, family or group interventions are done, before a final level of specialized services- such as professional treatment- is deemed necessary.

In the Family Conversations conducted by AMDF, psychosocial education is the first session conducted among the families. It is important to note that all members of the family need this session- not only the children in most cases, or the women in some cases. Women in the families who participated in the Family Conversations appreciated the knowledge that their husbands and children are receiving psychosocial support as well.

Mohammad Salahudin U. Samporna explained that the DSWD was actively helping IDPs. He said:

“We have conducted some psycho-social activities for adults and for children. We are also giving them relief goods to sustain them from hunger. We also give them financial assistance for them to buy what they need. We have observed that some of the IDPs have not yet recovered from the traumatic experience they have encountered.... However, difficulties include miscommunication between us and the evacuees. Anger and impatience are the main causes of misunderstanding and miscommunication. We need to explain things to them in a calm and nice way.”

There is no question that the psychosocial wellbeing of IDPs must be dealt with efficiently and sensitively. The prolonged displacement of the IDPs has resulted in different and more complex effects for ECs and host communities.



Children play while their parents participate in AMDF's Family Conversation session in Pantar, Lanao del Sur (Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam)



BOUTEILLE
ISOLANTE
D'FABRIQUE EN CHINE
CAPACITY 2.20LT.

HERMOS POT
CAPACITY 2.20LT.

HIGH quality stainless steel made from
high quality stainless steel for health and
safety. Very sturdy and durable. To clean
hand wash with soap, just wash the
this stainless steel with warm water.
Please thank our staff.



Letter-Day

ELIC
RESPONS

A woman receives kitchen essentials and mats, Iligan City
(Photo: Humanitarian Response Consortium)

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED: REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

The Marawi siege, and the crises that ensued with the prolonged fighting brought to light challenges that continue to persist in situations of emergencies. As we confront these challenges, we learn from our experiences and hope to build on these lessons to better and more effectively respond to emergencies, particularly to differentiated needs of those affected. Such lessons highlight the need for contextualised humanitarian response and recovery plans, rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all framework that often results in inefficient, gender insensitive, culturally and age inappropriate programmes that exacerbate the already dire situation of victims, particularly displaced people. What follows are key learnings and reflections we have garnered from the field in the conduct of this research. Running across all these lessons and challenges, is the need to reach home-based IDPs. While making up 95% of the total displaced population, they had the least access to all humanitarian aid and response programmes.

ON BASIC NEEDS (WASH CLUSTER, FOOD SECURITY, SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS)

Water plays a very important function in people's everyday lives. In situations of emergencies, access to clean and potable water is vital for one's survival. In the case of Marawi, there is an urgent need for the continuous provision of safe, clean and potable drinking water. The provision of functioning water systems will also minimize health risks, sanitation and protection issues.

The Marawi siege resulted in protracted fighting and prolonged displacement of residents. As such, programs on food security should be well-planned and must take long-term displacement into consideration. This is to ensure that food stuff distributed- particularly rice- is of good quality. It is also necessary to take into account the different needs of IDPs so that food provision can provide for the nutritional needs of all, especially the elderly, young children, pregnant women, and those with chronic illnesses.

The provision of temporary shelter should also take into consideration specific gendered needs and cultural practices. For example, the provision of a conjugal room for Muslim communities is an issue that needs to be addressed by local government agencies, as well as local and international humanitarian responders. Similarly, toilets, latrines, tents, beddings and essential kitchen wares should be sensitive to the needs, context and number of IDP families.

ON LIVELIHOOD AND CASH PROGRAMS

Livelihood programs must be prioritized, especially in situations of prolonged conflict and long-term displacement. Provision of such programs can help IDPs become self-reliant and self-sustaining;

and as such, these must be carefully planned and implemented, taking into consideration the differentiated needs of men and women to allow them equal access to such programs, and to facilitate their meaningful participation in such activities. As well, the provision of cash can be considered and incorporated into programs, for example, as capital to start small scale businesses, or to allow IDPs to find alternative livelihood activities. Such capital can be provided alongside skills training and start up kits.

ON LEGAL ISSUES AND ASSISTANCE (GENDER BASED VIOLENCE, IDENTITY, MANAGEMENT OF THE DEAD AND THE MISSING)

A pressing issue that was raised during the research is the need for legal assistance—to recover lost legal documents such as land titles, birth certificates, marriage certificates, etc. Legal assistance is also necessary to ensure victims' identities.

An important lesson learned is the need to incorporate the provision of legal assistance into emergency response and recovery plans. Such assistance must include the provision of protection and verification programs of the dead and missing family members in evacuation camps, host-homes; as well as ensuring that IDPs will have access to all legal documents necessary to facilitate their return to their lands or abandoned residence.

Also important is the need for protection and assistance to address all concerns related to gender-based violence. This means that ensuring women's desks and health centers are in place in all camps and barangays, and support for these are prioritized.

ON HEALTH (GENERAL HEALTH ISSUES, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES, PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT)

In the cases of emergencies, it is important to prioritize the provision of all forms of health services, including general, reproductive and psychosocial services. It is also important to be more deliberate in information-sharing about these services—how, and where to access them. Equally urgent is the establishment of women's desks in health centers that can provide comprehensive services on reproductive health, family planning, as well as STI and HIV concerns.

Psychosocial support programs that are gender-sensitive and culturally- and age-appropriate must also be incorporated within response and recovery plans. These services should be accessible in all areas, including evacuation centers and host communities. Displaced populations who owned properties and houses at ground zero have to be given proper attention and specialized psychosocial support to minimize heightened restlessness.

ON EDUCATION

The prolonged conflict and long-term displacement has had negative effects on the schooling of young people. As such, free-tuition for all IDPs through scholarship programs for various levels should be made available and accessible. Alternative learning systems should also be provided in camps and in barangays where host families are located. Teachers and others in the education sector should also be capacitated to respond to the particular needs of IDP children. As well, policies to protect displaced children such as Anti-Bullying policies, should also be implemented. Programs for life-long learning, for out of school youth, adults and the elderly should also be prioritized.



Focus group discussion with young women (Photo: Att Yusoph)



Research staff chats with a Meranau girl in Pantar tent city (Photo: Att Yusoph)

RECOMMENDATIONS

In war, as in other disasters, women, young boys and girls find themselves in more difficult situations and at a higher risk because of gender roles and the existence of stereotypes. This is especially true among Muslim Filipinos. The Marawi 'crisis' response provide lessons, and proposals for more inclusive, gender-responsive and transformative response, disaster preparedness and management.

These recommendations cut across, rather than correspond to each of the response themes.

FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS AND LINE AGENCIES:

- With the support of other humanitarian actors, to ensure the proper profiling of disaster survivors, including home-based IDPs. Such profiling should include the deliberate gathering of age- and sex-disaggregated data. Generating and providing access to such information will allow all humanitarian actors to better track the conditions of all IDPs, and therefore be able to respond to their needs in a more efficient and timely manner.
- To work closely with community leaders, and civil society organisations to ensure that correct and accurate information about the situation is disseminated and made easily accessible to all residents. This will allow for a more effective early warning mechanism, therefore also giving residents and all actors concerned ample time to plan and respond to the emergency.

FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT:

- Coordinate and strengthen the early warning and early response (EWER) mechanisms of the different protection agencies/NGOs and strengthen the capacity of the local communities in self-protection.
- Provide implementation guidelines and minimum standards on context-specific, community-based, gender-sensitive, and culturally- and age-appropriate humanitarian response and recovery plans. This must include organising meaningful consultations with affected communities, including women, children and the elderly, and developing durable relocation, recovery or return plans.
- Ensure that context and gender analysis is well integrated in the programmes and actions of the government. Skills training and capacity-building must be provided to ensure that responses are in accordance with minimum standards set by the government.
- Establish a mechanism for the proper turnover of services to local providers that takes into consideration long-term displacement. This is to ensure the continuity of the delivery of services beyond the emergency timeline, and that the needs of IDPs are well responded to, especially in a prolonged displacement.

HUMANITARIAN ACTORS, NGOS AND INGOS:

- Continuously undertake context and gender analysis during and even after a conflict situation. This includes risks analysis, such as threats to and vulnerability of men, women, boys and girls.
- Capacitate the community for self-protection that involves the link between gender transformation and conflict resolution.

- Capacitate humanitarian responders in protection and safeguarding mechanisms at all levels to ensure that sexual exploitation and abuse in emergency situations is prevented, or immediately and appropriately addressed.
- Strengthen partnerships and coordination among humanitarian response actors to ensure more effective and efficient delivery of response, continuous sharing of knowledge and experiences, including stories of healing and reconciliation.

ACRONYMS

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AMDF	Al Mujadilah Development Foundation, Inc.
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
COM	Community Organizers Multiversity
DAFAC	Disaster Assistance Family Access Card
DPWH	Department of Public Works and Highways
DRRMC	Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
GPH	Government of the Philippines
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
HH	Host Homes
HRC	Humanitarian Response Consortium
IDEALS	Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
KII	Key Informant Interview
LIFT	Leading Individuals to Flourish and Thrive
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MSU	Mindanao State University
NFA	National Food Authority
NGO	Non-government Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UnYPhil-Women	United Youth of the Philippines-Women

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