



PHILIPPINES: SUPPORT FOR INTERNALLY DIS-PLACED PERSONS IN SURIGAO DEL SUR

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

SITUATION REPORT • 21 September 2015



Internally displaced families in Surigao del Sur currently living in tents and in the Tandag City Sports Complex
Photo Credit: SDS-PDRRM Office Office

Highlights

■ Using IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), a tool to track displacement, the IOM Office in Cotabato conducted an assessment mission on 17 September to identify the most pressing needs of the internally displaced persons (IDPs). The assessment was shared and discussed with local government partners. The most urgent needs identified are: upgrades of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, the provision of non-food items, emergency shelter assistance, protection and health support.

■ Working since the onset of the military and paramilitary attacks, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the local government unit (LGUs) of Tandag, have provided household kits such as jerry cans, blankets and sleeping mats. These household kits are supporting the IDPs to improve their current living conditions while residing inside evacuation sites.

■ Supporting the efforts of the Government of the Philippines and the Mindanao Humanitarian Team, IOM can provide additional non-food items as well as conduct upgrades in the evacuation sites, including the construction of cooking and kitchen counters and latrines. As co-chair of the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) cluster, IOM can also build the capacities of IDP leaders and LGU partners on humanitarian response during natural and human-made emergencies.

Situation Overview

The displacement in this region started back in May 2015 when the Lumad schools were forcibly shutdown. A teenage girl was raped by the military after the infamous "rescue/attack" led by Rep Cotamco. Three soldiers paid Php 63,000 to the family of the rape victim. These three have been recommended for court martial. The new Commission on Human Rights Chair Chito Gascon issued a report condemning the extrajudicial killings by paramilitary and army forces for the Lumad killings and calling the government to respond to the humanitarian crisis. The affected ancestral domain areas (places of origin) are known as mining-rich areas.

Currently, more than 2,000 persons, mostly Lumads, an indigenous group of people in southern Philippines, are taking refuge in Tandag City Sports Complex as they were forced to flee from their homes and sources of livelihood out of fear from the intensified military and paramilitary attacks in their communities. These people are members of a Lumad organization called the Malahutayong Pakigbisog Alang sa Sumusunod (MAPASU), who is protesting against mining operations, land conversions and plantations encompassing five municipalities of Surigao del Sur.

On the other side of MAPASU area in Barangay Siagao, Surigao del Sur, Lumad communities experienced threats and intimidation by the Armed Forces of the Philippines with the "Hasmin paramilitary group" that recently killed brothers Crisanto and Loloy Tabugol last August 28, 2015.

Witnessing the execution of their leaders and tribesmen and their lives brazenly threatened, Lumads were forced to flee their homes. As of 18 September, a total of 2,886 individuals or 572 families from seven barangays in five municipalities of Surigao del Sur are seeking refuge in the Sports Center of the Surigao Del Sur provincial capitol in Tandag City.

CONTACTS

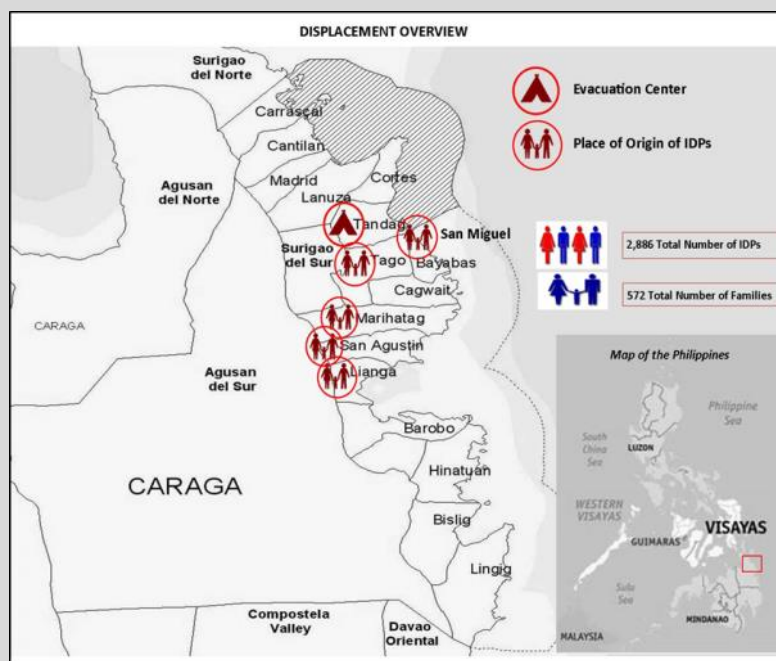
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Internal Displacement

On 1 September 2015, 1,468 IDPs or 266 families from the town of Lianga left their homes followed by 294 individuals or 92 families from San Agustin on 2 September. On the following days of 3 and 4 September, another 894 IDPs or 154 families from the town of San Miguel and 147 individuals or 33 families from the town of Marihatag were forced to leave their villages. On 8 September, another group of 74 IDPs or 13 families from Tago arrived at the evacuation centre. The IDP figures have reached to as high as 3,227 individuals or 598 families, but it reduced to 2,886 persons or 572 families during the latest assessment conducted on 18 September, as some of the IDPs have opted to stay with their relatives and friends due to safety concerns and congestions in the evacuation centre.



Humanitarian Needs

NFI

IDPs have received some non-food items (NFIs) such as hygiene kits, but they only received a few or incomplete number of these items. Jerry cans and water containers have been distributed by the Provincial Government and the International Committee of the Red Cross, however dignity kits for women were not included among the assistance. There is a need to provide hygiene kits and NFIs for 89 elderly, including persons with disabilities as these groups of people are more vulnerable to illness and other health hazards.



The Provincial Social Welfare and Development and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) of the Caraga Region have assigned field staff to manage the evacuation site. Evacuation centre committees have been organized, however they need to be oriented and capacitated on the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) on the roles and functions of all CCCM committees and involve community participation to ensure that CCCM is fairly working.



Emergency shelter assistance is also one of the immediate needs. Only 100 plastic sheets from a local NGO called Balay Mindanao have been provided to the IDPs. However more than 400 families are living in sports complex without privacy partition, which would affect the protection and safety, of these families, especially among women and children. Makeshift shelters are not elevated, where IDPs' living areas are being flooded during the current rainy season due to absence of drainage system. Tents do not have fire breaks which would create hazards when there is sudden fire.



Referral pathways on protection issues, such as Gender-Based Violence, health and complain mitigation are in place in the site. The provincial government and DSWD have assigned desk and 24/7 security personnel in the area. But staff who handle these services need to be strengthened and trained based on the international minimum standards on protection, to prevent violence and abuse especially among women and children.



Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities are among one of the key concerns of the IDPs. There are only 15 units of functional latrines and portalets are being used by 2,886 IDPs. As per Sphere standards, the evacuation centre needs to have at least 120 latrines at the rate of 20 individuals per unit to address the scarcity of WASH facilities. No water points have been installed for washing, cooking and personal hygiene. The provincial government and other local agencies are regularly providing water but only for drinking and washing. Only one bathing and washing cubicle is present in the evacuation centre without roof, serving the whole IDP population. There are no designed latrines for elderly and persons with special concerns and persons with disabilities.



The Integrated Provincial Health Office (IPHO) and Department of Health from the Caraga region have already provided mental health and psychosocial support services to 1,346 IDPs. There are still more than 1,000 individuals that need to have these services as part of their coping mechanism. As per IPHO records, there are top five reported diseases as of 17 September, as follows: 1. Acute Respiratory Illness affecting 548 IDPs; 2. Influenza, affecting 204 IDPs; 3. headache/malaise/pain, affecting 156 IDPs; 4. acute watery diarrhoea, affecting 97 IDPs; and 5. fever with unknown cause of infection, affecting 56 IDPs.

IOM's Response

IOM will continue to support the efforts of the Government of the Philippines and local government partners in Mindanao in order to ensure the safeness and protection of the IDPs in evacuation sites. IOM is currently looking for the following funding requirements to address the most pressing needs:

- ⇒ WASH assistance and improvement—USD 200,000
- ⇒ Camp Coordination and Camp Management—USD 100,000
- ⇒ Shelter and Non-food Items—USD 100,000
- ⇒ Capacity Building for partners (LGUs and NGOs) —USD 100,000

\$ 500,000

Funding required

\$0

Funding received

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