

INCIDENT BACKGROUND

In late December 2017, skirmishes stemming from a land dispute broke out between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and a faction of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) that has reportedly declared allegiance to the Islamic State. The land in question covers the Mount Firis Complex, an area that is considered sacred ground by several Indigenous Peoples (IPs) groups – the Teduray, Lambangian, and Dulangan Manobo. It is said that several towns in the province of Maguindanao such as Datu Unsay, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Guindulungan, Shariff Aguak, and Talayan were carved out from the surrounding land of Mt. Firis Complex.

On 25 December, the BIFF faction tried to overrun a Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) detachment in Mt. Firis, with the aim of occupying it, and ignited a firefight with the military. A number of IP families from Sitio Makun of Barangay Limpongo, in Datu Hoffer municipality, pre-emptively evacuated as a result. Several improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were planted, which detonated in the following days, killing and wounding a number of Government troops as well as civilians. More civilian displacement was recorded until the end of 2017. Some civilian houses were also reportedly set on fire by the rebel group.

CURRENT SITUATION

Pre-emptive evacuations were again reported in several other communities in the municipalities of Shariff Aguak, Shariff Saydona Mustapha, Datu Salibu, Datu Unsay and Datu Saudi Ampatuan on 10 January 2018 because of the ongoing military operations against the IS-inspired BIFF faction. This also triggered a re-positioning of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (MILF-BIAF) units in the area in order to avoid the risk of misencounters between government forces and the MILF. The displaced populations in these communities returned three days after being displaced.

From 25 December 2017 until this report, around 1,279 families (estimated 6,395 persons) in total were displaced as a result of the continuing conflict. It should be noted that this figure is limited to the reported numbers shared with Protection Cluster members. Out of this number, some 790 families (approximately 3,950 individuals) have been verified to have returned to their habitual residences (see table below).

PROTECTION ISSUES AND RESPONSE

ISSUES	RESPONSES	WAYS FORWARD
Threats to life, safety, and security		
Roadside bombings and planting of improvised explosive device (IED) have killed and wounded Government troops as well as civilians. This has caused fear among civilians living in these areas, who face risks as they go about their daily activities.	A joint meeting of the Municipal Peace and Order Council (MPOC) of the municipalities of Datu Hoffer, Datu Unsay and Datu Saudi Ampatuan was conducted on 9 January to discuss these issues. Security forces were also part of the meeting.	Follow-up protection monitoring and possible referrals for access to shelter assistance (through DSWD) for those whose houses were damaged.
Four (4) houses were reportedly burned in Sitio Makun, Barangay Kubentong on 26 December 2017. Another 16 houses in Barangay Kubentong and two (2) houses in Barangay Talibaduk were burned on 31 December 2017, all in Datu Hoffer Municipality.	Government troops continue to provide security to civilians by increasing their presence in affected areas.	
Access to shelter		
A municipal gym and a public terminal are used as evacuation sites in Datu Unsay. It is situated along the national road and adjacent to a military detachment, which is often a target of harassment from the armed group. These ECs have no walls and partitions, posing privacy concerns, especially among girls and women.	Local governments and other stakeholders facilitated IDPs' movement to designated evacuation centers (schools, barangay halls, and covered courts).	Follow-up protection monitoring, particularly on the situation of IDPs who have not yet returned and are still in temporary shelters.
Schools and madrasahs are used as temporary shelters by the IDPs. They have to vacate the classrooms during daytime when classes are ongoing, then return in the evening. In some locations, IDPs are cramped in small rooms.		
Duty-bearers and humanitarian actors face challenges in		

tracking the IDPs because most are staying with host families, while others have built makeshift shelters. This because the locations of identified evacuation centers are far from the IDPs' places of origin.		
Access to food aid and nutrition		
IDPs brought limited supplies of food when they were displaced. Some were forced to sell their livestock to provide food for their families.	ARMM-HEART provided food assistance to IDPs in their locations of displacement.	Follow-up protection monitoring and coordination/advocacy with DSWD, ARMM-HEART and other relevant actors.
Access to water, sanitation, and hygiene		
Safe and potable water is unavailable in the evacuation centres, forcing the IDPs to purchase water from a water truck. Some do not have water containers to use and have to share with others. (ECs in <i>Datu Unsay and Datu Hoffer</i>)		Follow-up protection monitoring Referral of cases to WASH Cluster leads.
There are available water pumps but the water is not safe for drinking. It is used for cooking, bathing, and laundry. IDPs have to buy drinking water. (ECs in <i>Kitango Elem. School; Madrasah in Kitango; Mahad in Sitio Tatapan</i>)		
<i>ECs in Datu Unsay Municipality:</i> There are public toilets that are not available for use because of lack of water. In the absence of toilets, some defecate in the open – fields, bushes, bodies of water and other open spaces, which is around 20 minutes' walk from the displacement sites. <i>Kitango Elem. School EC:</i> There is only one available toilet each for males and females, which is also used as a bathing area but is not well-lit. <i>Madrasah being used as EC in Kitango and Mahad in Sitio Tatapan:</i> There is only one (1) available toilet that is not well-lit. Facilities for males and females are not segregated.		
The lack of WASH infrastructures forced some of the IDPs to return to their habitual residences or build makeshift shelters that are near water streams.		
Access to Health Services		
There are reported cases of common sicknesses such as colds, cough, and diarrhoea. (EC in <i>Mahad, Sitio Tatapan</i>)	Health personnel of the Rural Health Unit have visited the evacuation centers to provide medical assistance. Local health centers are open for IDPs seeking medical attention.	Follow-up protection monitoring Referral of cases to Health Cluster leads.
Access to Education		
Classes continue even if classrooms are used as evacuation centres. IDPs occupy the classrooms in the evening and vacate it in the morning so that the classes will not be disrupted. It was observed that approximately half of the total number of students were absent even when classes have resumed after the holiday break.		Follow-up protection monitoring Referral of issues to Education Cluster leads.
IDP children from Barangay Pikeg are not attending school. There is no clear information if they can be accommodated by the schools in the host communities.		
Access to Livelihoods		
Most of the IDPs are farmers. For those who are still displaced, their main concern is access to their farms, as their crops are ready to be harvested. People fear that their crops might get spoiled or looted. This situation forced some to return amid the still volatile security situation, although they left their valuables in the displacement sites.	Some of the IDPs' other basic needs were partially met by distributions of non-food items coming from NGOs, Red Cross, Ulama Council, other religious organizations, and private individuals, as well as donations channeled through media organizations.	Follow-up protection monitoring and advocacy with duty-bearers regarding food security and livelihood assistance.
Some of the IDPs had no choice but to sell their livestock to be able to provide food for their families.		

PERSONS OF CONCERN

	Location (Origin)	Location (Current)
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No. of Fam	+/-	No. of Persons	+/-	Province	Mun	Barangay	Sitio	Province	Mun	Barangay	Sitio	Exact Location
280	+/-	1400	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Limpongo		Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Limpongo		Home-based
60	+/-	300	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Kubentong		Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Kubentong		Home-based
70	+/-	350	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Talibadok		Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Talibadok		Home-based; DCC
40	+/-	200	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Apas		Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Apas		Home-based
84	+/-	420	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Macalag		Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Macalag		Home-based
105	+/-	525	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Taib		Maguindanao	Datu Hoffer	Taib		Home-based
30	+/-	150	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Gandingan	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta		Old DCC
49	+/-	245	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Gandingan	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta		Covered court
45	+/-	225	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Gandingan	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Hill 24	Home-based
8	+/-	40	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Gandingan	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta		Public market
26	+/-	130	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Gandingan	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta		Irrigation
144	+/-	720	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Bagong	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta		Home-based
26	+/-	130	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Maitumaig	Firis	Maguindanao	Datu Saudi Ampatuan	Kabengi	Hill 224	Kyamko ES
176	+/-	880	+/-	Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Kuloy	Lab	Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Kuloy	Patra; Taligaba; Mizta	
100	+/-	500	+/-	Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Bagong Upam		Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Bagong Upam	Maguindanao	
20	+/-	100	+/-	Maguindanao	Shariff Saydona Mustapha	Pikeg, Malangog		Maguindanao	Datu Saudi Ampatuan	Kitango		Kitango ES
16	+/-	80	+/-	Maguindanao	Shariff Saydona Mustapha	Pikeg, Malangog		Maguindanao	Datu Saudi Ampatuan	Kitango		Madrasah in Kitango
TOTAL												
1,279	+/-	6,395	+/-									

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

No. of Fam	+/-	No. of Persons	+/-	Location (Displaced)			Location (Current)			Type (Please select one)		
				Province	Municipality	Barangay	Province	Municipality	Barangay	Return	Relocation	Local Integration
30	+/-	150	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	x		
49	+/-	245	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	x		
45	+/-	225	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	x		
8	+/-	40	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	x		
26	+/-	130	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	x		
144	+/-	720	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	Maguindanao	Datu Unsay	Meta	x		
176	+/-	880	+/-	Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Kuloy	Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Kuloy	X		
100	+/-	500	+/-	Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Bagong Upam	Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Bagong Upam	X		
20	+/-	100	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Saudi Ampatuan	Kitango	Maguindanao	Shariff Saydona Mustapha	Pikeg, Malangog	X		
16	+/-	80	+/-	Maguindanao	Datu Saudi Ampatuan	Kitango	Maguindanao	Shariff Saydona Mustapha	Pikeg, Malangog	X		
176	+/-	880	+/-	Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Kuloy	Maguindanao	Shariff Aguak	Kuloy	X		
TOTAL												
790	+/-	3,950	+/-									

SOURCES:

Department of Social Welfare and Development – Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center (DSWD-DROMIC)
 Community and Family Services International (CFSI)
 ACTED

The IDP Protection Assessment Form (IDPPAR)

The IDP Protection Assessment Form aims to provide a starting point for information and analysis that can help humanitarian agencies, policy makers and other stakeholders concerning instances of forced displacement or solutions (repatriation, resettlement, integration). The number of people displaced/affected may differ from the number in need of humanitarian assistance. To the extent possible, the terminology used in the Dashboard reflects the *UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* and other sources of international law and practice. The information reported in the IDP Protection Assessment Forms has been received from members of the Protection Cluster across Mindanao. Consequently, unreported cases of forced displacement and solutions are not reflected. Updates will be provided as and when more information is received from members. Although efforts are made to verify the data, the Protection Cluster takes no responsibility for the incompleteness or inaccuracy of the information. At the end of every month, this data is compiled and distributed through the **"Protection Dashboard"**. The information provided in this IDP Assessment Report does not necessarily reflect the views of UNHCR or any individual member of the Protection Cluster.

The Protection Cluster

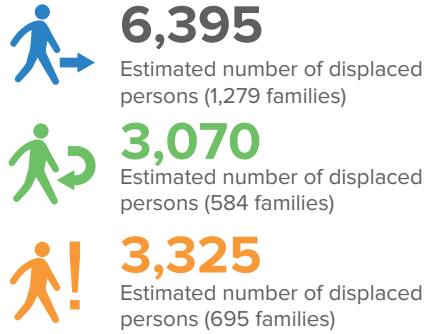
In the Philippines, the protection cluster has been established by the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) Circular No 5 series of 10 May 2007 (Institutionalizing Cluster Approach in Philippine Disaster System). The cluster approach is part of a global response aimed at providing more timely and consistent help to the internally displaced and other affected people in complex emergencies and disasters. The Protection Cluster in Mindanao meets in Cotabato, Iligan, Davao and other cities on a regular basis. Currently there are over 100 participating agencies including from the Government, State, Civil Society, national and international NGOs and agencies, as well as the United Nations. For more information, please visit the Protection Cluster website <http://www.protectioncluster.org/philippines/> or e-mail us at PHICOPRC@unhcr.org



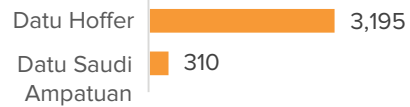
IDPPAR: AFP vs IS-inspired BIFF Armed Conflict

Issue no. 1

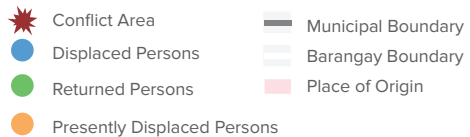
KEY FIGURES



IDPs per displaced location



LEGEND



LOCATION MAP

