

## BRIDGING THE GAPS: ENSURING PROVISION OF PROTECTION SERVICES TO PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT IN MARAWI CITY

### BACKGROUND

- On 23 May 2017, the siege in Marawi City began when the Islamic State-inspired group known as Maute Group had invaded the city and clashed with the government security forces. Martial Law was declared on that same day following the burning of cathedral and school, and the jail break. On October 2017, this month-long siege came to an end when the Philippine government called off the conflict. The urban gunfight between the group has caused devastating damages not only to the city, but also to the lives of its people.
- Majority of the residents had fled the city on the 24th of May to seek safety in the neighboring towns in Provinces of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur, and Cagayan de Oro City while some of the residents sought refuge with their relatives in metropolitan cities such as Cebu, Davao, and Manila and as well as in other parts of the country.
- Marawi City has 96 barangays. Of which, 24 barangays which are situated in the business center areas were mostly affected by the siege. The 72 remaining barangays were least affected by the said siege, and residents of these barangays gradually returned to their habitual residences on October 2017.
- Kathagombalay, a Maranao term for “rebuilding”, was established as a one-stop-shop where internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the most affected areas (MAA) can process their permits for the repair and reconstruction of their houses and properties. The 24 barangays that are mostly affected are grouped into nine sectors. The first seven sectors are composed of 15 barangays whose residents have been processing their permits for eventual returns. The barangays under the last two sectors are covering the reclamation sites that are still for discussion. The Kathagombalay is a mechanism which ensures that the returnees are the rightful owners of their lands and houses to prevent conflicts among the claimants. According to the report from the Office of the Building Official (OBO) of the City Government of Marawi, there are 2,062 individuals who have processed their applications for the Kathagombalay. Of the total number, 1,960 individuals already have approved permits and can now return to their homes, but they still need to either repair/reconstruct their houses or reoccupy them.
- The rehabilitation program in Marawi City has started. The re-occupancy or return of the residents are on a cluster approach and this would depend on the progress of the rehabilitation, including the installation of basic facilities such as electricity and water.

### CURRENT PROTECTION CONDITION OF THE PROTRACTEDLY DISPLACED FAMILIES AT THE TRANSITORY SITES IN BOGANGA, ROROGAGUS, AND SAGONSONGAN IN MARAWI CITY

As of the reporting date, there are around 17,446 families (approximately 87,230 individuals) belonging from the MAA in Marawi City that are still displaced and in need of durable solutions. Of the total number, 2,943 families (approximately 14,715 individuals) are in different transitory sites situated in Marawi City, Matungao Municipality and Saguiaran Municipality, while the rest are with their host families in various locations. Reports revealed that there are about 113 families (approximately 565 individuals) who returned to their homes in Barangay Tolali, Marawi City, and approximately 209 families (approximately 1,045 individuals) were transferred at the relocation sites in Barangay Dulay West, Marawi City and in Barangay Pagalamatan, Saguiaran Municipality.

### Access to WASH

Poor hygiene and sanitation conditions related to full septic tanks that need emptying have been the top issues for the IDPs in the three transitory sites. This issue increases the individual's exposure to health risks especially those belonging to the vulnerable sectors. Some of the households devised their septic tanks to connect in the drainage canal where the dirt will directly flow.

Access to sufficient supply of water is a prevailing concern for the IDPs in the three transitory sites. Water ration is usually done twice a week, with a water delivery capacity ranging from 40,000 liters to 120,000 liters. Despite this action, water supplies from various organizations are inadequate to meet the water demands of the IDPs, given that said water ration needs to serve around 3,000 families (approximately 15,000 individuals) from various transitory sites.



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## Access to food aid

IDPs have faced problems on access to food since the quarantine protocol was imposed by the authorities. Access to food depends upon income available to the household, and this has been severely affected due to the pandemic as their movements are restricted and thus, livelihood activities have also been disrupted. IDPs are concerned on the food aid that they are receiving from various organizations because it is not nutritious, and at most, they are processed foods.

## Access to livelihood support

The livelihood activities of the IDPs have been affected by the pandemic, especially when the quarantine protocol was imposed wherein movements were restricted to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. There were families whose capital for their small businesses were already exhausted and they faced difficulties in getting back to their normal living. The government had extended support, and each family were provided with PhP14,000.00 as part of the Transitory Family Support Package (TFSP) that assists them to start-up with their livelihoods. However, most of them used the money to pay for their debts and/or buy food and other necessities for their families. There are organizations which also provided cash assistance to IDPs, such as the Action Against Hunger, Care Philippines, Save the Children and World Vision.

## Camp Coordination and Camp Management

There is lack of dedicated camp managers or administrators in the transitory sites whom the IDPs could approach whenever they have concerns and who could liaise with concerned authorities as regards the protection and humanitarian issues the IDPs faced in the transitory sites.

## Access to safety and security

There are reported cases of theft, selling of illegal drugs, and alleged presence of illegal drug pushers at the transitory sites. Despite these issues, there are no security outpost and/or presence of security actors. An IDP Peace Action Team (IPAT) was organized in every transitory site but it cannot provide the safety and security needed by the IDPs due to due to limited security equipment, lack of authoritative powers, and lack of trainings on protection, safety and security.

There are shelters located in landslide prone areas, particularly in Boganga Transitory Site.

There are reported build-up of tension among the IDPs due to various reasons, including but not limited to, water distribution schedule and protection assistance that they receive.

## Housing, Land and Properties

There are a number of IDPs who faced difficulties in complying with the requirements for the Kathagombalay, while those who have secured permits for the Kathagombalay are financially incapable to reconstruct their houses in MAA which may further delay their intended return to their places of origin.



## BRIDGING THE GAPS

**The following are the recommended actions to help bridge the gaps and address the continuing protection needs of the displaced populations:**

- ✓ Strengthening of the sanitation and hygiene promotion activities. There is a need to educate the people on proper waste management and conduct regular desludging of septic tanks in the transitory sites.
- ✓ Installation of on-site water sources at the transitory sites or regular water rationing that are sufficient to meet the demands of the IDPs to promote regular hand washing to avoid the spread and transmission of COVID-19.
- ✓ Documentation of persons with special needs should be done to provide specific interventions on their needs, e.g., medical services and assistance for the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- ✓ Strengthening of CCCM at the transitory sites to address the sectoral issues and build on the capacities of the IDP leaders on CCCM.
- ✓ Establishment of referral mechanism and improve the awareness of IDPs on how they could access the available services that they may be needing.
- ✓ Installation of information boards where IDPs can access timely and accurate information that they need, including the contact details of local officials.
- ✓ Repair and installation of security outpost and streetlights at the transitory sites.
- ✓ Provision of support to families who could not comply the requirements for Kathagombalay as well as provision of assistance to families whose houses were damaged and need reconstruction.
- ✓ Regular food ration comprising of healthy and nutritious foods.
- ✓ Provision of sustainable livelihood assistance that is relevant to the skills of the IDPs.