

PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT IN SULU PROVINCE (AFP vs ASG)

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INCIDENT BACKGROUND

In June 2017, civilians from Barangay Kabbon Takas, Patikul municipality evacuated due to armed confrontations between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the alleged members of the Abu Sayaff Group (ASG). According to the Barangay Chairman, his constituents have been displaced multiple times due to frequent armed encounters. The displaced families fled from Barangay Kabbon Takas to Barangay Kan Ague, in the same municipality. Through an agreement with a private land owner, they were allowed to use a portion of a lot where they built temporary shelters and makeshift shanties to stay in while the situation was still unstable.

In January 2019, the municipal local government unit (LGU) of Patikul in coordination with the barangay LGU of Kabbon Takas had already planned the return of these families. However, this did not materialize after the bombing of the Jolo cathedral occurred later on the same month, prompting President Duterte to announce the launch of an “all-out war” against the ASG.

CURRENT SITUATION

As of this report, more than 284 families (approximately 1,420 persons) have remained displaced for more than two (2) years. Of this total, 150 families (approximately 750 persons) are staying in the old and damaged shanties in Barangay Kan Ague, while 134 families (approximately 670 persons) are living with their relatives and friends. According to the barangay chairman, some of these families went to their relatives in neighboring barangays, and others moved as far as Jolo municipality.

The municipal LGU of Patikul continuously monitors the situation of these families and provides food assistance, despite overstretched resources. According to IDPs interviewed by local partner IRDT in October 2019, they had last received food packs sometime in February 2019. They expressed the need for immediate support, particularly shelter materials to improve their makeshift shelters, food assistance to complement the relief assistance from the MLGU, and livelihood assistance.

Since the onset of their displacement, ten (10) deaths have been recorded among the IDPs due to different illnesses, including a dengue case which was reported by the Integrated Provincial Health Office (IPHO) of Sulu. The barangay chairman attributed this case to the unsafe location of the temporary shelters and the challenging living conditions.

PROTECTION ISSUES AND RESPONSE

ISSUES	RESPONSES	WAYS FORWARD
Health		
Over the past years that they have been displaced, 10 deaths have been recorded among the IDPs due to different illnesses, including a dengue case.		Refer to DOH/IPHO for potential conduct of medical missions and provision of appropriate assistance.
Child Protection		
The IDPs' current location has no safe area for children. They usually play under the coconut trees on the land, which puts them at risk from falling coconuts or debris.	This issue has been referred to the BLGU, which set up a play area for the children.	Continue monitoring the situation and refer to other partners who can provide additional support on facilities for children.

Education		
The temporary classroom that has been established does not provide a conducive learning setting. Its location near the highway (exposed to traffic passing along the road) also puts the children at risk.	This concern has been discussed with teachers.	Refer to the local education authorities (provincial/municipal office of the Ministry of Education) and the Education Working Group. Conduct follow-up monitoring on the continuity of schooling for the displaced children.
Shelter		
Most of the shanties are now dilapidated. Repair and improvement of the IDPs' temporary shelters are needed to address risks, including possible occurrence of harassment/gender-based violence.		Lobby with local authorities for further support, and refer to shelter actors or other partners for urgent assistance.
Housing, Land and Property		
Because there is no formal agreement between the land owner and the IDPs regarding their stay, IDPs are concerned about their security of tenure. They are required to comply with certain restrictions while staying on the land, and fear that they may be asked to vacate it at any time.	Following a dialogue with the land owner facilitated by the BLGU, it was reiterated that the owner can offer free use of the land while the situation remains unstable in the IDPs' places of origin, but is unable to offer any additional support beyond this.	Continue monitoring the IDPs' situation and refer any concerns to the local authorities/relevant actors.
WASH		
There is no source of potable water. The displaced families rely on an open well near their temporary shelters, and they have no choice but to use this water for drinking and household chores.		Lobby with DOH/IPHO for water treatment to ensure safe water for drinking and cooking, and refer to WASH Cluster/other actors for urgent support.

PERSONS OF CONCERN

No. of Fam	+/-	No. of Persons	+/-	Location (Origin)				Location (Current)				Exact Location
				Province	Mun	Barangay	Sitio	Province	Mun	Barangay	Sitio	
150		750		Sulu	Patikul	Kabbon takas		Sulu	Patikul	Kan-ague		
134		620		Sulu	Patikul	Kan-ague		Sulu	Patikul	For verification		

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

SOURCES:

Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) of Kabbon Takas
Integrated Resource Development for Tri-People, Inc. (IRDT)
IDP representatives from Kabbon Takas

SOME IMAGES OF THE TEMPORARY SHELTER AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURES



The IDP Protection Assessment Form

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). Given the fact that Mindanao did not witness major emergencies since Marawi siege, the protection cluster was not convened since mid-2017. Instead a protection working group was established in April 2019 to attend to protection needs of displaced families in BARMM

Protection Working Group for Bangsamoro Autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

In April 2019, PWG for BARMM was established under the leadership of Ministry of Social Services, co-led by UNHCR. The Protection Working Group (PWG), based in Cotabato City, is being convened to support the provision of protection interventions and services to these disaster- and conflict-affected communities. The main objectives of BARMM PWG is to strengthen coordination among relevant actors with a protection role (from regional down to municipal and community level) in order to: (a) ensure timely prevention of and response to protection issues in the BARMM region,; and (b) facilitate timely information-sharing among these actors, in support of effective planning and implementation. The PWG meets every 2 months with members of Government agencies with protection roles, Relevant LGUs, UN agencies, Local and international NGOs& CSOs.

For more information, please visit the Protection Cluster website <http://www.protectioncluster.org/philippines/> or e-mail us at PHICOPRC@unhcr.org



KEY FIGURES

Total number of displaced population



184 Families

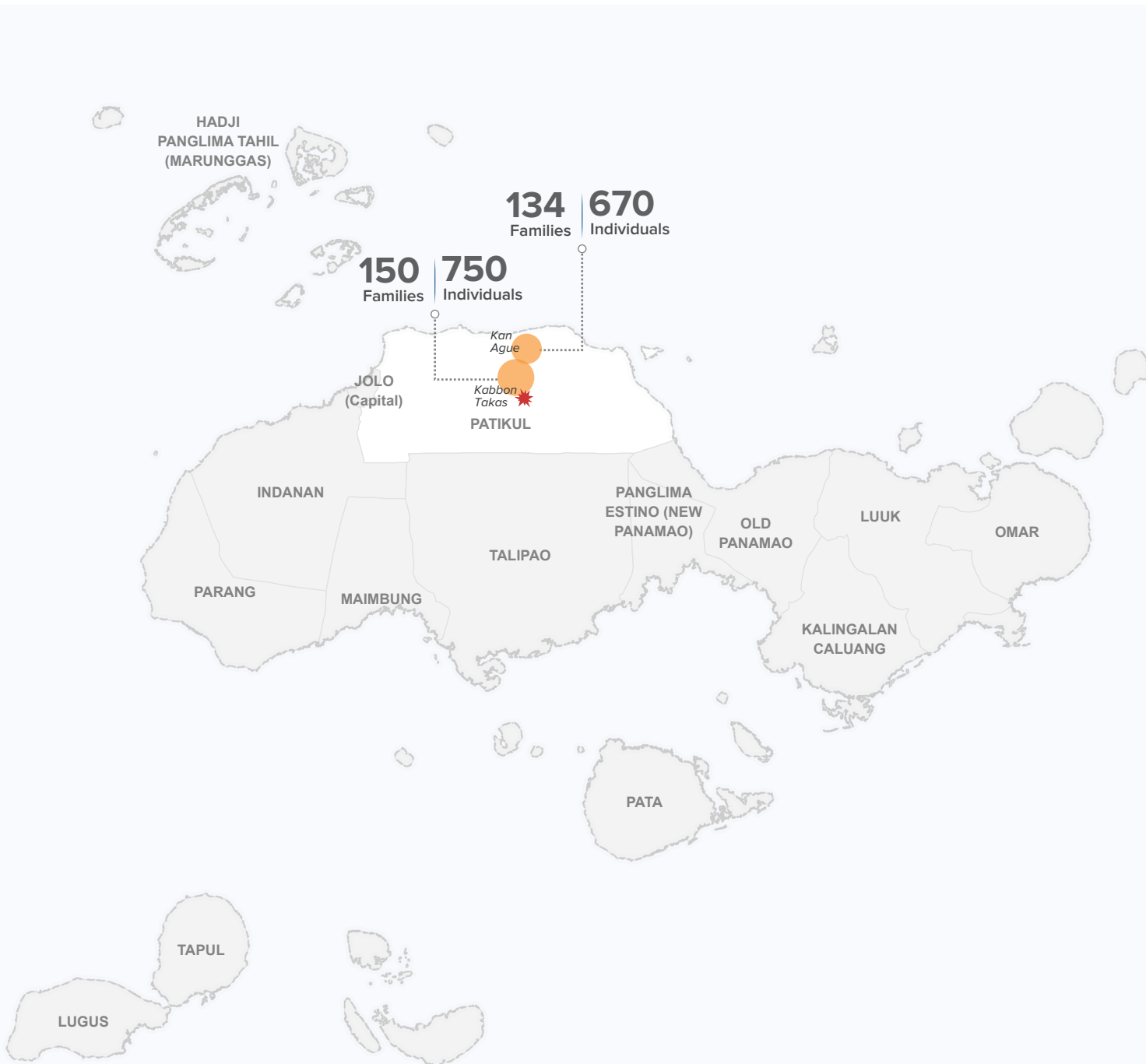


1,420 Individuals

Current location of displaced population



150 families (approximately 750 persons) are staying in the old and damaged shanties in Barangay Kan Ague, while 134 families (approximately 670 persons) are living with their relatives and friends.



LEGEND

- Conflict
- Provincial boundary
- Municipal boundary
- Barangay boundary
- Road
- Displaced individuals
- Returned individuals
- Presently displaced individuals
- Evacuation center

LOCATION MAP

