

The Mindanao Displacement Dashboard is a monthly publication of the Protection Cluster in Mindanao, Philippines which is co-led by UNHCR with the Department of Social Welfare and Development. This publication aims to provide an overview of the protection environment of displacement incidents in Mindanao for each month. Displacement incidents were collected with the support of Protection Cluster members in Mindanao.



Armed Conflict (AFP vs. NPA) in Manay, Davao Oriental

On 01 February, an armed encounter between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the New People's Army (NPA) broke out in Barangay Lambog, Manay municipality, Davao Oriental province. The firefight affected 2,422 families in five barangays (Barangays Caoasna, del Pilar, Lambog, Rizal, and Taocanga). A total of 749 families (approximately 3,500 persons) were displaced to Barangay Central Poblacion, while residents in neighbouring barangays were also affected.

Further displacement occurred on 04 February, when alleged sightings of armed group members in Barangay Old Macopa, Manay municipality, displaced 125 families (approximately 700 persons) to Barangay San Isidro.

The municipal local government unit (LGU) activated its incident command system and, with support from the Philippine Red Cross, assisted the IDPs by distributing food packs. The LGU of Manay also organized a search and rescue operation for four persons who went missing during the evacuation, who were all able to safely return to their families, and facilitated the burial of two civilian casualties. After the affected areas were declared safe by the AFP, the municipal LGU provided transportation to support the IDPs' return on 04-06 February. In consultation with the affected communities, the municipal and provincial LGUs coordinated to provide additional food assistance following the return. As of this report, all displaced families have returned to their habitual residences.



Armed Conflict (AFP vs. NPA) in Alabel, Sarangani Province

On 11 February, about 100 families (approximately 500 persons) were displaced in Alabel municipality, Sarangani province due to a series of aerial bombardments carried out by the AFP, reportedly in connection with armed encounters between the AFP and NPA. The IDPs, who belong to indigenous peoples' (IP) groups, fled Sitio Tangis and Sitio Kindag in Barangay Datal Anggas and sought refuge in neighbouring villages. There were also reports of alleged abduction and torture of civilians. As of this report, the displaced families have returned to their habitual residences.



Armed Conflict (AFP v s. NPA) in Laak, Compostela Valley

On 12 February, an armed encounter between the AFP and NPA occurred in the remote areas of Barangay Langtud, Laak municipality, Compostela Valley province, affecting a total of about 1,532 families in Barangays Bollucan, Langtud, Macopa and Poblacion. According to some IDPs, one house was destroyed during the incident and an undetermined number of other houses were partly damaged. As of 15 February, at least 135 displaced families (approximately 550 individuals) were temporarily sheltered in Laak National High School and Tuk-an Elementary School, both in Barangay Poblacion. Some of them would return to their farms at daytime but sleep in the evacuation sites.

To date, the security sector has declared the six affected barangays cleared and residents can safely return. The LGU continues to provide food packs to families who have returned, in order to support them while they re-establish their livelihoods. As of this report, all displaced families have returned to their habitual residences. However, some affected families are still afraid to resume their farming activities due to alleged NPA presence in their areas.



Firefight between two local armed groups in Sultan sa Barongis, Maguindanao

On 17-18 February, a firefight between two local armed groups, whose commanders are both believed to be affiliated with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), displaced about 200 families (approximately 2,000 persons) in Barangay Barurao, Sultan sa Barongis municipality, Maguindanao province. The clash was allegedly triggered by the killing of a follower of one of the parties. The affected families fled to neighbouring barangays. A civilian was also reportedly hit by a stray bullet. This incident is linked to a longstanding land dispute between these two groups, which had triggered a previous displacement incident in November 2016.



Armed Conflict (AFP/CAFGU vs. NPA) in Arakan, Cotabato

On 19 February, at least 21 families (approximately 105 persons) were displaced due to a firefight between the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) and the NPA in Sitio Kinawayan, Barangay Badiangon, municipality of Arakan, Cotabato province. During this incident, a civilian was hit by a stray bullet.

On 22 February, succeeding firefights between the AFP and NPA displaced another 8 families (estimated 40 persons) in Arakan. Landmines were reportedly discovered along the boundary of Arakan and Magpet municipalities. The barangay LGU of Brgy. Tempuran, where the IDPs took shelter, advised the affected residents to temporarily vacate their homes every night to ensure safety. The municipal LGU of Arakan facilitated the distribution of food items among the IDPs. As of this report, the displaced families have returned to their habitual residences.

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Armed Conflict (AFP vs. NPA) in Bansalan, Davao del Sur

On 25 February, at least 300 families (approximately 1,500 persons) were displaced due to armed encounters between the AFP and NPA, including airstrikes launched by the AFP. The incident was part of a series of short-term displacements in Eastern Mindanao that were triggered when the unilateral ceasefires previously declared by the respective parties were lifted and the peace process between the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines was suspended. As of this report, displaced families have returned to their habitual residences.



Armed Conflict (AFP vs. NPA) in Asuncion, Davao del Norte

On 26 February, about 200 families (estimated 800 persons) were displaced in Barangay Sagayen, Asuncion municipality, Davao del Norte province due to an encounter between military troops and members of the NPA. The IDPs took shelter in an evacuation centre in Asuncion, where the LGU provided them with food assistance. The military declared the area safe after the firefight ceased on the following day. By 28 February, the LGU facilitated the IDPs' return to their homes.



Firefights (AFP vs. ASG) in Sulu and Basilan

In the island provinces of Sulu and Basilan, a total of 1,801 families (9,005 persons) were forcibly displaced due to clashes between the AFP and the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

On 27 February, a firefight between the said parties displaced about 297 families (estimated 1,485 persons) from three barangays in the municipality of Indanan, Sulu province. The operation is believed to be part of the AFP's rescue operation to recover a German hostage held by the ASG, who was later confirmed to have been beheaded by the group after ransom demands were not met.

In Al-Barka and Tipo-tipo municipalities, Basilan province, about 1,504 families (approximately 7,520 persons) from six barangays were also displaced due to encounters between the AFP and ASG. Reports from protection partners based in the area indicated that mortar shelling carried out by the AFP triggered fear among civilians, causing them to flee.

Update on displacement (AFP vs. Maute) in Butig, Lanao del Sur

After 11 months of displacement, approximately 3,493 families have returned after military operations against the Maute Group temporarily ceased in the municipality of Butig, Lanao del Sur province. However, more than 637 families from the barangays of Poctan, Ragayan and Coloyan remain displaced with their relatives due to fear for their safety. IDPs are hesitant to return because of the lack of clear information or concrete security assessments from the authorities. According to reports from protection partners, some 61 houses were totally destroyed and 34 houses were partially damaged, preventing IDPs from returning to the barangays of Bayabao, Poctan, and Ragayan.



Displaced families temporarily staying in Mipantao Primary School in Butig, Lanao del Sur ©Kulat | UNHCR

Clashes between the AFP and this local armed group had earlier caused displacements in February, May, and November 2016. With military operations likely to continue as long as the Maute Group is present, it is projected that sustainable return would not yet be possible in the short term, especially in the areas known as Maute strongholds. In addition, some families from host communities also evacuated out of fear that the families displaced from Butig might rekindle tensions due to unresolved *rido* (clan feuds). Meanwhile, MILF troops still remain in the areas where they repositioned.

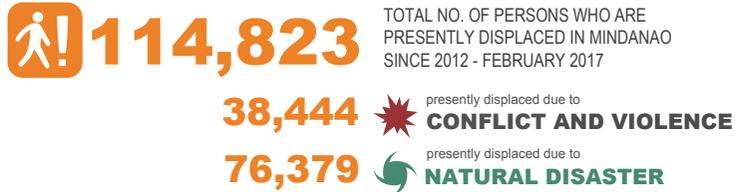
Among the key protection issues identified by government agencies and civil society organizations are child protection, including reported recruitment of minors as armed fighters; limited access to water supply and hygiene facilities, as well as livelihood sources; disrupted education and damage to schools; and challenges in facilitating the distribution of assistance considering that most of the remaining IDPs are home-based. As the situation remains fragile, government and humanitarian actors continue to monitor the situation of the IDPs and their protection needs.



The *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* note that “internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.”

Durable Solutions - UNHCR with Protection Cluster members continue to identify communities that are subjected to protracted displacement over the course of the year to ensure all IDPs are identified and the appropriate attention and resources can be obtained to support finding a durable solution to their displacement.

CURRENT NUMBER OF IDPS IN NEED OF DURABLE SOLUTION



CLARIFICATIONS

Typhoon Pablo displacement - A large number of IDPs remain displaced from Typhoon Pablo in December 2012 in Eastern Mindanao, Region XI and are still in need of a durable solution. Many of these families remain in temporary shelters where local authorities have been slowly obtaining access to land and constructing permanent housing for these IDPs. As of October 2015, there are still an estimated 76,379 IDPs in need of a durable solution in this region.

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS CAUSING DISPLACEMENT (see details in boxes)

	TOTAL IN FEBRUARY 2017		TOTAL SINCE JANUARY 2017	
	INCIDENTS	DISPLACEMENT (persons)	INCIDENTS	DISPLACEMENT (persons)
CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE incidents with displacement	8	18,700	13	25,372
NATURAL DISASTER incidents with displacement	0	0	1	387,138

DISPLACEMENT MOVEMENT IN FEBRUARY 2017



LEGEND



Note: The figures appearing in this document are not comprehensive. The data pertain to those collected by Protection Cluster Partners and collated by UNHCR since 2012.

