



Municipal Protection Profiles conducted in Lanao del Sur

Wao



Municipality of Wao

Province of Lanao del Sur | Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)

Overview

Risk rating: **Low**

Quick facts

The Municipality of Wao was created by Executive Order no. 418 on 22 February 1961. Its name is derived from the story of a beautiful Muslim princess (*Bai sa Raya*) from the Kingdom of *Kutawato*, now Cotabato, who visited the town long ago. During her visit, there was a severe drought in the area. The visiting princess got thirsty, or *kawaw* or *uhaw* in the local dialect. Based on these local words, the inhabitants called this area “Wao”, in commemoration of the sad experience of the princess.

The Municipality of Wao is in the southern tip of Lanao Del Sur Province. It is bounded on the east by the Municipality of Don Carlos in Bukidnon Province, on the northwest by the Municipality of Bumbaran, and on the south by the Municipality of Banisilan in North Cotabato Province.

The municipality is accessible by land and air transportation. It is approximately 18 kilometres from Bukidnon, 88 kilometres from Cagayan de Oro City, 55 kilometres from Marawi City, and 125 kilometres from Cotabato City, the seat of Regions XII and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. The Wao Airport is ready for utilization, but still needs suitable human resources to operate it.



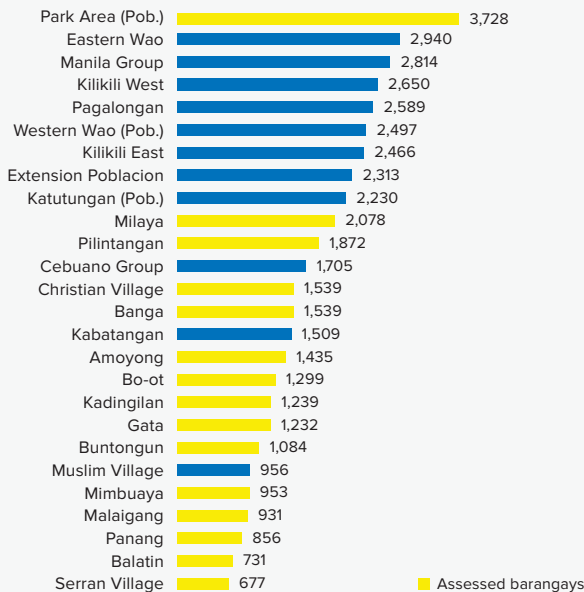
Wao is subdivided into twenty-six (26) barangays, of which four (4) are categorized as urban barangays, while the remaining twenty-two (22) barangays are rural.

The municipality is mostly agricultural and tagged as a ‘corn granary’. All types of crops are suited for its fertile land, of which 23,813.50 hectares are devoted to agriculture, while 55.89% or 20,040.00 hectares are classified as timberland.

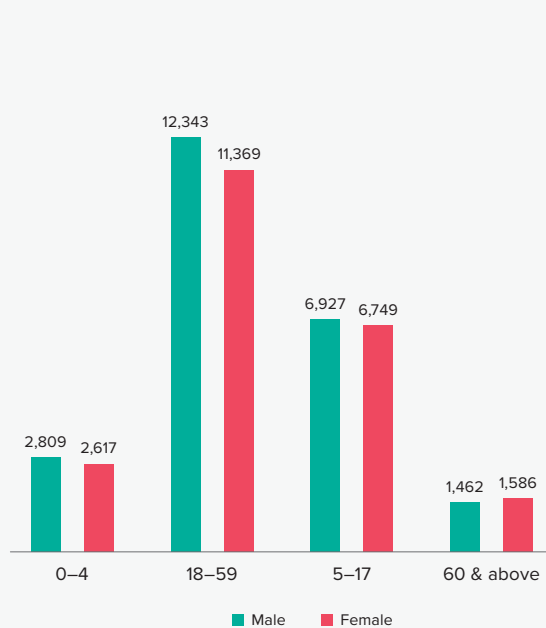
Wao is a diverse community, with different ethnic groups such as Ilonggo, Ilocano, Iranun, Cebuano, Maranao, Talaandig, Batangueno, Iwatan, and Tagalog residing in the area. Ilonggo is the dominant language spoken among the residents of the municipality.

Population	Family	Income Class	Land Area	Barangays	Climate type	Languages spoken
45,862	9,172	2nd Class	485.24 km²	26	Tropical	Maranao, Iranun, Ilonggo, Tagalog

Population¹ by barangay with highlighting of selected barangays (15) for assessment



Population¹ by sex and age group



1 2015 Census of Population, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

Protection profile summary

Protection risk in the Municipality of Wao is LOW. However, the rating can likely be raised to 'MEDIUM' level due to the following factors:



Several barangays are prone to natural disasters like **earthquakes and landslides**.



Barangays Balatin, Buntongan, Panang, Park Area, and Serran Village experienced a series of **earthquakes** in April and September 2017, which resulted in the evacuation of **301 families**.

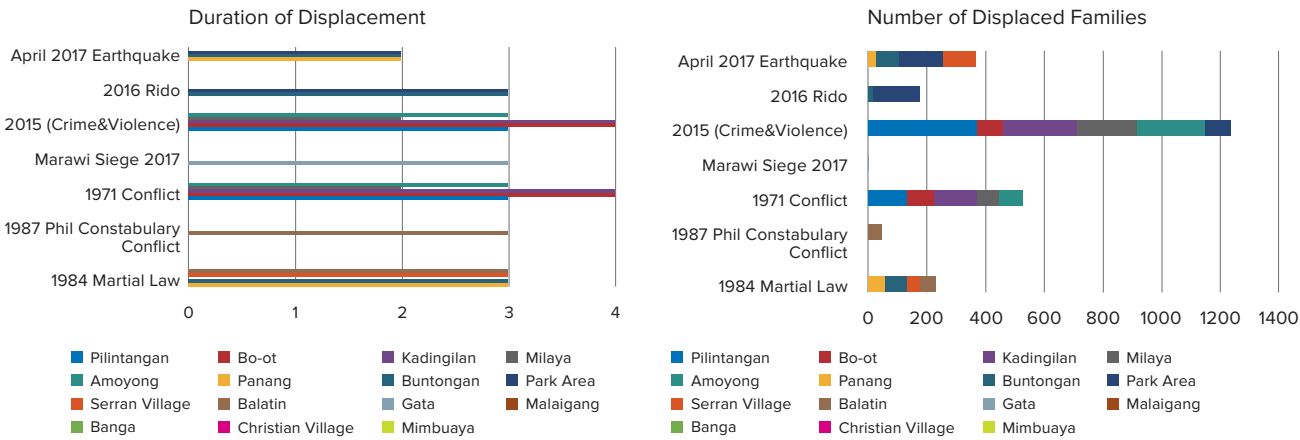


Internal armed conflict between Philippine Military and non-state armed groups resulted in the **displacement of residents** in Barangays Balatin, Buntongan, Panang, Park Area, and Serran Village during the last quarter of Martial Law in 1984, displacing the residents for more than one year. Conflicts between armed settlers and Maranaos were prevalent from 1971 to 1974, when either party would launch retaliatory attacks against the other group.

Respondent of the key informant interviews expressed their fear that previous experiences might recur due to the existing tensions between the different ethnic groups rooted in land disputes, as well as the possibility of armed conflict due to possible failure of the peace process between the MILF and the government. They fear a fight between the government and MILF may restart, especially if the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) is not implemented as agreed.

Protection analysis data

Displacement



Some of the expressed needs of these internally displaced persons (IDPs) are focused on basic needs, such as water, food, and medicines. Identified long-term interventions are on shelter and livelihood. There are barangay councils and other duty bearers that can provide for the basic needs of the IDPs.

During these displacements, IDPs experienced discrimination, denial of access to assistance, separation from family members, lack of livelihood, and trauma or psychological problems. Of the 15 barangays profiled, 9 said that there is a possibility of another displacement in the municipality which could be due to *rido*, natural disaster, man-made disaster, and armed conflict if BOL passage fails. The occurrence of displacement will mostly likely impact vulnerable groups like the elderly, children, pregnant women, people with chronic illness, and low-income farmers.

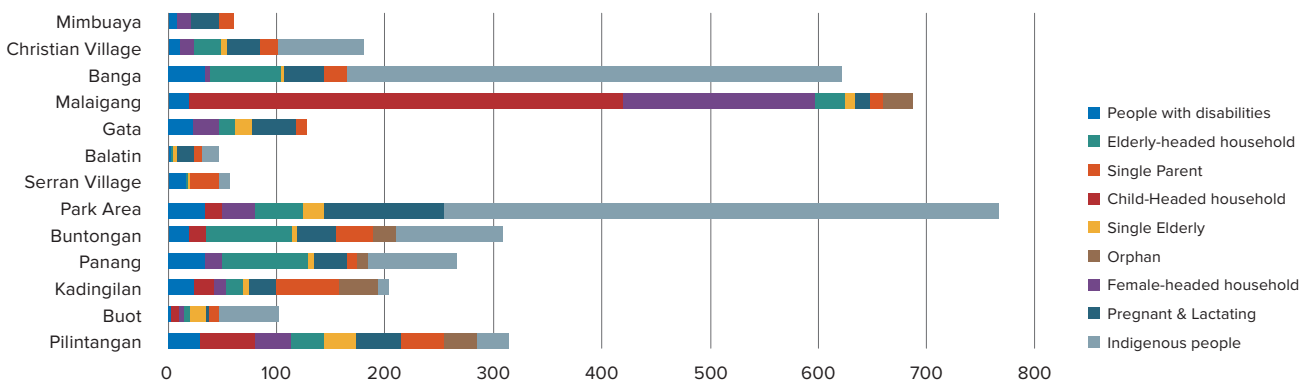
Protection services

As the municipality had experienced different types of displacement, the perception of communities on the performance of the duty bearers is not uniform. Some areas find it excellent (Buntongan, Kadingilan, Poot), others are good (Milaya, Panang, Pilintangan, Serran Village) while others perceive it as needing improvement (Balatin, Gata, Park Area). These could be attributed to the services provided like relief assistance, linkages to other agencies, and availability of protective mechanisms like the Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (BDRRMC), Violence

against Women and Children (VAWC) Desk, Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT), Mamamayan Ayaw sa Anomalya, Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga (MASA-MASID) and Barangay Anti-Drug Abuse Council (BADAC). Although, all of them responded that there is no BCPC (Barangay Councils for the Protection of Children) and they are uncertain whether there is BHRAO (Barangay Human Rights Action Center) in their municipality or not. The IDPs are also confident in sharing information with their host families and the barangay, as the latter is seen as receptive to feedback.

People with special needs

Out of 15 assessed barangays, 13 have recorded data on people with special needs. This is evidence that the Municipality of Wao has a system of monitoring and addressing concerns of persons with specific needs.



The following are the immediate protection needs of PWSN (both residents and IDPs):

PWD
Assistive devices (wheel chair, canes) and maintenance medicines

Lactating women
Medicines

Pregnant
Birthing clinic and medicines

Elderly
Maintenance medicines

Orphan
Education and livelihood

Solo Parent
Livelihood

Elderly Headed
Livelihood

Female Headed
Livelihood

IP
Education

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IS THE CROSS-CUTTING NEEDS TO ALL PWSN VULNERABILITY AREA.

Some of the coping mechanisms of the PWDs to ease life and not to lose hope are the following:

Strengthening their faith

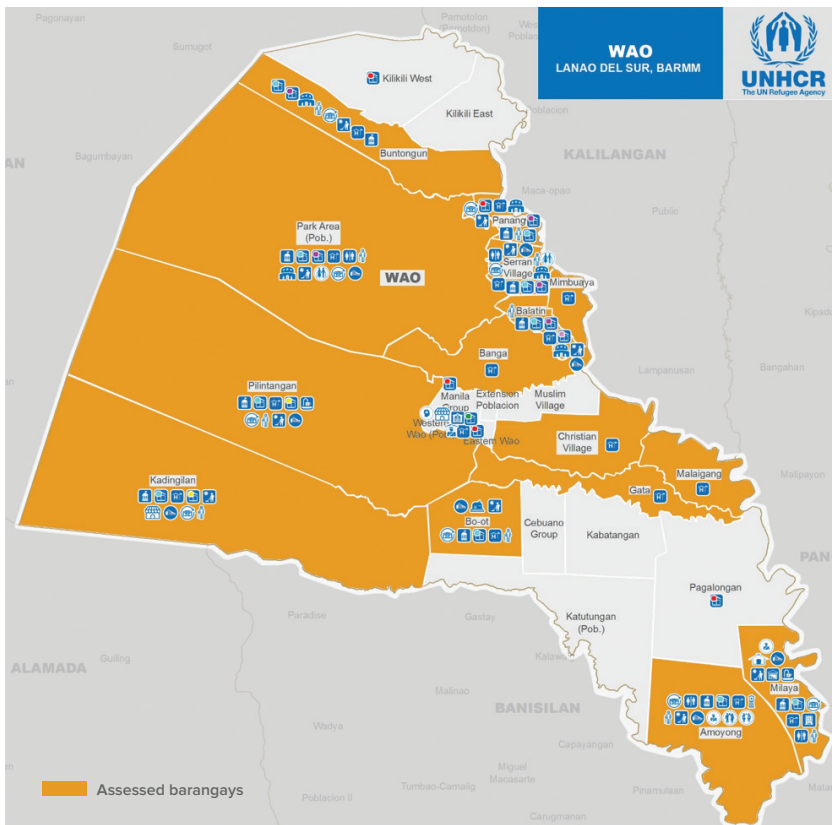
Engaging themselves in the social activities organized by the local government

Participating in community activities

Self-motivation and self-encouragement

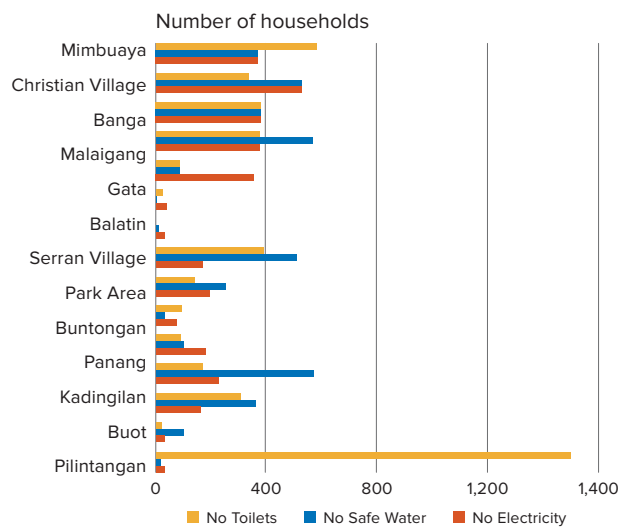
Receiving moral support from family

Access to basic services



- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|---|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Day Care Center | Madrasah | Market | CAFGU Outpost | Fire Station | Material Recovery Facility | FA Bldg. |
| Primary School | Health Unit | Municipal Hall | Gym / Social Hall / Multi-Purpose Bldg. | Sports Facilities | BPAT Outpost | Covered Court |
| Elementary School | Water Reservoir | Wharf | Grain Drying Area | Training Center | Youth Center | Police Outpost |
| High School | Water System | Police Station | Barangay Hall | BRAC Learning School | Women Station | DSWD Dropping Center |
| College | Public Toilet | Military Outpost | Warehouse | PAMANA Building | IP & Senior Citizen Bldg. | Waiting Shed |

Lacking Basic Social Services



Among the 15 barangays assessed, Barangay Banga has the highest number of household without electricity (40% of the 642 Household).

3,092	3,572	4,262
Household without electricity	Household without safe water	Household without toilets

Note: Values represent the number of households within the assessed barangays only.

Civil documentation

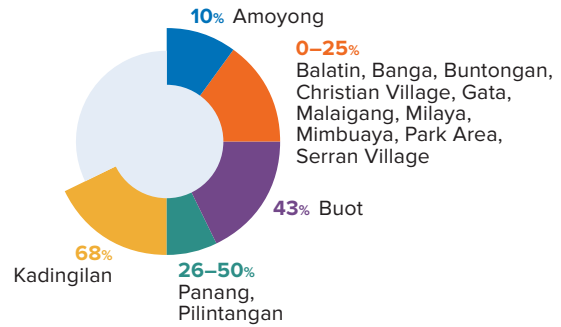
The government’s effort to extend its services in the area of civil documentation is manifested since almost all basic services can only be acquired through the presentation of civil documents. Despite these efforts, a big portion of the residents are not yet registered due to the following reasons:

- They don’t know about it
- They believe they never needed one
- They don’t know how to get one
- Cannot write, read, and apply
- Difficulties of access to the Civil Registrar’s Office
- Birthing in the communities are different in the current/urban municipalities
- Cannot afford one, and
- Cannot secure all the supporting documents

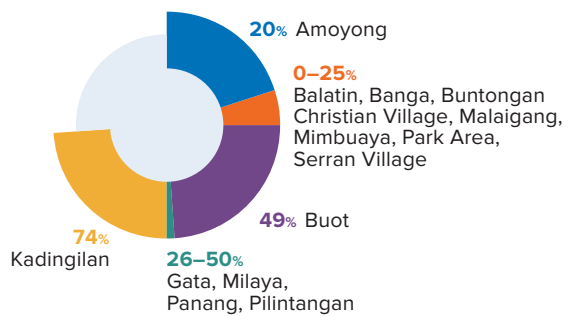
It is also noted that most of the unregistered individuals are elderly persons. The reason cited is that during their time it is believed that they do not need one, and/or that they are not aware of how to register or avail of a birth certificate.

This is the same for marriage certificates and death certificates. People do not feel the importance of acquiring the said documents.


Estimated percentage without Birth Certificate



Estimated percentage without Marriage Certificate



Below are the acknowledged effects of not having civil documents, particularly a birth certificate:

							
Inability to travel abroad	Inability to go to school	Inability to vote (but some say they have registered without being required of a birth certificate)	Inability to access assistance	Inability to claim pension or government support	Inability to claim 4Ps	Inability to work (but others claim that some can work even without birth certificate)	Cannot apply to government programs

For identification purposes for those lacking a birth certificate, the barangay certificates and the community residence certificates serve as temporary substitute for an ID for them to avail of basic services.

Safety and Security

Among the assessed barangays, seven barangays reported the presence of both Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) members whereas only one barangay reported MILF presence (but not MNLF). Other non-state armed groups such as the New People's Army (NPA) or Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) were not reported in any of the barangays

Effects of unstable safety and security in their barangays, which are as follows:

- Disruption of livelihood activities
- Slow development
- Limited freedom of movement
- Possibility that conflict may arise in the barangay

All sectors of society are affected and concerned about safety and security, but in times of crisis the elderly, women, children, and ill individuals are the most affected.

Listed below are the security mechanisms of the community to safeguard safety and security:

- Curfew imposed by the BLGU
- Constant monitoring and communication to sitios (sub-barangay levels)
- Conduct of coordination, communication and cooperation in addressing insecurity issues between barangay LGU and the community
- House clustering in some barangays, wherein the purok leader will report violation or conflict in his area and coordinate with the BLGU.

These measures are perceived to create a safe and secure environment as stated by the respondents.

Despite the imposition of the curfew, the residents do not feel that their freedom of movement is violated. It is understood to be a precautionary measure to maintain safety and security.

Among the reasons why the community feels safe is due to the presence of security personnel in the area.

The respondents identified the following common ways to settle disputes and other security threats:

- Municipal and barangay authorities
- 25 PNP personnel assigned all over the municipality
- 161 Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT)
- Religious leaders
- Women leaders
- Shari'a courts, if necessary
- Military

Housing, Land and Property

Ways of acquiring or coming into possession of properties:

- Inheritance
- Purchase
- Rental

Some barangays currently have issues related to HLP:

- Banga, Buot, Milaya, and Pilintangan
Some houses and properties were
- Amoyong
Destruction of crops
- Buot and Pilintangan
Destruction, theft, fraud related to land records
- Amoyong, Buot, Kadingilan, Malaigang, Milaya, Park area, and Pilintangan
Land related conflicts, dispute, and grievances
- Christian Village and Malaigang
Lands are untitled and or not assessed (Lack of documentation)

The local government unit facilitates resolutions of issues related to housing land and property. However, settlers in the area expressed fear that their properties might be seized or confiscated in case the BOL is ratified.

In the past, armed clashes between civilians (whether from different ethnic groups or clans within the same group), were rooted in land disputes.

Information

Information is most commonly disseminated through:

- community meetings attended by the Purok leaders, community announcements, and barangay bulletin boards.
- mobile call and short messaging services (SMART, Talk-n-Text, Touch Mobile, and GLOBE networks are available).
- conduct of community/Barangay assembly meetings with a special invitation to purok leaders, concerned committees, Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team and other community leaders
- announcements by religious leaders (i.e. after prayer or religious service, the imam of the masjid or priest of a church can announce or share the information.)

What types of information are received?

-  Barangay programs
-  Disaster alerts, community awareness and trainings
-  New barangay ordinances and policies
-  Barangay events and social activities

Peace Process




- Optimistic about the passage of the proposed BOL
- Hoping that the BOL will address the sentiments of Bangsamoro and thus be instrumental in bringing peace
- Fearful that another round of conflict may happen in case the BOL is not ratified, as what had happened in 2008
- Most people in the barangay are not informed and or not updated on the progress of the GPH-MILF peace process

Community Protection Strategies

Identified Community Protection Strategies:

-  Extensive training and advocacy on Violence against Women and Children (VAWC)
-  Trainings of the barangay peace-keeping action teams (BPAT)
-  Provision, distributions and posting of information materials
-  Community awareness sessions and information sharing
-  Formation of barangay-based protection committees

Identified security and protection strategies of the community:

-  Barangay curfews
-  Constant monitoring and communication with sitios (sub-barangay levels)
-  House clustering (purok); purok leader reports violation or conflicts in his/her area to the BLGU and coordinate responses.

Protection Capability, Intent and Compliance Aptitude

Residents in the barangays feel the effort exerted by the local government unit to respond and mitigate the effects of the turmoil:

- Disaster preparedness program of the MDRRMC
- DSWD-implemented programs and activities such as the conditional cash transfer / 4Ps and social pensions and the provision of various relief goods during times of displacement
- Quick Impact Projects provided by CFSI and UNHCR to the displaced communities

The MLGU exerts efforts to assess the needs of the IDPs and allot some of its local funds to provide for the needs of the affected families such as food, medicines, and equipment for disaster mitigation.

However, respondents emphasize the need to solve the unsettled family feuds in the area. There is a need to further improve the capability of the LGU to address various disputes and rights violations in the area.

Recommendations

1 For the Local Government Units

- Provide programs on disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) preparedness to all barangays that are disaster-prone. BLGUs should make sure that their BDRRMCs are functional, operational, and sufficiently equipped;
- Conduct disaster preparedness simulations and drills in their communities, including evacuation, to minimize effects and casualties during disasters;
- Conduct trainings on disaster preparedness to BLGU and BPAT;
- Strengthen further the advocacy on the Violence against Women and Children Law;
- Integrate into their CDP-ELA or Annual Investment Plan programmes and projects intended for people with special needs, women and children;
- Ensure representation of various ethnic groups in local decision-making and policy-determining bodies in the municipality (local development councils, peace and order councils, etc.);
- Conduct information drives on the peace process;
- Ensure community participation in community development activities;
- Strengthen the Municipal and Barangay Peace and Order Council (MPOC);
- Implement a standardized and effective reporting mechanism by the BLGU;
- Implement an effective communication and information strategy by both LGU and BLGU;
- Strengthen the house clustering as monitored by the purok leader;
- Strengthen collaborative efforts between the constituents and the BLGU for protection monitoring in the barangay;
- Provide mental health and psycho-social services for survivors of gender-based violence;
- Implement livelihood programmes as a long-term intervention, especially for solo parents or divorcees to support their daily needs; and
- Strengthen conflict resolution mechanisms to settle conflicts between tribes or communities, and to prevent escalation torido.

2 For NGOs and other stakeholders

- Strengthen support to and coordination with the LGU and BLGU;
- Ensure that all humanitarian response/interventions are well implemented and monitored; and
- Ensure that all protection issues and concerns are well documented and raised/addressed to appropriate agencies or stakeholders for possible solutions.

SOURCES / REFERENCES:

Focus Group Discussions (FGD)
Key Informant Interviews (KII)
Secondary Data Review



Water brings life to Hasmin and her daughter Caramina. The community in Brgy. Bacawayan, Marantao hosts internally displaced families from Marawi City since the siege in May 2017. They now have a sustainable source of water for sustenance and basic hygiene. © UNHCR/Lyka Gonzalez