



# THEMATIC PROTECTION BULLETIN RIDGING THE GA

Ensuring the provision of protection services to a protracted displacement situation 05 DECEMBER 2019 | Issue No. 1

#### BACKGROUND

- On 27 January 2019, two improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were detonated at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Jolo, in the island province of Sulu. The attack resulted to 27 deaths and dozens more injured. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has tagged a faction of the Abu Sayvaf Group (ASG) known as "Ajang-Ajang" as the perpetrators of the said attack.
- Two days after the incident, President Rodrigo Duterte visited the site and ordered the military to launch an "allout offensive" against the ASG and alleged Islamic State (IS)-linked elements operating in the province of Sulu.
- Prior to the local elections last May 2019, the AFP and Philippine National Police (PNP) raised a nationwide "heightened alert," with intensified checkpoint operations and strict implementation of the electoral gun ban.
- The AFP carried out military operations against the ASG on 29 January which have affected some barangays in Patikul, including Barangay Latih. According to the 2015 census, the said barangay has a population of 6,089 individuals. However, only those living in the upper part were heavily affected and displaced.
- The military offensive in Patikul has escalated and spread to nearby municipalities, which resulted to displacement among other civilians in order to avoid being caught in the crossfire.

### **CURRENT PROTECTION CONDITION OF DISPLACED FAMILIES**

- More than 360 families (1,800 individuals) have been displaced in Barangay Latih since January 2019. Out of this figure, 70 families (350 individuals) are living in temporary shelters which are referred to by locals as "evacuation centers" in the lower part of Barangay Latih, while 290 families (1,450 individuals) are living with friends and relatives, also known as "homebased IDPs."
- According to the Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU), there is no indication of the possibility of return in the near future as the situation remains unstable.
- The barangay local government unit has been providing support to these IDPs, but due to the prolonged displacement, resources of the barangay have also been stretched to the fullest. As local authorities as well as private and civic organizations have provided food, non-food items, and cash assistance, IDPs expressed eagerness to return to their places of origin. While return is not possible, IDPs have requested for additional support in terms of shelter materials to improve the makeshift shelters that they have built more than six months ago. They also expressed the need for additional latrine units for men and women, solar street lights for safety and security, and livelihood assistance to complement the food assistance provided by the local government units.



### **BRIDGING THE GAPS**

In order to bridge the gaps and address the residual needs of the IDPs, the local government units need support in the following areas:

- Desludging and construction of additional WASH facilities in Latih evacuation center.
- Provision of livelihood support to home-based IDPs and those who are living in the temporary shelters;
- Installation of solar lights especially in the temporary shelters to prevent or reduce the risks of gender-based violence;
- Regular monitoring of the protection condition of the IDPs in close coordination with protection actors to address safety and security concerns as they arise.

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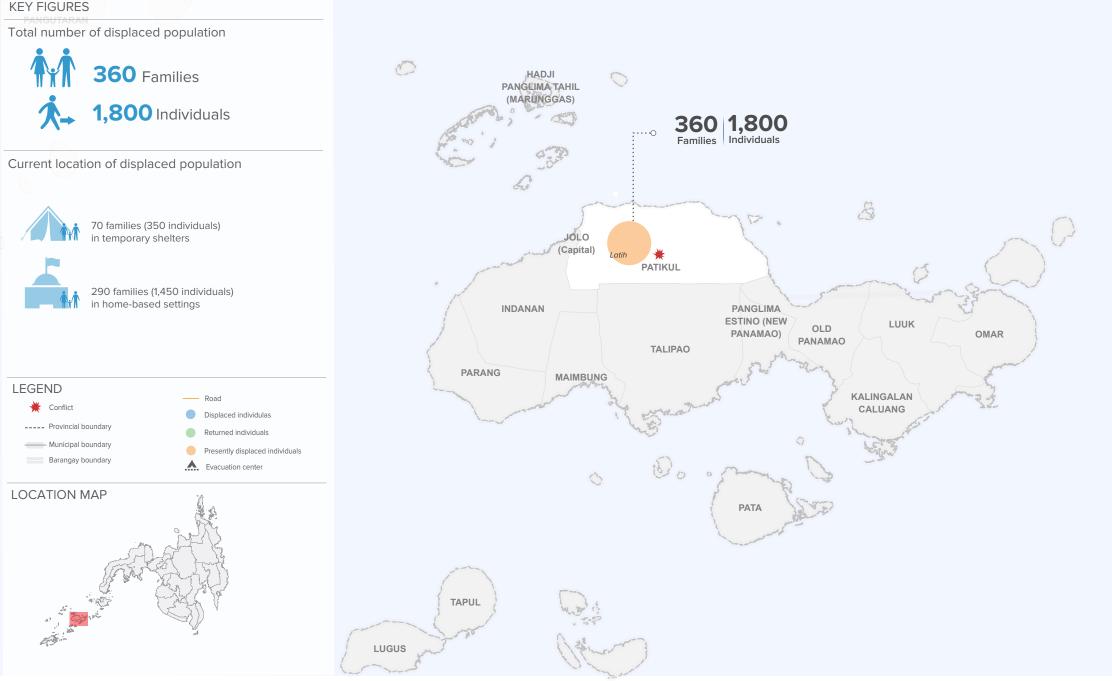


-PHILIPPINES

## protection cluster PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT IN SULU PROVINCE (AFP VS ASG)

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FOR EXTERNAL CIRCULATION



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