

Alert

Philippines

Crisis in Marawi City

Bangkok, 2nd June 2017

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

On 23rd May 2017, nearly 50 gunmen from the Maute Group, supporters of ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), entered Marawi City, in Southern Philippines. The government launched a military and law enforcement operation in Marawi City and the President of the Philippines later put the whole island of Mindanao under martial law up to a maximum of 60 days. This escalated to a deadly firefight between government troops and combined forces of Islamic extremists. After nearly two weeks of urban warfare now, a number of affected population were forced to flee and seek refuge to nearby towns and provinces such as Iligan City, Lanao del Norte and Cagayan de Oro. According to a report of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), on 1st June 2017, over 100,000¹ people or half of the total population of Marawi are displaced (86% staying outside evacuation centres or with relatives and friends) and the number of displaced people is continually increasing. In addition, the deaths of soldiers take the number of security force members killed to 39, with 19 civilians and 120 rebel fighters killed in the Marawi battles².

2. Why is an ACT response needed?

The initial data gathered by Christian Aid's partner, Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits Team or ECOWEB, revealed that at least 65 % of the Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are women and children. Most of the men of their families remain in their houses to guard properties. Some of the men also went to other places to find jobs or to borrow money from relatives. A rapid assessment launched by several START Network members, local CSOs, and local government agencies in some evacuation centres (ECs) in Iligan found that the IDPs need the following urgent assistance: Non-Food Items such as mosquito nets, sleeping mats and cooking utensils, and WASH. The facilities in the ECs are insufficient to meet the needs of the IDPs. For example, in some ECs there are no bathing facilities and in one EC, assessment results highlighted that only one toilet is being used by 344 IDPs. There are no private spaces for couples, separate rooms for men and women, and spaces for prayer which are very important to the Muslim Maranao culture. Children and the elderly people are exposed to the elements and are vulnerable to sickness and diseases especially as the food supply from the government is limited.

3. National and international preparedness and response

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Health (DOH) ensured the availability of prepositioned family food packs, hygiene kits, medicines, and other necessary items and supplies intended for the IDPs or evacuees in affected areas. DSWD has made available a total stockpile and standby funds amounting to \$ 26.9 million. There are prepositioned goods from the United

¹ http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ocha_phl_siege_of_marawi_1_june_2017.pdf

² <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-militants-idUSKBN18S3QE>

Nation (UN) but until such time that the National Government requests for international assistance, the UN cannot take humanitarian action. The START Fund has just been activated and some START network members like ACT and ACTED plan to respond and will apply for the Fund. Many national and local NGOs that have presence in the areas have already started to distribute food and non-food items at a limited scale. Most are still raising funds for their own responses.

4. ACT Alliance response

Christian Aid and its partner, the Humanitarian Response Consortium (HRC), conducted an assessment in Iligan and the ACT Philippines Forum has been activated.

5. Planned activities

ACT Philippines Forum plans to respond to this emergency through the ACT appeal mechanism. WASH, food security and nutrition, shelter and non-food items activities will be developed accordingly to assist the affected population.

6. Constraints

There is limited access to Marawi; and the internet is also intermittent. In addition, ACT Philippines Forum is mindful of the sensitivities around religious identity as well as the security situation in Mindanao as it is volatile.

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to the Head of Finance and Administration, Line Hempel (Line.Hempel@actalliance.org) and Senior Finance Officer, Lorenzo Correa (Lorenzo.Correa@actalliance.org).

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