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Philippines

Humanitarian Situation Update

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SITUATION IN NUMBERS

May 31, 2017

50,000-70,000 children

affected by the conflict in Marawi City Siege

UNICEF needs

US\$ 528,000

Highlights

On 23 May, President Rodrigo Duterte declared martial law for the entire Mindanao region in the Philippines. This followed the outbreak of armed conflict between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Maute Group, a local non-state armed group that has claimed allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh), in Marawi City in Lanao del Sur Province, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Mass evacuations took place as local residents left and sought refuge in identified safe areas in Marawi City and adjacent areas of Lanao del Sur (ARMM), and Lanao del Norte including Iligan City as well as in Cagayan de Oro City (Region X). As of May 30, 140,155¹ individuals, half assumed to be children are seeking shelter in local government run evacuation centers or are being hosted by relatives and friends in surrounding areas. Approximately 24,000 individuals are estimated to be in recognized evacuation centers with the greatest majority of individuals (109,510) in host arrangements. By all indications, the numbers of those displaced is expected to continue to climb as the military continue their operations in the area. No current information disaggregates numbers by gender or age, but a disproportionate number of those in evacuation centers are reported to be women.

Currently, Marawi City is under the control of government but with some areas on the outskirts still subject to armed clashes. Assessments in areas surrounding Marawi City and in evacuation centers have been initiated. Access to areas affected by direct conflict is limited and as a consequence the humanitarian needs there are unknown. It is assumed that in these areas food stocks and water supplies maybe limited. Children left behind and separated from caregivers and family members in these communities have been identified as especially vulnerable¹.

UNICEF's Response with partners

Child Protection

- There is concern for the well-being of children and their families inside and outside of Marawi City that cannot be currently reached. A number of these children are thought to be separated or unaccompanied. UNICEF is working with existing government structures in Region X and ARMM as well as non-governmental organizations to follow-up and activate family tracing if necessary.
- There are risks to children from ongoing armed clashes, including from air strikes, in civilian residential areas of Marawi City. A statement by the UNICEF Representative (May 30) has called for careful military action to minimize civilian injuries and deaths and that children should not be engaged as combatants, camp accessories, informants or as human shields against government forces.
- There are concerns about the risks of injuries/deaths from unexploded ordinances and explosive remnants of war (ERW) when displaced families return to Marawi City and adjacent areas after the cessation of armed hostilities considering reports of improvised explosive devices, booby traps and expected ERW in the City. As such, Mine Risk Education (MRE) for families/children in displacement locations before their return to Marawi City as well as for a period after their return is required.

Key Concerns:

- Some 50,000 to 70,000 children are thought to be displaced; some of whom may be separated or unaccompanied. Only half of these are currently accessible to government services through formal evacuation centers.
- All children will be in need of some form of psychosocial support.
- 36,000 displaced children from 74 public schools in Marawi are at risk of missing school when the new school year starts on June 5.
- There have been reports of children recruited and used in the conflict.
- While the basic needs of children in displacement centers are largely being met there are concerns for families/children living with host families in poorer municipalities/*barangays* (villages).

- One such opportunity will be to incorporate this information into school lessons in displacement locations, linked to 'back to school' initiatives in temporary learning spaces. A child protection partner has been identified to potentially lead this initiative and plans are underway.
- Unconfirmed reports of recruitment and use of children by the non-state group and attacks on schools and hospitals by the conflict parties have been reported. Monitoring of Grave Child Rights Violations and verification and response to cases reported has been scaled up. A current UNICEF MRM partner is leading this reporting/verification on the ground.
- Negative psychosocial impacts on children due to armed conflict and displacement can be expected. Psychosocial recovery actions for children in evacuation centers, in schools and for parents will be necessary. Partners to support psychosocial interventions for children, parents and teachers have been identified and staff already fielded in some centres. This is expected to be scaled up over the coming week, linked to back to school initiatives and continue for 60 days.
- UNICEF is supporting essential supplies for child friendly spaces for young children in evacuation centres including tents, recreation and ECD kits and related items.

Education

- There is a risk of delayed opening of schools for the new school year on June 5 and missed schooling for children who are displaced. There are an estimated 36,000 children from 74 public schools displaced. This includes children from 66 primary schools (32,000) and from 8 secondary schools (3,900). DepEd ARMM and UNICEF are planning a full needs assessment to ensure that children's education can resume before or just after the new school year on June 5th. UNICEF is expected to support with 'back to school' supplies including tents for temporary learning, student and teacher supplies / 'school in a box'. Further clarity on needs and UNICEF specific role will be discussed at the Education Cluster meeting being hosted by the Department of Education on June 1.
- No education assessment has been done for Marawi City, that is currently inaccessible, but (as yet unconfirmed) there are reports of two elementary schools being severely damaged / destroyed by aerial bombing by Government forces. UNICEF will work with the Department of Education and partners to provide support for children of these schools in Marawi (and other damaged schools) to ensure the continuation of their education upon return to the City. This is most likely to include provision of tents and school supplies.
- UNICEF supported an Education Sector coordination meeting in Cotabato City, ARMM on May 26 for government and NGO partners.

Water and sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

- Rapid assessments of the situation in government-run evacuation centers in Iligan City have been completed by NGOs. There is significant government and private sector and NGO assistance to the official evacuation centers and few unmet needs. Gaps in WASH are principally being met by other partners (Philippines Red Cross and ICRC mainly). UNICEF will confirm action taken by partners who have committed to cover gaps in hygiene kits, portlets and where necessary provide additional support.
- No assessments yet undertaken in communities hosting displaced families. There are concerns that some host communities may not have the adequate capacities to host large numbers of displaced families. Assessments in these communities have been initiated but security concerns will hamper accessibility.
- UNICEF is currently supporting ARMM to lead WASH coordination in Iligan City.

Nutrition

- An assessment of the situation in official evacuation centers has shown no specific gaps requiring a response; however requests for infant formula and evidence of some donations has been reported. UNICEF is reinforcing the need to follow the Milk Code and activated its agreement with a nutrition partner to provide nutrition counselling as well as providing nutrition in emergencies flip charts to partners as needed for inter-personal communications on infant feeding etc.
- There is no information yet on the situation in Marawi City but there are concerns that food stocks in Marawi City may be low/inadequate if markets have not functioned properly and families are confined to their homes pending cessation of armed clashes in the City.
- There are concerns that the host communities' capacities in poor *barangays* (villages) that are acting as adhoc hosts in especially vulnerable households may be inadequate. Additional information on the nutrition situation will be available pending a planned assessment mission from May 29th to June 3 by UNICEF. If needs are identified, UNICEF will work with existing partners to scale up interventions as necessary.
- One concern is the medium term impact on the nutrition situation of young children in the poorest families as a result of loss of livelihood and agriculture opportunities due to the conflict. This may require increased surveillance over the remainder of the year and will be discussed among nutrition partners.

Humanitarian leadership and coordination

National and regional authorities have set up the Regional Coordination and Operations Center in Iligan City to provide support to the affected provinces of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte. This body is chaired by the Office of Civil Defence (OCD) Region X, OCD ARMM, and the ARMM Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, and will serve as the main sub-national coordination hub until further notice.

Affected area / populations	Province	Coordination lead
Iligan City and adjacent affected municipalities	Lanao del Norte (not in ARMM)	OCD Region X
Marawi City and adjacent municipalities	Lanao del Sur (ARMM)	ARMM HEART Operations Center (incl. OCD ARMM and ARMM Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office)

Daily government-led overall inter-cluster coordination involving both Region X and ARMM is taking place. UNICEF is supporting government-led coordination in Iligan City for both Region X and ARMM agencies. At a National level the Health Quad Cluster¹ will meet on May 31, the Education Cluster will meet on June 1 and the Child Protection Working Group on June 16. UNICEF will provide support to each cluster and in particular in the Health Quad Cluster to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene and Nutrition.

The Humanitarian Country Team in Manila and the Mindanao Humanitarian Team are meeting regularly to discuss the conflict and humanitarian response. On May 29, the ARMM government transmitted an official request for augmentation of humanitarian assistance to international and non-government actors through the Mindanao Humanitarian Team.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response and Funding

While actions are being taken to mobilize supplies, identify partners and partnerships for response, precise requests and gaps are yet to be confirmed and will be cognizant of assessment findings and cluster discussions. The below table identifies potential UNICEF key interventions, and estimated costs. We currently have available contingency ORE funds in hand as part of our preparedness plans for 2017; but if the crisis escalates or becomes protracted additional resources will need to be mobilized.

The proposed budget is based on current plans for three months.

Sector	Activity	Budget US\$
Child Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of PSS ▪ IEC distribution and awareness raising on UXO/ERW ▪ MRM ▪ Family tracing and reunification 	200,000
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement of tents and back to school items 	100,000
WASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replacement of existing prepositioned stocks (includes hygiene kits, water bladders, jerry cans etc.) 	150,000
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support to outreach activities and the dissemination of IEC 	5,000
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-site photographer and writer 	5,000
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-going monitoring support (including repeat field visits, assessment missions and engagement with the affected population. This includes missions to gather feed-backs from affected-families/children/young people and may also include support to an 'after-action' review) 	20,000
Subtotal costs		480,000
Operations @10% of total costs		48,000
Total costs		528,000.00

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¹ The Quad-Cluster in the Philippines considers Health, Nutrition, WASH and Mental Health and Psycho-social Support together under the leadership of the Department of Health within one Cluster. Within the Cluster, Nutrition and WASH coordinate as a sector, but report back within the Quad-cluster format.