



Background

Since 1968, conflict between Moro insurgent groups and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines has severely affected the population of Mindanao. The Moro community is estimated to be 5 percent of the country's total population and have historically formed the majority population of Mindanao, the second largest island in the Philippines archipelago. The most recent surge in the conflict in August 2008 resulted in about 750 000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), only half of whom were registered as such.

After a year of intermittent fighting, the Armed forces of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front announced a suspension of military operations in July 2009.

The Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) for the Conflict-Affected Provinces of Mindanao was launched on 2 February 2011 to support Government efforts in responding to the most critical needs of the conflict-affected people of Mindanao over a 12-month timeframe. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) are co-leaders of the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster. The Cluster will increasingly emphasize early recovery interventions that support the restoration of crop cultivation, livestock rearing, fishing and other agriculture-based activities, as well as improved nutrition for the affected population.

Challenges facing food security and agriculture

Since the suspension of military operations, IDPs have been gradually returning to their places of origin. Although the majority of those displaced since 2008 have returned home, many have yet to do so and cite the lack of security, shelter and viable livelihood opportunities as the main impediments. Those who have returned face significant challenges in recovering their former livelihoods and remain vulnerable to food insecurity and violence, which is a constant threat.

Many IDPs have lost their draught animals, small livestock, farm tools and fishing gear as a result of the conflict and are now heavily indebted to moneylenders for loans taken out for crops that were never harvested due to the conflict. Many Farmers are, therefore, unable to prepare their land or purchase the agricultural inputs required to restart crop, livestock and fisheries production.

The Emergency Food Security Assessment, conducted by WFP in January 2010, indicated that approximately 70 percent of IDPs and returnees were food insecure, of which 40 percent were highly or moderately food insecure.

IDPs also experience inadequate food consumption, which has resulted in malnutrition rates in Mindanao that are more than 50 percent higher than in the rest of the country. Similarly, the stunting rate among children under five years of age, a measure of chronic malnutrition, is at 41 percent.



The vast majority of conflict-affected IDPs rely on agriculture to provide for their families

FAO's response

Within the framework of the Humanitarian Action Plan for the Conflict-Affected Provinces of Mindanao, FAO seeks over **USD 2.1 million** to assist IDP and returnee households to restore crop production and other agriculture-based livelihoods.

With donor funding, FAO aims to provide agricultural input packages consisting of more than 700 sets of hand tools, 70 tonnes of rice, 267 tonnes of corn, 22 000 packs of

vegetable seeds, 1 360 tonnes of fertilizers, 1 776 goats and 1 543 sets of fishing gear to families most in need. FAO also plans to provide immediate technical support in sustainable rice, corn and vegetable cultivation, fisheries production and livestock and poultry management.

The transition from humanitarian relief to early recovery and development requires a concerted commitment to the restoration of agricultural livelihoods. The proposed project is expected to help more than 100 000 rural IDPs and returnees recommence farming activities in an equitable and sustainable manner, having lasting impacts on food security, nutritional status and income generation.

Project title: Emergency Response to Restoring Rural Livelihoods in Conflict-Affected Areas of Mindanao

Objective: To increase food production among returnee households in Maguindanao/ARMM, North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat/Region 12.

Beneficiaries: 105 500 IDPs (17 600 households).

Partners: Community and Family Services International.

Funds Required: USD 2 141 675.

For more information please contact:

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