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Distribution of household items in Bubong, Lanao del Sur

## Humanitarian situation

- The fighting between government forces and the Maute group in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, has continued for more than a month now. Residential and commercial areas east of the Agus River have been damaged in the continued hostilities, based on media and ground sources. More recently, the authorities have recovered decomposed bodies, or parts of it, from the city while others in a similar state have yet to be retrieved.
- There are still around 200-300 civilians trapped inside Marawi whose situation is of great concern after more than a month, according to the Crisis Management Committee.
- The security situation in the Provincial Capitol in Marawi City poses risks for evacuees staying inside the complex, and for other civilians including volunteers and aid workers there.

- There are now more than 300,000 people displaced by the fighting according to the regional authorities. The figures include people living outside of Marawi who have fled their homes from fear that the fighting might spread to their areas.
- Hygiene, sanitation and proper shelter--especially now during the rainy season--are among the growing concerns in congested evacuation centers. Health authorities reported that around 27 displaced people have died due to illnesses that have been exacerbated by their difficult situation in the evacuation centers.
- In Ditsaan-Ramain and Bubong, municipalities southeast of Marawi City, displaced people urgently need medical supplies, food and drinking water. There's still no electricity in the area, prices of basic commodities have significantly increased, and the provision of assistance is proving to be difficult due to distance and stricter security.

## Humanitarian needs and issues of concern

### On protection of civilians:

- Circumstances are dire for those trapped in Marawi as the fighting endures. Efforts to secure humanitarian corridors should continue to safely evacuate these civilians who have been trapped for more than a month now.
- The ICRC is concerned about reports of civilians who were killed or deliberately targeted, and those who are being held against their will. Civilians are not part of the fighting and should be protected.

### On displaced families:

- It is important to closely monitor the health situation in evacuation centers especially for the children, elderly and other vulnerable groups. Immediate action is needed to lower or prevent the incidence of communicable diseases.

### On management of dead bodies and missing people:

- All human remains must be treated with respect and dignity at all times. All measures should be taken to ensure that the dead are identified and returned to their families.
- Families who have missing relatives have the right to know the fate of their loved ones, and to be reunited with them. They must be properly supported in tracing their relatives. Governments, the military, and armed groups have an obligation to provide information on the whereabouts of civilians under their authority and assist efforts to bring families back together.

## ICRC actions to date

-  Assisted the safe evacuation of more than 700 people, including handicapped, sick, wounded civilians, families with young children, and unaccompanied minors from the Marawi City to nearby municipalities; and continuously helps reuniting separated family members with the help of the Philippine Red Cross (PRC)
-  Distributed essential household items to around 21,500 displaced people (4,304 families) in Ditsaan-Ramain and Bubong municipalities
-  Continued providing medical supplies where needed for assisting wounded or displaced people, focusing more recently on the less-accessible municipalities of Tamparan, Ditsaan-Ramain and Bubong. Since the beginning of the crisis, more than 13 local health facilities have received support from ICRC

-  Works together with the PRC in the following activities:
  - Hygiene promotion and continuous supply of drinking water to more than 10,000 displaced people through the five water bladders installed at the evacuation centers in Saguiaran and Marawi City
  - Installation and maintenance of portable toilets, bathing area with partition for privacy, washing area and cooking kiosks at Saguiaran evacuation center
-  Provided technical support and essential equipment to the authorities, for the retrieval of human remains and the provision of news to families of missing persons
- Documents and monitors reports of alleged IHL violations; and intervenes, whenever possible with the concerned parties to address the issue

The ICRC's humanitarian operations in the coming days will continue to focus on municipalities in the east and west of the Lanao Lake. The independent and neutral identity of the ICRC, and contacts with all relevant parties involved, gives the ICRC the unique ability to access and operate in challenging areas.

*The ICRC is a neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian organization that protects and assists victims of armed conflict. It has an international mandate to promote knowledge for and respect of IHL.*

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