

# STORIES OF DISPLACEMENT AND INTERVENTION PROGRAMS IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF MAGUINDANAO

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**Abstract:** This study was conducted primarily to describe and validate the stories of displacement and intervention programs to the Internally Displaced Person in the Municipalities of Maguindanao. Data were gathered through focus group discussions and were translated and analyzed using qualitative method. The data revealed that the Internally Displaced Persons experienced a better life until armed conflict took place. The family's needs were provided due to the availability of resources. However, war had changed their lives. They had to endure a difficult and inconvenient life due to sickness and food shortage at the evacuation centre. Nevertheless, the aids from the different humanitarian organizations provided their immediate needs. The participants shared insights on how to improve the programs and services tendered by the service provider. They also suggested ways on how to create a sustainable program where the need for livelihood is addressed and also on how to decrease stress and trauma.

**Keywords:** Displacement, Internally Displaced Persons, Intervention Programs, Maguindanao.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are among the most vulnerable and affected victims in armed- conflict areas. These IDPS are helpless and often remain in danger after they are displaced. It was found out by the Global IDP Project that research on the needs of this population is insufficient. The United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal said that IDPs is the largest group of at risk people in the world. In fact, by 2003, there were nearly 25 million IDPs in 52 countries, and at least 23 countries accommodated a quarter-million or more IDPs. This huge number of IDPs is due to internal conflicts.

The Research Documentation and Information Program (2000) of Balay Non-Government Organization stated that Internally Displaced Persons in the Philippines are habitually moved from places or voluntarily relocated to escape harm or harassment arising from man-made disaster such as armed conflict, land conversation, environment destruction and aggressive implementation of development projects.

In Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) there is recurring conflict between the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and other separatist group. Maguindanao is part of ARMM and it suffers such problem. ARMM is leading in terms of armed conflict problem. More than 1.3 million has been displaced in six years ("Internally Displacement," 2007).

Based on this reality, it is but imperative to find out the stories of displacement and what have been the actions undertaken by the Government and Non- Government Organizations to the affected areas. It is in this context that the researcher found the urgency to conduct this study.

## 2. METHOD AND MATERIALS

The Researcher used qualitative method in doing this study as it excels in narrating the story from the participants view point ( Trochim, 2006). A qualitative study is also interested in the nature and essence of an event, person or case (Silverman, 2000). This study particularly utilized the phenomenological approach that Creswell (1998) specified. The

researcher would like to discover events that are occurring in the life of people but will remain true to the facts. (Groenewald, 2004). Moreover, the Researcher also aims to describe accurately the event people can be certain about how things appear in, or present themselves to, their consciousness (Eagleton, 1983).

Questions were focused on the participant's personal encounters, feelings, and views as it would answer the research problem. Moreover, the Researcher investigated the living conditions of the Internally Displaced Persons and their encountered experience as the beneficiaries or recipients of the different humanitarian organizations that rendered assistance during and after conflict.

The system of purposive selection was used. Patton (1990) said that in selecting information-rich cases, the study for in-depth is without needing or desiring to generalize all such cases. Three sets of focus group discussion (FGD) were conducted. One per municipality which was attended by five participants per FGD. The participants were specifically the head of the family and only one parent per household joined the said FGD.

In this study, the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) gave their feedback, experiences and perceptions on the provisions that were rendered to them by any of the humanitarian organizations. Thus, the Researcher narrated important and relevant events as experienced by the participants.

In this research, the Researcher formulated open-ended questions which provide direction for focus group discussion. Marczack & Sewell (1998) defined focus group discussion as a group of interacting individuals having some common interest or characteristics brought together by a moderator, who uses the group and its interaction as a way to gain information about a specific or focused issue.

Ahearn (2000) stated that FGD is a method of data collection that works well within the context of the participant observation study. It is the process of give and take in the dialogue whereby relatively spontaneous remarks are made (Morgan, 1998). In addition, it gives the member of the focus group the opportunity to immediately add on to clarify, and either confirm or renounce certain ideas or information that one member expressed or presented (Cuizon, Castillo, & Magdayao, 2008).

In data analysis in phenomenology research, the researcher was able to examine the transcriptions of the participants as Ogill (2002) specified. The researcher was able to identify not only the similar experiences, but also the differences between them. In this process, the researcher developed initial categories that described different people's experiences of the given phenomenon. After the covering multiple aspects of that phenomenon, the researcher developed the categories that explained all kinds of variations in the data.

Then, based on initial categories, the researcher re-examines the transcripts to determine whether the categories are sufficiently descriptive and the next examination of the data is reviewed for internal consistency of the categories of description. This process of modification and data review continues until the modified categories seem to be consistent with the interview data.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed four criteria for evaluating interpretive research work: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. In this study the researcher was able to conduct prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, triangulation, negative case analysis, checking interpretations to make sure credibility was made. In addition, the researcher was able to design transparent processes for coding and drawing conclusions from the raw data. Coders' knowledge and experience have significant impact on the credibility of research results. It is necessary to provide coders precise coding definitions and clear coding procedures.

### **Ethical Considerations:**

This study observed research ethics to prevent, reduce, or undo harm to research participants (Davis, 2000). I distributed informed consent concerning this matter (Creswell, 1998). Participants were informed on the purpose and objectives of my study and only those with confirmation were scheduled for the focus group discussion. Participants were rest assured of confidentiality with regards to this activity and personality.

In this study the names of the participants were cancelled but pseudo names were used instead, in other words all the names mentioned in the narration were not real but code names only. I cautiously observed permission to terminate participation as Davis (2000) stated that penalty, coercion, or shame must be avoided in case the participant decided not to join the focus group discussion.

**Theory:**

This study was anchored in the Crisis Intervention and Community Development theory. A crisis is an “upset in steady states” (p.284) an emotional reaction on the part of an individual, family, or group to a threatening life event (Mendoza, 1996). When a person is in crisis state it means that there is a temporary disturbance in his equilibrium. Moreover, it occurs when a person is faced with a situation that pushes him or her beyond his capacity to cope and still continue in a normal life style (Jackson, 2000). Another definition states that it is temporary state of upset and disorganization, characterized by an inability to cope with a particular situation (Kantor, 2000).

The crisis intervention is a process for actively influencing the psycho-social functioning of individuals during a period of acute disequilibrium. It involves crisis-oriented, time-limited work, usually two to six weeks in duration (Mendoza, 1996). Its primary goal is to assist the person in distress and to resolve the immediate problem and regain emotional equilibrium. The origin of modern crisis intervention dates back to Eric Lindeman. He noted that during life crises, some individuals dealt with problems in a maladjusted way, and seemed to come out from the event not as healthy as before (Kantor, 2000).

Further, crisis intervention enables a person faced with a crisis to cope with the immediate acute and stressful demands being made by circumstances and to restore normal functioning so that the subject can take up the task of seeking a satisfactory resolution to his own crisis (Newbery, 1993).

The Department of Social Welfare and Development renders crisis intervention program. Services include financial assistance, temporary accommodation or shelter for a limited period of time, burial assistance, provision of immediate psychosocial intervention and referral services to link the clients with the appropriate service units in the Department, other government agencies, NGOs and other organizations (“Crisis Intervention,” 2008).

**3. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS****Life before displacement:**

In this study, the Internally Displaced Persons expressed that they have experienced good life before armed-conflict. They enjoyed the community’s resources such as fish, farm, fruits and root crops. They said that they were already capable to earn additional income from animal raising which helped them provide daily expenses. They were determined to work harder in order to meet the basic needs of the family. They were still capable to pay school fees of their children. They achieved peace of mind which made them able to establish inner silence and harmonious relationship with the community people as well. For most of them good memories ensued before war.

The participants revealed their living condition before the armed-conflict. Most of them stated that they had experienced good life. People in the community got their source of living through fishing and farming. One participant cited that his life then is better than after displacement because along with his livestock, he also earns in farming. His family farms their own land and they are abundant in terms of vegetables and other crops. Another participant also said that if man works hard then he can live. This statement was supported by Homedy. He said that their area in Salbo is rich in agricultural products and surrounded with fresh water. Fishes like” tilapia, gurami, and karpa” are common in their place.

They said that even if they did not earn much income they were able to supply the needs of the family because they are determined to work. They can plant vegetables in the backyard and children helped in fishing. The family were able to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and medicines. They can eat three times a day and they were able to pay school expenses of the children. Some of the study participants have started to invest in owning electrical appliances for their convenience.

Almira mentioned that when war has not yet occurred they focused more on their livelihood. Her statement was supported by Fauzah who said that life before was worry free and fearless. Looking at Fauzah’s facial expression you can tell that she was upset. They also said that before the war, the night is the safest time in the community. Aside from meeting the necessities in life, the study participants have also said that sometimes they were able to afford “Kanduli”, a feast in Maguindanaon, wherein they prepare food and celebrate with their visitors and relatives. Moreover, when they run out of money, they can ask financial help from their neighbours or sometimes from their relatives.

The participants exposed that life before the armed-conflict was far different from today. Though they considered themselves as working poor they asserted that they experienced good life. They can eat three square meals; they have adequate housing where they can rest, a home which gives comfort after work, a quiet night that serves venue for family bonding and reflection.

Before the war, the IDPs have an easy access to their needs because the resources are within the area. Their land can produce income and even livestock creates additional earning. Their life is focused more on their work errands, how to survive, make money and be a responsible parent. The positive relationship found among their neighbours and relatives made their lives simpler.

The life experiences among the study participants showed that they felt good life before the war. They conformed to the statement of Ventegodt (2000) who said that the notion of a good life can be observed from subjective to the objective. The subjective quality of life is how good a life each individual feels he or she has. Each individual personally evaluates how he or she views things and his or her feelings and notions. Whether an individual is content with life and happy are aspects that reflect the subjective quality of life.

Fulfillment of needs is not identical to well-being, as needs are related to aspects of human nature. However, it is part of the theory of needs that we feel good once our needs have been fulfilled. Fulfillment of needs is not the same as realizing life potential, which takes the extreme stance that life is all about realizing one's biological information. This information exists in such complex forms that one can hardly reduce it to simple, actual needs.

#### **Situation at the Evacuation Center:**

Difficult and suffering life was experienced at the evacuation center. Crowded site, huge number of sick children, insufficient food supply, unsanitary environment, and lack of earning were confronted by the Internally Displaced Persons at the temporary shelter. Due to these situations the IDPs developed the feeling of sadness, hopelessness, fear and anxiety.

In the province of Maguindanao, every municipality had their respective evacuation centre. According to the participants one center was situated along Datu Salibo road and the evacuees were from Barangay Tee. They said that their Baragay was the last rescued since the area is remote and isolated. Pump boats or bancas were used to reach the evacuation center. The second center was in Barangay Salibo which was located at the elementary school while in Datu Piang was in their municipal plaza.

The evacuation centers were heavily crowded. The participants shared that their "tolda" (shelter) was made of bamboo and "trapal." Spaces could not accommodate for each member of the family. They also mentioned that they slept all together on the floor with a kerosene lamp that served as light. They also added that during day time, their family was suffering from the heat inside the tent and when it rains it is expected that they will be drenched and cannot sleep well at night. They have also cited that the food distribution in the center is like a competition.

Aside from these dilemmas, they were also confronted with problem of health and sanitation. They shared that physical illnesses brought them additional suffering. According to them, children staying at the evacuation are the most affected and have the most number of cases of different ailment. The usual sickness they got are cough, colds, diarrhea, fever, and mosquito-causing disease such as dengue fever. Another issue is the insufficient food supply which according to them made their bodies weak and susceptible to infection. According to Fauzah it is harder to have more children because regardless of the number of family members, every household received the same amount of goods / supplies from any humanitarian organizations. In cases where a family has large number of children, she said that they have to budget well the received supplies.

According to the participants, in the evacuation center, potable water is not sufficient for all the dwellers; hence, they are forced to drink water from the river. Farouk was thankful of the river because they used it not for drinking; but also for bathing, laundry, and even cooking. There were reports that the evacuation centers do not have comfort room and there were poor waste disposal and that, the smell in the area was unbearable. They said that they were aware that some of the evacuees used to defecate anywhere because of the absence of comfort rooms at the center.

The agonies and sufferings of the displaced families are beyond any description, especially when they realized that they could no longer live the life they once had. According to Nasrudin life is so different in the evacuation center because there is no means of livelihood. They felt sad because they are helpless and they depend solely on the relief goods given by an organization. They felt discouraged because they cannot believe that they have to suffer this kind of dilemma. Others would want to work in order to provide the needs of the family, yet the availability of resources, opportunities and skills in the new environment, hinder them from doing so.

One participant mentioned that the scarcity of resources given by any humanitarian organization brought them ambivalent feeling because they have to get through a tiring procedure before getting the supply. They have to compete with others. They mentioned that they have to stand under the heat of the sun during the release of supplies that led to the death of an elderly who has a history of hypertension. Also, there was an incident that a pregnant woman gave birth prematurely because of the stress of a long wait in distribution of goods. These experiences made them unhappier with the situation.

They also said that they have suspicion that their community leaders were taking advantage and made a lot of money out of their situation. Some of them cited that there were goods that were not provided at the right or equal amount. These sentiments among evacuees worsen their feeling of sadness. According to them the parent or the head of the family was required to get their allocated supplies from the humanitarian organizations, they cannot depend on their children or on other person as a substitute in doing the task; thus, making it more difficult for them to seek for other source of income and leads them to total dependency to these organizations.

One participant shared that he tried to go back to save his animals and other belongings but only felt dismayed because none left of his properties. They also said they do not want to leave their house, but when the Red Cross, they were forced to leave their place. They were confused whether to stay because they were only counting weeks before harvesting their crops or to evacuate for their safety. Some were able to bring their livestock; however, after days of staying at the evacuation center they were forced to sell them at the lower price to sustain their needs at the center.

Moreover, in barangay Tee, most of the houses were burned and the residents felt more depressed knowing that they could no longer go back to their houses and old lives. One participant was worried of the schooling of their children when he said that after this tragedy he was not sure of where he will get their everyday needs since they got nothing when they left their home. One evacuee also shared that it saddened her looking at her children living in an uncomfortable environment such as the evacuation center where they were temporarily housed.

Most of the participants shared the same feeling of unhappiness. They said that they have lost their home, property, and livestock. They expressed that they were affected and suffered. Sometimes it makes the down thinking what had happened to them. They themselves could believe that it happened to them and to their children. They felt they were victims and helpless.

Another issue that the Internally Displaced Persons encountered was fear. They said that they were afraid that the war might happen again. According to them, they no longer felt safe in their homes and in their community. They said that their hearts and minds were not yet settled since they don't know if they would encounter crossfire from the Army and the MILF. They said that they no longer have peace of mind because they don't know what the war would bring. They said they have fear of returning to evacuation centers and experience again all the inconveniences they got in the said area. One participant mentioned that they were afraid to be sent back to the evacuation center again. They found that life is more difficult when they are in the centres. One participant shared her fear for her daughter who had panic attacked. According to her, this started when her child saw the falling missile near their backyard and after that incident she yells and becomes hysterical every time she hears a loud noise.

According to the participants, despite the efforts of Arm Forces of Philippines to work for the benefit of IDP's, the mere sight of soldiers brought fear to the said people. According to them, they have the idea that the war may start anytime because of the presence of the AFP members. As a result, they were anxious about their situation and worried about their lives. They said that their minds are troubled and uncertain whether they could surpass the crisis or not. They were also bothered whether their children could understand their situation, and whether they could still provide the needs of their children.

These apprehensions are common to the IDPs. Some of them cannot even sleep well at night and they always worry about their lost properties. Some of them have lost their appetite to eat, not only because of food shortage, but because they were also thinking of alternative source of living. Another concern they brought up was the children's welfare particularly on how to provide for their education. Other participants are uncertain about their problem, about who is going to help them in order to rebuild their lives. They have in their minds that the worst thing is how to start their lives for many were taken out from them. However, his life now is far different from before and he only cares about how to survive. During their sharing, they were faltering about their plans in life. They doubted that if they could provide and meet the needs of their family.

The participants generally stated that they survived through supplies either in food or in kind that they received from the humanitarian organizations. These supplies helped them lived. Majority of the humanitarian organizations were active in attending the needs of the internally displaced persons in evacuation centers. Although there were rations, the food supplies distributed by Government Organizations and Non-Government Organizations were not enough for the daily consumption of the evacuees. This situation made the lives of the IDPs more difficult.

The participants felt helpless. They have no land to tilt; there was no other source of income and unavailability of opportunities in their new location. The participation of different humanitarian organizations somehow lessened the obligations of the government to IDPs, but it did not answer the entire problem in the shortage of food supplies. Despite of the additional bags of rice from AFP, there were still complaints of starvation among the evacuees. Generally, the participants were not satisfied with the services of the government and other organizations. During the distribution of supplies, IDPs felt degraded since they have to be under the heat of the sun and in a rowdy crowd just to get their goods. They thought that they were not only victims of war, but also victims of corruption in the government.

Most of the participants were optimistic, despite their difficult situation. They thought of ways to augment their food supplies. Though very disappointed with the procedures inside the center, IDPs were determined to survive, so they have started small businesses to support the everyday needs of their family. The government and non-government agencies do not have enough resources to fully satisfy the needs of the IDPs financially, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. In spite of their effort to maximize the supplies they have budgeted, They were still not enough.

Displacement causes fundamental change in the lives of displaced individuals and their families. For example, the roles of family members usually change, at least temporarily if not permanently. Parents in the evacuation centers find themselves in situations of very limited authority and great dependency. Generally, they were unable to work and had no access to resources resulting to being depressed and anxious. In the evacuation centers, food and other relief supplies are being delivered through the family head that are considered by providers to be more efficient and less likely to allow the supplies to be diverted, stolen, and/or misused. The head of the family must often wait in line to obtain food rations, assist with food distribution; thus, they couldn't look for job because of the strict policy.

It is clear that the experiences brought by the armed-conflict had caused stress to IDPs. This conformed to the study of Auerbach (2008) study on stress that it is normal and is adaptive reaction to threat. It is also an unpleasant state of emotional and physiological arousal that people experience in situations that they perceive as dangerous or threatening to their well-being. The participants felt their life, health, prosperity, self-respect, freedom, security status, and future prospects which are their personal value are threatened. Along with these sadness, and agony are also commonly felt by the IDPs.

#### **Interventions that Helped the Internally Displaced Persons:**

The Government and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have responded to the needs of the Internally Displaced Persons. The IDPs gained several intervention programs from the different local and international funding agencies. Different intervention programs were provided to the IDPs by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC), Community and Family Services International (CFSI) and World Food (WF), International Organization for Migration, Mindanao Tabang Bakwit (MTB), Mindanao Energy Response Network (MERN), OXFAM International, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Medicine Sans Frontieres, and Non-Violent Peace Force.

Generally, different intervention programs were provided to the IDPs. They received material assistance to meet their basic need such as food, shelter, clothing and medicines. Other forms of assistance were kitchen and home utensils. Parenting and livestock raising seminar were conducted for the parents. Food for work activity helped the IDPs to augment their source of income. Children attended feeding and literacy program. They also received sports and recreational equipment. Some agencies constructed water pumps, school building, and sanitary toilets to assure the wellness of the IDPs.

According to the participants there are various agencies that helped them in the evacuation center. They said that the Local Government Unit through the DSWD responded first. They provided relief goods, feeding for the children, drinking water, and "trapal" to be used as temporary shelter. On the later part they organized leaders and mother's club for parenting seminar and livelihood training such as goat/ cow rising. There was also food for work activity that according to

the participants was tiring yet a fulfilling job. They also mentioned that DSWD has a daily record with the complete list of the IDPs; thus, their team is more visible in terms of monitoring and validation in the area.

Another agency that rendered aid to the IDPs was the PNRC. One participant cited that during the first month of release of supplies they received fifty (50) kilos of rice per household however, during the succeeding months, they only received 25 kilos of rice per household. They also gave kitchen utensils like pan, cups, plates, and water jugs. They said that the Agency gave supplies every four months. One participant emphasized that among the agencies, PNRC is the most firm and yet organized Non-Government Organization (NGO). According to her, the agency prioritized the elderly and pregnant women during the supply distribution. The tickets or coupon were given to the head of the household and they were expected to fall in line and get the supply. Children were not allowed to get supplies in behalf of a parent or else no food/ supplies would be given to the family. One participant said that the Red Cross gave complete supplies even cooking oil. He also added that falling in line was not so difficult.

The Community and Family Services International (CFSI) and World food has given only food assistance to the IDPs. According to the participants they received two (2) kilos of rice per month, beans and other vegetables as viand. They agreed that they found inconvenience during the distribution of supplies because interviews were conducted during the, despite of the crowded population and the heat under the sun. Colour coding of coupons was changed every month and the head of the family was compulsory to receive the supplies.

Another agency that extended support to them was the International Organization for Migration. The participants recalled that they only received materials for shelter and toilet construction such as “Trapal”, woods, nails, toilet bowls and temporary toilet facility. They also mentioned the Mindanao Tabang Bakwit ( MTB) agency. They also got non-food assistance from the said agency. Supplies like mosquito net, blankets, gallons, plastic mat, towels and basin were given to them. The Mindanao Energy Response Network ( MERN) also gave most of what the MTB gave.

They also remembered the OXFAM International which initiated the sanitation concerns. They received water pumps, free construction of toilets, and also potable water supply. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has rendered literacy program among the children. They also constructed two rooms for literacy program per evacuation center, provided recreation and sports equipment for the children, and initiated feeding program. Members from the IDPs who became their volunteer teachers received one sack of rice per month as honorarium.

One participant revealed that some of the evacuees destroyed the facilities of the school. She helped in fixing the tables and chairs and also in assisting the parents inside the evacuation center. Another Non-Government Organization who extended help was the Medicine Sans Frontieres which focused more on the medical aid. Sick adult and undernourished children were given medicines. Some of them received free surgical operations like those IDPs who had problems with cyst and orthopaedic cases. They also gave free birth delivery services. They also cited Non- Violent Peace Force which did not give relief assistance but only monitor and interview them. Finally, the Act for Peace provided one hundred water jugs per evacuation center.

The Internally Displaced Persons received several support from the different humanitarian agencies. This support can be classified in the form of food and non-food. The food assistance was in the variety of rice, vegetable and cooking ingredients. Non-food includes clothes, kitchen utensils, medical assistance, home use materials, toilet construction, water pumps, sports, equipment, literacy program and livestock rising.

Food assistance came in different forms. They were given different kilos of rice from the different agencies. Some of the Humanitarian Organizations also gave vegetables such as beans and other spices for cooking use. Although potable water was provided, IDPs had to drink water from the river because the supplied water could not cater to the number of IDPs in the evacuation center. The children were also given feeding program to supplement food intake to meet the body nutrients requirement.

Their experienced during the distribution of food supply was not easy. Every agency had their own procedure before releasing the goods. The IDPs had to stand and fall in line whether under the heat of the sun or under the rain. They had to join the heavy crowd and leave work and household errands to make sure supplies would be received by the head of the family. Food assistance was essential to IDPs because it was one of the necessities of life. Food is a basic need. It is a body requirement in order to survive. Since they left their resources, food assistance was the major concern of the Government and Non-government Organizations.

The participants revealed that the food assistance helped them to function socially in the evacuation centers. The participants also received non-food supplies. These were kitchen utensils such as pans, water jugs, gallons, and basin. These are important things that they used in the temporary shelter. Some of the supplies were distributed personally to the families occupying the tents while some were through their barangay leaders.

They also received home used materials like “trapal” blanket, plastic mat, towels, mosquito net, and clothes. These were useful in their daily life activities at the center. This assistance also prevented them to get ailment especially the mosquito causing disease particularly the dengue fever. The said materials also became their aid to have a comfortable sleep during night time. The distribution also happened during the food release. Every family head was required to receive the said supplies.

The construction of water pumps brought IDPs convenience at the center since water is a basic need. The barangay leaders of each centers helped in the said construction. The materials were all given by the OXFAM agency. This assistance was an aid to the water shortage which also prevented them to acquire water causing diseases such as typhoid fever, amoebiasis, and diarrhea.

Another construction that was initiated by OXFAM was the toilet facilities per evacuation center. The staff and the community people helped hand in hand for the construction of toilets. This was to address sanitation problem at the center. Even if the area was wide it was still proper that the people must defecate at the right place and must observe cleanliness to prevent illness.

War impedes the attendance of children in school. Some of their classrooms were occupied by the evacuees. The UNICEF gave literacy program to the elementary pupils in the municipality of Datu Saudi. They had also constructed two additional rooms and paid volunteer teachers one sack of rice per month. The said provision lessened the fear and trauma among the children. The DWSD and the MTB provided livestock training such as goat and cow dispersal. This was to teach and provide IDPs other source of income. Community leaders were identified and through organizing the people they were able to raise animals in their backyard and earn from it.

Since majority of the IDPs are Maguindanaon tribe, the agencies were sensitive in choosing what kind of animals to provide. Thus, cow and goat were given to the community people. The food for work activity initiated by the DSWD also offers IDPs to work in reconstructing the wreck houses and buildings. After hours of work, they were compensated with relief goods. This activity boosted the IDPs’ morale. They felt good because the food that they brought home was from their fruit of labor. Aside from that, they were proud in taking part in the rebuilding of their community.

Majority of the IDPs received supplies that are necessary for survival. The study participants conformed to the statement of the American psychologist Abraham Maslow proposed that all people are motivated to fulfill a hierarchical pyramid of needs. At the bottom of Maslow’s pyramid are needs essential to survival, such as the needs for food, water, and sleep. The need for safety follows these physiological needs. According to Cherry (2010) relating Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs, said that higher-level needs become important to us only after our more basic needs are satisfied. These higher needs include the need for love and belongingness, the need for esteem, and the need for self-actualization.

Aside from the importance of physiological support, livelihood assistance also comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access) and activities required for a means of living. Livelihoods are vital for the social, emotional and economic well-being of displaced persons. They are keys to increase the safety of displaced persons (“Livelihood,” 2009). Livelihoods are targeted towards local markets. They are comprehensive in approach and promote self-reliance that is both dignified and sustainable. Livelihood projects to refugee have generally catered to small segments of the displaced populations with interventions largely focused on meeting basic survival needs in order to reduce or cut off food rations.

#### **The Wishes and Aspirations of the Participants:**

The study participants learned that there must be improvement to the intervention programs given by the agencies. These were prioritizing the most need help of Internally Displaced Persons and the personal distribution of supplies of food and materials to the recipients rather than thru the supervision of the barangay officials or leaders in the community. They proposed that there should be more of the livelihood / skills training to augment the family’s income during and after conflict. They strongly agreed that help must be on time to prevent inconvenience and chaos and finally they also requested to have rubber boats to transport them safely and faster if the incident happens again in the future.



The participants were asked about their recommendations to improve the services if similar incident happens in the future. They pointed out that the most in need IDP must be given priority. They suggested that the distribution of relief must be house to house to eliminate biases, cutting of supplies, and the right person must receive his shared out goods. Ticket or coupons must be distributed directly to an individual and not to the leaders or Barangay Captain. They also revealed that equal opportunities must be given to all kinds of people regardless of location, leaders or religion. They also expressed the need to have more livelihood programs to augment the family's needs during and after conflict.

They still agreed that queuing must be implemented during relief distribution. They also stated that help must be on time. They felt that some of the agencies neglected them especially the LGU. In Barangay Tee, they proposed to have an emergency rubber boat to easily vacate from their place if war happened again. The aforementioned recommendations were made based on the answers of the affected IDPs regarding the intervention programs in the evacuation center. These recommendations primarily aim, but not limited, to provide references to different organizations on how to facilitate effectively their delivery of services for IDPs.

The study participants aspired to deploy more people in giving out food supplies to prioritize vulnerable group like women, elderly and persons with disabilities. Most number of children must also be given consideration with regard to the amount of supply. Another is to have an organized distribution of goods to avoid chaos among the IDPs and lastly, to provide more sustainable livelihood programs suitable for their environment and capabilities. These humanitarian organizations should create skills / livelihood program to augment the living condition of the IDPs especially during post-war. There should be an on-time delivery of food supplies.

IDPs were complaining not only of the shortage of food but also in the delay of delivery of services. Goods should be given directly to the concerned IDPs and should not be channelled to their leaders to avoid corruption and reduction of their allocated supplies. Communities and private sectors should be urged to contribute financially to augment the food supplies that the humanitarian organizations are currently providing.

Government agencies would be of great help in information dissemination for the other sectors to actively participate in solving the problems of IDPs. The government should properly enforced all the programs and create a management team solely responsible for IDPs in their localities. This team would be automatically activated when there will be IDPs in their area of responsibility. All problems will be properly addressed to the concerned organizations through the help of this team. They would serve as "help center" to avoid confusion among IDPs as to where to go when they have complaints.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The participants have experienced good and satisfying life before the armed-conflict. The availability of the resources and the achieved peace of mind made the Internally Displaced Persons satisfied about life's requirement. It clearly indicates that war has negative effects on the IDPs and to the society as a whole. War has damaged properties, resources, livelihood, even took lives. Aside from displacement, the participants had to endure the physical and emotional stress brought by the war. They are at risk to experience prolonged stress if not managed at the early stage. The hostility at the evacuation center, competition during food distribution, sickness of the children, joblessness, were all recalled as they brought unhappy memories to the IDPs.

The Non-Government Organizations have facilitated most of the assistance to the IDPs; thus, they are more popular and appreciated by the community. Even if most of the intervention programs of the Government Organizations and Non-Government Organizations were short-term goal and has only centred on physical needs. These programs IDPs lived. Meeting the basic necessities in life is more than important. These various humanitarian organizations have a huge part in their survival as they responded to help distressed IDPs. The NGOs have created task to fill the gap and to supply materials as a help to the Government in proving goods to the war-affected people. Even if the Government has conducted programs for livelihood training, it was noted that it was not sufficient to address the IDPs need due to limited resources.

Addressing the physical needs is somewhat superficial to eradicate or lessen the root cause of the problem among the IDPs. It does not answer the underlying need which has a long term effect. The socio-economic crisis as well as their psychosocial dilemma can be more at risk. Their vulnerability has not yet diminished because they were not given appropriate solution that could have solved the problem. The positive effect of the assistance received by the IDPs provides a venue in uplifting their confidence to live. They are being appreciative despite they have experienced disaster and it made them better and stronger individuals. The love of the family encourages them to work harder and to live longer. The participants also came to realization that they value more what they have than what they have lost.

The participants claimed for better intervention programs of the GO and NGOs. This is to address not only their physical needs but also the economic and emotional needs as well. For that reason, it could create a sustainable and empowered society. As on the agency's management style, the requirement to identify the most in need must be given enough attention as they are more helpless and at risk to dysfunction. Right timing for the right program must be implemented to arrive at the solution.

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