



Municipal Protection Profile conducted in Agusan del Norte

Buenavista

Municipality of Buenavista

Province of Agusan del Norte | Region XIII: Caraga Region

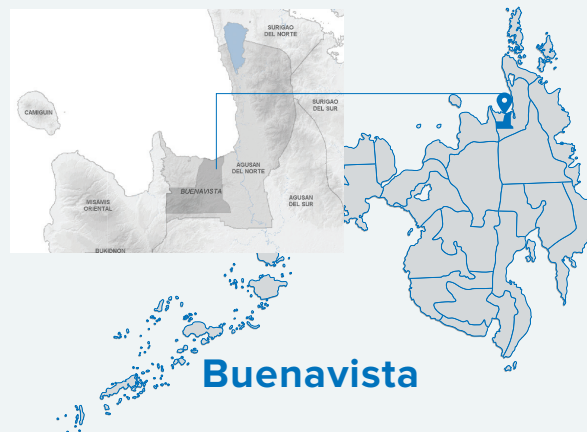
Overview

Risk rating: **Medium**

Quick facts

The Municipality of Buenavista is a first-class municipality in the province of Agusan del Norte, Region XIII. It is a coastal municipality that has a total land area of 475.61 square kilometers that is subdivided into 25 barangays. The municipality covers 17.42 percent of Agusan del Norte's total land area.

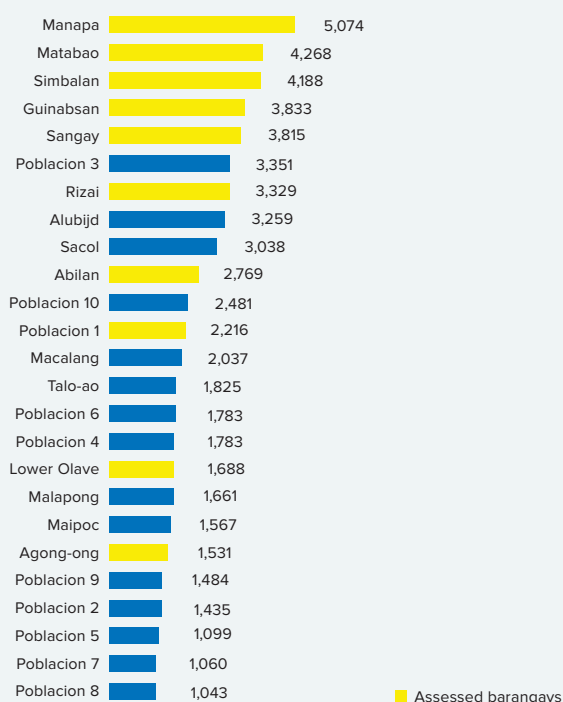
Buenavista has a total population of 61,614 based on the census conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) in 2015. The population of the municipality represents 17.38 percent of the total population of Agusan del Norte, and 2.37 percent of Region XIII's overall population. Although Buenavista is a first-class municipality, its poverty incidence is 31.8 percent.



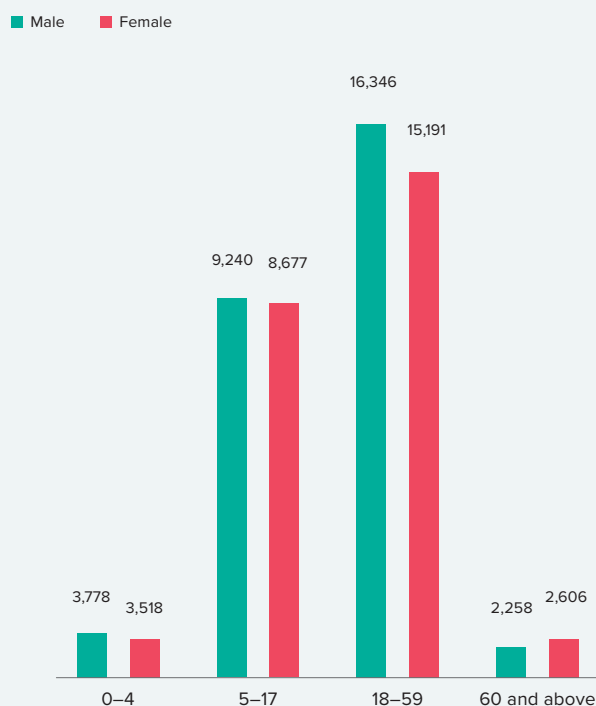
Based on the data by the PSA, 46 percent of the residents of Buenavista are male and 54 percent are female. Also, 37 percent of the municipality's population are children, 53 percent are adults, and 10 percent are elderly people.

Population ¹	Families	Income Class	Land Area	Barangays	Climate type	Languages spoken
61,614	12,323	1st Class	475.61 sq.km.	25	Tropical	Agusan, Butuanon, Cebuano, Higaonon, Tagalog

Population¹ by barangay



Population¹ by sex and age group



¹ 2015 Census of Population, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

Assessed barangays

The table below shows the population of barangays in Buenavista that were assessed for the MPP.

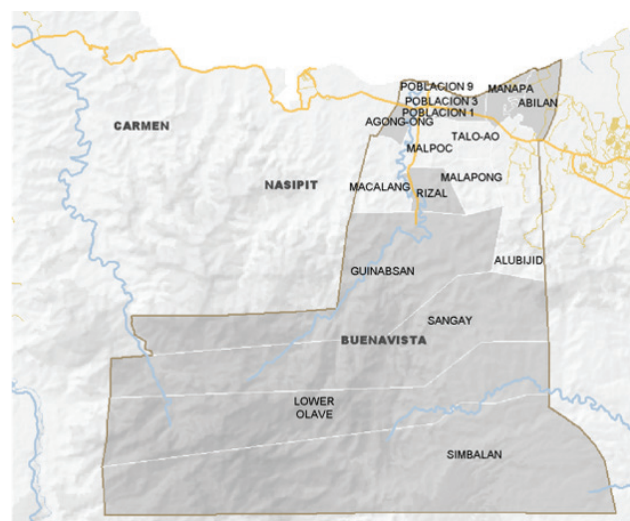
Barangay	No. of HH	No. of Families	No. of People	No. of Male	No. of Female	No. of Children	No. of Adults	No. of Elders
Abilan	654	655	3,009	1,434	1,575	730	2,148	131
Agong-ong	367	432	1,555	758	797	1,231	200	124
Guinabsan	833	1,117	4,437	2,291	2,146	1,357	2,545	535
Lower Olave	339	344	1,622	860	762	1,182	260	180
Manapa	1,256	1,323	4,782	2,492	2,290	1,794	2,390	598
Matabao	1,010	1,223	4,775	1,543	3,232	1,340	2,686	749
Poblacion 1	516	885	2,768	1,368	1,400	1,467	1,165	136
Rizal	714	877	3,288	1,619	1,669	1,044	2,007	237
Sangay	856	860	4,004	1,979	2,025	1,482	2,010	512
Simbalan	946	950	5,012	2,025	2,987	3,914	886	212
TOTAL	7,491	8,666	35,252	16,369	18,883	15,541	16,297	3,414

Protection Profile Summary

The Municipality of Buenavista in Agusan del Norte can be placed in a 'Medium' risk rating due to exposure to natural and human-induced hazards in the area compounded by existing vulnerabilities and protection risks. The municipality is affected by hazards such as floods, typhoons, landslides, and armed conflict, all of which trigger the displacement of the affected population.

As a low-lying area in the Caraga region, the municipality has experienced severe flooding due to typhoons and continuous rains, which trigger displacements. Coastline communities, such as Matabao and Abilan and riverine communities, are also susceptible to flooding. In terms of conflict, some communities in the municipality are considered hotspots for several armed encounters between the New People's Army and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Aside from armed conflict, the municipality has also experienced civilian conflicts arising from land disputes.

These natural and human-induced disasters and security threats cause significant damages to livelihood, shelter, and education of the affected population. Limited access to food, livelihood, and shelter cause interrelated impact to the lives of the affected and displaced population. Some experience low food consumption and malnutrition as a result of not being able to harvest because of the weather conditions, or for fear of being caught in the crossfire. Psychosocial health and education of the children are also affected.



Assessed barangays

Protection analysis

Displacement

Nature of Violations and Threats

A majority of the participants reported that the municipality experienced displacement from either armed conflict or natural disasters. Seventy-eight percent of the participants said that natural disaster was the cause of their displacement, while 31 percent said that it was armed conflict. The remainder of the participants did not respond to the question.

The participants from the coastal barangays of Matabao and Abilan reported that during typhoons they evacuated because of the rising water level and the big waves near the shoreline. The community members that are not living in the coastal barangays are vulnerable to flashfloods and flooding. Residents from Rizal, Manapa, and Guinabsan reported that the fear of flashfloods and the swelling of the river made them decide to evacuate. The participants from Poblacion and Sangay reported that flooding killed their livestock animals and damaged their farms.

Armed conflict in the area brought fear to the communities. The participants said that they would avoid armed conflict, as much as possible, for fear that they might get caught in the crossfire. Skirmishes between armed groups in the area would usually cause them to evacuate to find safety.

During emergencies, more than half or 59 percent of the population reported that they moved to evacuation centers located within their barangay. Twenty-six percent said they moved to live with their relatives within the barangay, 24 percent said they fled to ECs found within the municipality, and 13 percent said they found safety in schools. Other responses from the participants include moving to ECs outside the municipality, relatives within the municipality, and relatives outside the municipality.

Eighty-one percent of the participants reported that the longest displacement in the municipality is less than 30 days. Meanwhile, a total of 14 percent of the participants said that the longest displacements in the area took 91 days to more than a year. During evacuations, 83 percent of the participants reported problems and issues on their access to assistance and 7 percent reported that harassment is also an issue during displacement.

Eighty percent of the participants said they have hosted IDPs while 20 percent said they have no experience hosting IDPs. For those who have hosted IDPs, the primary causes of displacement were armed conflict and natural hazards. The longest duration of displacement in which they had hosted, lasted less than 30 days. A majority of those who have hosted IDPs said access to assistance was one of the primary issues during displacement.

Impact and Effects of Violations

The participants reported that the displacement, regardless if it is caused by armed conflict or natural hazards, affected their access to food, livelihood, shelter, and education. The participants said that they have problems accessing enough food during displacement because heavy rains or the fear of being caught in the crossfire prevented them from visiting their farms or fishing for food and livelihood. Some also reported that the presence of armed men in their farms prevented them from getting food.

The participants also reported that their rice and corn fields, as well as their houses, were heavily damaged by natural hazards. As a result, they were left without livelihood and shelter during displacement. They also reported that the displacement incidents have affected their jobs. Some people lost their jobs, especially those who are dependent on agriculture; while for others, livelihood activities were disrupted by the displacement. Livestock animals were also left unattended by the IDPs, which resulted to their eventual death.

The participants said that the education of their children was affected. Instead of going to school, their children and parents opted to stay in the evacuation sites for safety.

Coping Mechanisms of Affected Population

According to 61 percent of the participants, there is a possibility of displacement in the municipality. Twenty-eight percent also reported that they do not know if another displacement will take place; while 11 percent said that there is no possibility of displacement in the municipality. Should another displacement take place, the most likely to be affected are the farmers and fisherfolks, and the most vulnerable sectors – people who have disability, who are old, who are indigenous, and as well as the women and the children.

Ninety-one percent of the participants said that the IDPs were able to raise their concerns to the proper agencies. Six percent of the participants also reported that they do not know if they were able to raise their concerns, while three percent did not respond to the question. The participants mentioned that they were able to raise their concerns by directly communicating to the barangay leaders, especially the village chieftain. Some of the participants also said that they reported their issues to the tribal leaders or *purok* leaders who then reported the issues to the barangay officials.

Ninety-six percent of the participants also reported that the population has access to humanitarian assistance, while the remaining four percent said that they did not have access or did not respond. The type of emergency aid received were: food (94 percent); Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) kits (27 percent); health-related assistance (11 percent); livelihood (7 percent); and shelter (6 percent).

Ninety-four percent of the participants reported that they

received the assistance from the government, while nine percent also said that non-government organizations also provided aid. Some participants mentioned that they were likewise able to access aid from private sector and faith-based organizations.

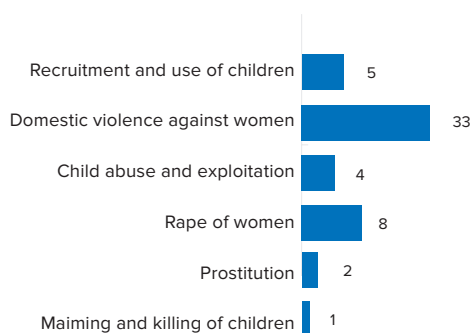
Protection of women and children

Nature of Violations and Threats

Domestic violence against women is the most frequently reported abuse against women in the municipality of Buenavista. Rape and sexual abuse of minors, recruitment and use of children, child abuse and exploitation, rape of women, and prostitution were also identified by the participants as violations they were able to report.

Despite the reports on violations and threats against women and children, 78 percent of the participants reported that they remain to feel safe in their communities because of the presence of the members of the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT) who monitor the safety of the residents even at night. The policy on curfew, the implementation of the Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) law in the municipality, and the quick response of the government officials on reports and issues made the participants feel safe. Six percent of the participants reported that they do not know if they feel safe, while the four percent who do not feel safe said that they have noticed parents leaving their children for work.

Reported violations against women and children



Note: Values represent combined no. of cases as perceived by respondents (KII).

Coping Mechanisms of Affected Population

All of the participants reported that the community is familiar with the VAWC Law, and that they are also fully aware of their rights. When asked to elaborate, the participants reported that women and children’s rights include the right to live, the right to education, the right to receive assistance, the right to be protected, the right to be free from abuse, the right to receive love and care, the right to complain, the right to work, and the right to safety. As to the specific rights for children, the participants identified schooling and education, play, clothing, food, and protection for abuse.

Ninety-four percent of the participants said that women and children are willing to report information, four percent said that they do not know, and the other two percent said that they are not willing to report information. As to the reason why they are not willing to share information, the participant said that because there are a lot of people.

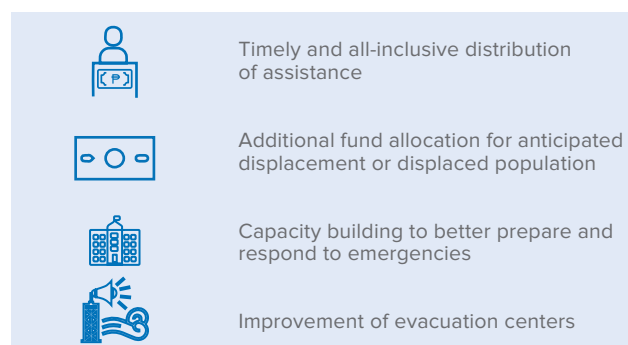
Seventy-two percent of the participants also said that there is a reporting or referral mechanism in place for women and children; 19 percent reported that there is none, while nine percent said that they do not know. Eighty percent of the participants said that the referral mechanism is functional, 15 percent said that it is not, and five percent said that they do not know if it is functional.

Seventy-eight percent of the participants reported that community awareness sessions are one of the measures in place to prevent the abuse of women and children. Thirty-nine percent said that the dissemination of IEC materials is also part of the measures against abuse of women and children.

Seventy-eight percent of the participants said that there is a facility for gender-based violence (GBV) survivors in their area, while 20 percent said that they do not know if such facility exists. Two percent said that the facility is not present in their area. All those who said that a GBV facility for survivors exist reported that it is functional.

Fifty-percent of the participants also said that there is no facility for child protection in their areas. Twenty-six percent of the participants said that they do not know, and 24 percent said that such facility is present. Ninety-two percent of those who said that the facility is present also said that it is functional, while the remaining eight percent reported that it is not.

Recommendations




Protective Capability and Compliance

Ninety-eight percent of the participants said that a VAWC desk is existing and functional in their barangays and two percent said that it is not present. Seventy-eight percent also reported that the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) in their areas are also existing and functional, two percent said it is not present, and the 20 percent did not respond to the question. Thirty-nine percent of the participants said that the Gender and Development (GAD) council is existing and functioning, and two percent said that it is not present in their areas. Fifty-nine percent of the participants did not respond to the question.

It is notable that the municipal officials are quick to respond on VAWC reports and issues. Facilities and systems like referral mechanisms for women and children and facilities for GBV are present and mostly functional. Community awareness sessions are also done in the community by duty bearers. VAWC desks and BCPCs are also present and functional. The existing facilities and systems of the LGU have overall contributed to the immediate response on issues relating to protection of women and children.

Recommendations

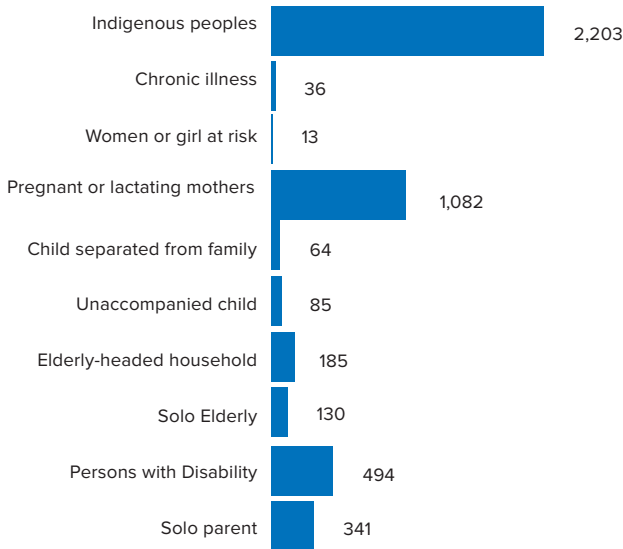


- Provide assistance to women affected by gender-based violence and access to sustainable livelihood
- Continually implement curfew to reinforce a feeling of safety among residents
- Strengthen protection mechanisms and confidentiality measures to encourage information sharing

Persons with specific needs


Nature of Violations and Threats

Which of the following vulnerable groups are present in the community?



Note: Values represent the number of assessed barangays responding as applicable.

Recommendations



- Conduct more awareness-raising activities, training on protection and on sustainable livelihood; and provide livelihood inputs for the PWSNS
- Increase budget allocation for programs, services and projects intended for the PWSNs. Provide timely and sustainable assistance
- Provide inclusive facilities in evacuation centers
- Include provision of psychosocial treatment and care mechanisms for people with disabilities, elderlies, and their caretakers as one of the services for the PWSNs

Immediate needs of the PWSNS

Seventy-two percent of the participants reported that PWSNS need humanitarian assistance. Forty-six percent of the participants reported that the PWSNS need assistive devices. Medical treatment for survivors of sexual violence and medical care for people with disabilities are reported as immediate needs. Eighteen percent of the participants also reported that care mechanism for children is an immediate need. Other immediate needs identified by the participants are psychosocial treatment and care mechanisms for older people.

Eighty-seven percent of the participants said that there is no discrimination against people with specific needs, while 11 percent believes that discrimination exists. Two percent of the participants did not respond to the question. Those who believe that discrimination exists reported that PWSNS experienced bullying.

Meanwhile, 93 percent of the participants reported that the PWSNS have access to assistance while 7 percent believe otherwise.

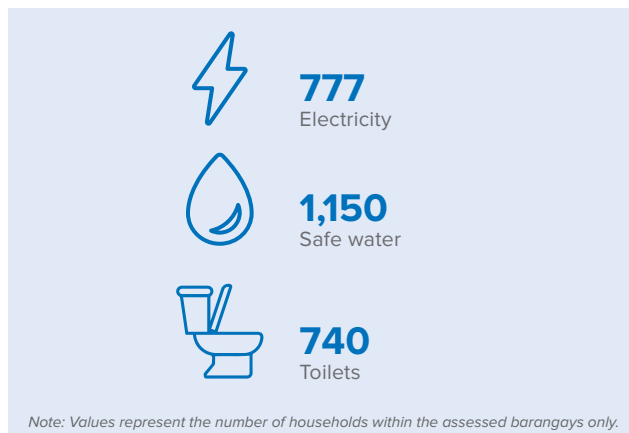
Immediate protection needs

The participants identified the following immediate protection needs:

- financial assistance;
- awareness-raising community activities;
- food, water, medicine and healthcare;
- and an evacuation center with inclusive and private facilities.

Basic social services

What is the estimated number of households without the following services:



Protective Capability and Compliance

Among the government programs accessible to respondents include 4Ps, Philhealth, and free registration. Other government programs such as SSS, and free wedding and burial services are also available. In terms of provision of services to the displaced population, relief distribution budget is available from the calamity fund. Health centers in the barangays are also functional.

Recommendations



Safety and security

Nature of Violations and Threats

Among the respondents from barangays where conflict occurred, 81 percent said that the conflict arose from the conflict between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and non-state armed actors, particularly the New Peoples Army. Eighteen percent mentioned civilian conflicts as another type of conflict in the barangay, which comes in the form of land disputes, political disputes, and crime-related incidents. Violence and threats that communities experience include armed encounters and firefights, kidnapping, land disputes, destruction of civilian property, bombing, shelling, and civil disturbances.

Aside from conflict threats, natural hazards also affect the safety and security of the residents. 96% of the respondents shared that the majority of the assessed barangays are hazard prone. Natural hazards affecting the assessed barangays are floods, flashfloods, typhoon, and landslides. In relation to these threats, the most affected are the Higaonon tribe, or from vulnerable sectors such as children, women, people with disabilities and those with special needs.

Impact and Effects of Violations

Displacement is one major effect of safety and security-related issues in the community. Respondents said that they experienced fear, suffered, and had difficulty in conducting daily economic activities. They also expressed difficulties inside evacuation centers. Despite these multiple and complex security threats resulting from compounding effects of human-induced and natural disasters, respondents generally feel safe, with 85 percent responding positively about their perception of safety. On the other hand, only 2 percent do not feel safe. Similarly, 94 percent reported that their mobility is not affected by conflict while 6 percent said they cannot move freely in their barangay because of the activities of armed groups and the implementation of the curfew policy.

Assistance provided was limited and evacuation centers lack facilities. Some participants also said that the quantity of assistance was limited and did not last for a week, hampering their chance to seek for other livelihood and food sources while in the evacuation center.

Recommendations



Documentation

Nature of Violations and Threats

While some respondents reported that there are free birth registration services, an estimated number of 1,897 individuals reportedly do not have birth certificates. The participants also reported that an estimated 1,726 individuals have no marriage certificates.






As to their reasons why they do not have birth certificates, the participants' top reasons are the lack of awareness on its importance and the lack of knowledge on how to apply for one. Other reasons involve the lack of ability to read and write, of accessibility to the Local Civil Registrar (LCR) Office, and of available documentary requirements, and of financial resources. They do not feel the need to get a birth certificate.

As a result of the lack of birth certificate, the participants provided equal response to its effect on their access to employment, access to assistance, access to 4Ps and other government programs, and pension claims for senior citizens. They also reported that it affected their freedom of movement and access to education.

Impact and Effects of Violations

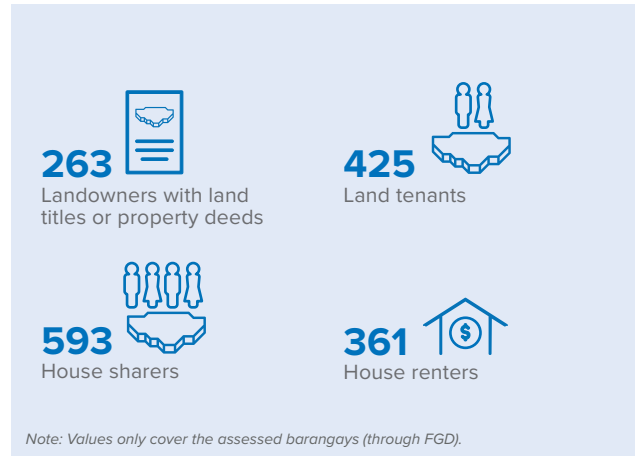
The lack of civil documents, such as birth certificates, affects the access to employment, access to assistance, access to 4Ps and other government programs, and pension claims for senior citizens. It also affected their freedom of movement and access to education.

Recommendations

-  Simplify requirements and provide assistance on complying with the requirements for access to civil documents
-  Provide necessary assistance to safely access civil registration
-  Increase awareness of the residents, especially the indigenous people, on the importance of civil documentation, such as marriage contracts and birth certificates
-  Designate/assign tribal chieftains who are licensed to officiate tribal marriage
-  Document and report immediately tribal marriage to make it more valid
-  The LCR will conduct a barangay-to-barangay civil registration by 2020 to make sure that everyone in the municipality will be registered
-  Tap the Expanded Comprehensive Local Government Integration Program to help facilitate reclaim the identity of former rebels

Housing, land and property (HLP)

Estimated number of land owners, land tenants, and house sharers and renters



Recommendations



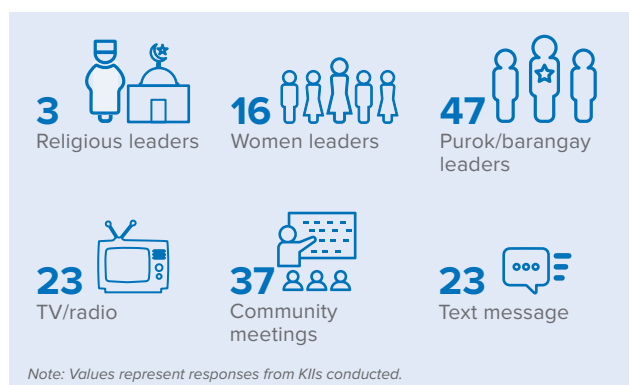
Further study on the impacts of HLP issues to the communities, particularly the indigenous peoples' sector, and how development and natural hazards can impact them.

Information



Nature of Violations and Threats

Communities receive protection information in the form of disaster and security alerts, barangay ordinances and policies, and trainings. A majority of the respondents prefer receiving protection-related information through *purok* leaders and community meetings, and through house-to-house campaign. The preferred modality of others is through text message, radio or television, and through women and religious leaders. Respondents also mentioned limited equipment for warning and dissemination, such as hand-held radio and other communication device.

Preferred means of the community to receive protection-related information





Recommendations

-  Dissemination of protection-related information through barangay leaders and community meetings.
-  Provide or make equipment/devices that can help in information dissemination accessible, such as hand-held radio and other communication devices

Peace processes

Recommendations

-  Resume peace talks
-  Receive information on the peace process

SOURCES / REFERENCES:

- Focus Group Discussions (FGD)
- Key Informant Interviews (KII)
- Secondary Data Review



MPP validation exercise conducted in Buenavista Municipality, Agusan del Norte
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