ONLINE LAUNCH

CHILDREN OF WAR

A Rapid Needs Assessment of Orphans in Muslim Mindanao

Thursday, June 30, 2020 9:00 am - 10:00 am EST,
9:00 pm–10:00 pm PHT
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<th>TIME</th>
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<td>9:00 AM – 9:05 AM</td>
<td>Opening Remarks</td>
<td><strong>Sam Chittick</strong>, The Asia Foundation Philippines Country Representative</td>
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<td>9:05 AM – 9:15 AM</td>
<td>Remarks from Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)</td>
<td><strong>Minister Raissa Herradura Jajurie</strong>, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Ministry of Social Services and Development</td>
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<td>9:15 AM – 9:35 AM</td>
<td>Presentation of Children of War Report</td>
<td><strong>Maria Carmen (Ica) Fernandez</strong>, Lead Researcher</td>
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<td>9:35 AM – 9:55 AM</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
<td><strong>Hadzer Birowa</strong>, Provincial Researcher</td>
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<td>9:55 AM – 10:00 AM</td>
<td>Closing Remarks</td>
<td><strong>Sam Chittick</strong>, The Asia Foundation Philippines Country Representative</td>
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Orphans of war are children who have lost at least one parent, particularly the father, in the various conflicts in Southern Philippines. Some are children of shaheed, or martyrs of the Moro revolutionary fronts, but many others are sons and daughters of civilians caught in the crossfire.
1. Research Questions

What is the status of orphans and other affected children who have lost at least one parent from the recent wars in Mindanao, with particular focus on the last decade (2009-2019)?

Where are they, what are their needs, and what can be done to address their basic needs?

What are their particular vulnerabilities, including to recruitment by violent extremist groups?
2. Overall Policy Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Treaties</th>
<th>National Laws</th>
<th>Peace Process Commitments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
<td>Sec. 3 Art. XV of the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to defend the rights of children to assistance and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development</td>
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<tr>
<td>protocol on Children in Armed Conflict</td>
<td>12 National laws create the policy environment for orphans and widows no dedicated national programs for war orphans in the Philippines,</td>
<td>2014 CAB contains provisions guaranteeing support for children and widows, persons with disability, and other vulnerable groups. Recommendation 5d of the TJRC report pushes that:</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRC Article 20 goes on to identify that “Children who are deprived of their family must receive alternative care with due regard to the child’s ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.”</td>
<td>• Exception: RA No. 6963 s. 1990 mandates the provision of support for the families of soldiers or police personnel who are killed-in-action or wounded-in-action.</td>
<td>“the national and the future Bangsamoro authorities, the DSWD, the Department of Health (DOH), PCW, NCIP, and NCMF” issue “an internal directive for the provision of preferential free access to health and social services, as well as educational opportunities for widows and orphans of war.”</td>
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</table>
Alongside the road map toward the establishment of the Bangsamoro, a Normalization Process will be implemented by both the GPH and MILF.
Field research from April to September 2019

273 respondents
- 77 orphans surveyed
- 36 KIIs
- 160 persons in purposive FGDs
- 34% male, 66% female

7 provinces
34 municipalities

There are no DSWD-accredited orphanages in the Bangsamoro. Majority of respondents remained with family after their parent’s death. Despite general sentiment that raising orphans is a shared responsibility, all types of support generally decline after the first year.
Figure 1. Major Conflict Incidents in the Last Decade

- Peace Process Development
- Central Mindanao
- Basulta
- Ranao

- MDA-AD ruled unconstitutional
- Outbreaks of violence
- ARMM Reform Agenda
- Restart of talks with the MILF
- Tripartite Implementation Review
- Zamboanga Siege
- FAB

- CAB
- Butig war
- Lamitan Car bombing
- Mamasapano Incident

- LGU-led anti-ASG operations in Al Barka
- Marawi Siege
- Plaago clash
- BFIF reconfiguration
- Passage of the BOL
- Transition to the BARMM
- Jolo Bombing
- Indanan Incident

- Madamba Incident
Specific case stories

Case 1. The Children of Marawi’s Missing and Disappeared
Case 2. Best Practice: Ugur Suleyman Soylemez Orphanage
Case 3. The MILF’s Social Welfare Committee
Case 4. Support from the Catholic Church
Case 5. Support Packages for the Orphans of the SAF-44
Case 6. Coping Mechanisms: Four orphans of the All-Out-War
Case 7. The Widows of the Zamboanga Siege
Case 8. Acts of Vengeance
Case 9. The Orphans of the ASG
Case 10. Families left behind: widows and children of revolutionary leaders
There are no official figures on the number of orphans affected by the wars in Mindanao. This reflects the general lack of service facilities for abandoned, neglected, and orphaned children in the Philippines.

The MILF Social Welfare Committee (SWC) reportedly has a list of 8182 orphans as of April 2019.

The MILF Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade (BIWAB) is working on a partial list with just over 500 widows and a similar number of orphans as of January 2020.
Central Mindanao

you know Baba I like you
and if you don’t like me ok
I love you
so much
I miss you
Baba
so much
I heart you Baba

You: Please... Baba, you
or I come back here in
or orphanage
...indiahed

HUMA/EZE

HUMA/EZE
4. Community Concepts & Definitions

- Orphans based on type of parent
- Orphans based on age level
- Orphans based on dwelling
- Orphans based on type of incident

WHO ARE THE ORPHANS?

PARENT LOST
Of the 77 orphans directly surveyed, 88% lost their father, while the rest lost both parents.

AGE & GENDER
- In Sulu, when the father dies while the child is still in the womb or below the age of 5 years old, the child is called a yatim. If the child is above the age of 5, the orphan is called an ilu.
- When a child reaches puberty and intellectual maturity, or the age of majority (18), the child is no longer an orphan.
- Gender informs the orphans’ experiences and needs

TYPE OF DWELLING
- Home-based orphans living with family
- Center-based orphans in formal or de facto orphanages, or madrasahs, toris, or markadz
- Displaced orphans

Children of:
- Mujahideen who died as a shaheed (martyr) in combat against government
- Mujahideen who died as a result of death in combat due to other conflicts (with black flag groups)
- Civilians who died in crossfire or in situations of displacement
- Parents who disappeared or remain missing, as well as those who may have been interred in unmarked graves
5. Who are caring for the orphans?

1. Family support
   a. Mothers/widows (if surviving)
   b. Other relatives
2. Community support
   a. zakat/sadaqqah from politicians, local leaders, religious institutions, neighbours
3. Support institutions
   a. Baitul yatim - In-house/center-based institutions
   b. Service providers
Figure 6. Types of support provided to orphans

- Food
- Shelter
- Clothing
- Schooling
- Medicine
- Allowance
- Livelihood
- Psychosocial support
- Others
- Don't know
- Refused to answer
- No data
- Total

Legend:
- Family
- Community
- Center and other institutions
Figure 7. Duration of support provided to orphans

- **No data**
  - Family: 10
  - Community: 15
  - Center and other institutions: 5

- **0-1 years**
  - Family: 12
  - Community: 8
  - Center and other institutions: 4

- **2-3 years**
  - Family: 11
  - Community: 6
  - Center and other institutions: 3

- **4-5 years**
  - Family: 9
  - Community: 5
  - Center and other institutions: 2

- **8-9 years**
  - Family: 2
  - Community: 1
  - Center and other institutions: 1

- **Others**
  - Family: 2
  - Community: 2
  - Center and other institutions: 1

- **Don’t know**
  - Family: 1
  - Community: 1
  - Center and other institutions: 1

- **Refused to answer**
  - Family: 3
  - Community: 3
  - Center and other institutions: 2
5.2 Community Support

In some areas, family support is sometimes supplemented by community support through sadaqqah (voluntary giving or charity) or zakat (tithing)

- more affluent community members
- politicians
- regional officials
- religious leaders

Forms include: some scholarships or gifts in cash and kind esp. during Ramadhan
Distribution of food - *qurban and adat aqiqah*

One (1) case of *kafala* (stewardship arrangement) in Lanao
5.3 Support institutions

5.3.1 Center-based institutions

- private *markaz* (centers of learning)
- *Madaris*
- *baitul yatim*
- *torils*
- Private institutions outside BARMM
- NGOs
- Religious organizations and civic groups
5.3 Support institutions

5.3.1 Center-based institutions

Some notable center-based or in-house support institutions, all in Central Mindanao and Ranao:

- Ugur Suleyman Soylemez Orphanage in Cotabato City, supported by the Insani Yardim Vakfi (IHH) humanitarian foundation;
- Risale-i Nur’s Dersane in Cagayan de Oro, Iligan and Marawi,
- Filipino - Turkish Humanitarian Aid Association (FITUHA), which runs an orphanage center for girls in Iligan City;
- United Islamic Cultural Centre of the Philippines (UNICEP)
- the Catholic Church, particularly in North Cotabato.
- SAKSI Orphanage Learning Center in Marawi City;
- Al-Abrar Institute for Learning Qur’an and Sunnah in Marawi City; and
- Darul Aitam Litahfidil Qur’an (Siyap ko mga Wata Ilo) at Purok 11, Tambacan, Iligan City

*No center-based, in-house institutions operating in the Basilan-Sulu-Tawi-Tawi area (Sulu Magbassa Kita centre after the 1996 FPA shut down after a year).
Save the Children, Basilan
5.3 Support institutions

5.3.2 Service providers: Government programs

There are no official programs to cater specifically to orphans of war in the Bangsamoro region.

A major exception are the programs of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) for the families and children of fallen soldiers or wounded soldiers under Republic Act No. 6963 s. 1990

Increasingly, PCVE programs particularly in Basilan (Program against Violent Extremism or PAVE) are looking at responses for orphans who are former child soldiers, providing housing, livelihood and educational services, including study tours.
What do orphans need?

1. Emotional and spiritual support
2. Access to balanced quality education
3. Access to jobs and livelihood
4. Physical safety and security especially for displaced communities
5. Access to justice
6. Effects of being orphaned

1. Physical safety and security
   - 26% of respondents expressed feeling unsafe at time of father’s death. More prevalent for displaced orphans
   - Anecdotal reports of physical abuse, forced work, and bullying

2. Loss of household income and other economic effects
   - Impacts on food and housing security
   - Impacts on education
   - Disproportionate effects on women and girls
6. Effects on women and girls

- Out of the survey of 77 orphans across the Bangsamoro, 75.32% lived with their mother for the first two years after the incident.
- At present 64.94% of respondents are still with their mother.
- More than half (57.14%) of respondents said that their parent/mother did not remarry after the incident, while 36.36% remarried.
- Five respondents (6.49%) are now staying in orphanage centers, mostly in Maguindanao.
- Roughly 26% have some kind of employment, while 17% are now married, equally distributed amongst boys and girls.
- One orphan respondent is now a widow herself.
Figure 8. Orphans’ access to basic physical and emotional needs

- Well-balanced food
- Urgent medical needs
- Access to safe water
- Sufficient clothing
- Time for recreation
- Presently studying
- Encouraged to engage in school activities
- Able to mingle with others
- Recognized for accomplishments

Legend:
- No data
- Yes
- No
- Sometimes
- Not sure
- Refused to answer
6.5 Access to justice

- The desire for justice is common across all areas, particularly for orphans or widows who may have personally witnessed the death of their father or felt that the circumstances of his death were unjust.
- Those who sought vengeance were in the minority (16.88%) compared to 51% who said they did not want revenge.
- There are multiple cases across all regions where at least one orphaned sibling in each family joins a revolutionary movement, particularly if their father was a shaheed.
- Over 18% of interviewed orphans admitted that the death of their father inspired them to join the MILF or MNLF, while 26% said that they had no desire to join a revolutionary group (or they had no need to because at least one sibling was already a member). 52% of respondents declined to answer.
- Of those who shared of their experiences, the desire to join has multiple reasons: (i) as a way to replace the rank of their father; (ii) to cope with grief; (iii) for social capital; and (iv) as a means of revenge.
6.5.1 Vulnerability to recruitment

- Respondents across the region noted that being unattended, ignored, and unloved leaves orphans vulnerable to radicalization and co-option by violent extremist groups.

- Without proper assessment and processing of their emotions, orphans may grow up believing resolving issues by violence is normal. If they are unable to trust those around them, it may make the situation worse. Exposure to broader environments may help children discern what is radical or extreme from what is not.
Recommended Support for Orphans & Widows

- Policy measures, including laws ensuring support for orphans and widows of war
- Establishing baseline data on orphans, widows, and existing de-facto orphanages, centers, and other service providers
- Design and delivery of comprehensive support packages, including the establishment of a DSWD-run and accredited orphanage in the Bangsamoro
- Continuous consultations with and monitoring of orphans and widows across all interventions
### 8.1 Principles for design

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Targeting</strong></td>
<td>Programs should be geographically tailored but ‘status-neutral’ regardless of parents’ circumstances or rank</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Tailoring</strong></td>
<td><strong>Localized and specific designs</strong> for each <strong>geographic region and type of orphan</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Safeguards</strong></td>
<td><strong>Do-No-Harm, conflict-sensitive, gender-sensitive and age-appropriate</strong>, consultative, avoids further trauma, and encourages play</td>
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<td><strong>4. Family Focus</strong></td>
<td>Supporting family and community ability to support orphans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Funding</strong></td>
<td>Earmarking of funds, use of shariah-compliant instruments</td>
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8.1 Principles for design - Funding

- Sustainable financing is key.
  - **Earmarking of funds** to ensure that certain percentage of resources (ex. Block Grant, Special Development Fund, Gender and Development fund) go towards programs for orphans and widows
  - Islamic instruments such as **creation of an endowment office (waqf)** to receive gifts and donations for orphans, similar to the AFP Educational Benefit System Office and HERO ‘Help, Educate, and Rear Orphans’ Foundation
  - **Partnerships with private sector** (including chambers of commerce etc) and civil society to deliver services
8.2. Recommended interventions

1. Establishing a baseline for supply and demand
2. Design, Financing, and Implementation of support packages
3. Policy measures at multiple levels and scales
   a. National legislative measures
   b. National executive measures
   c. BARMM-level executive and legislative measures
   d. Local government units
   e. Normalization bodies – tied to the decommissioning of combatants and development of communities
   f. Marawi rehabilitation
   g. P/CVE
   h. Communications, consultations with, and monitoring of orphans
## 8.2.1 Establishing a Baseline

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Interventions</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profiling of orphans and widows</td>
<td>Building a comprehensive database of orphans and widows within the Bangsamoro that is transparent, and matching with existing service institutions.</td>
<td>Abovementioned parties, including MSS-BARMM Local government units Academe and civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Databasing of service institutions and providers</td>
<td>- Given limited time and resources, targeting should prioritise orphans who are still underage (ex. affected in the last decade)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- However, the listing should work backwards to include all other affected individuals (for TJR/memory work purposes)</td>
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**Recommended Support for Orphans & Widows**

Policy measures, including laws ensuring support for orphans and widows of war

Establishing baseline data on orphans, widows, and existing de-facto orphanages, centers, and other service providers

Design and delivery of comprehensive support packages, including the establishment of a DSWD-run and accredited orphanage in the Bangsamoro

Continuous consultations with and monitoring of orphans and widows across all interventions
Central Mindanao

- Older orphans from the 2000 All-Out-War
- 2009 MOA-AD
- Sporadic skirmishes in the 2nd district of Maguindanao
- Communities hit by the 2015 Mamasapano incident
- Deaths in
Basilan and Sulu

- MNLF widows from the 2013 Zamboanga Siege
- Orphans affected by operations with the ASG
- MILF orphans from Basilan
- Butig and Piagapo
- 2017 Marawi Siege civilians, shaheed, and the missing/disappeared
- Martyred in MILF anti-drug operations
- Deaths in displacement
- Madamba incident
Case Study: The Orphans of the ASG

- Examples of orphans in these conditions include the sub-cells within the scattered factions of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Sulu. They go by various names: The Lucky-9, Ajang-ajang, Anak I’lu, Group Latih and the newest name called Pulang Araw—all of which are mostly orphans of ‘martyred’ ASG, both commanders and rank-and-file.

- The Lucky-9 and Anak I’lu are orphans of ASG from Patikul, Sulu while the Ajang-ajang (whose former group was known as Latih Group) are a band of criminals who used to steal motorbikes and are mostly former drug users.

- Pulang Araw hails from Patikul. Their members mostly come from other ASG sub-cells who decided to consolidate their forces to fight against the Barangay officials of Taghlibi and Brgy. Panlayahan.

- Their names are often anchored in popular culture.
  - ‘Pulang Araw’ comes from the popular soap opera ‘Ang Probinsyano’.
Case Study: Widows of the Zamboanga Siege

- Roughly two-thirds of married women in Barangay Bitanag, Old Panamao, Sulu lost their husbands during the 2013 Zamboanga Siege.

- All residents of the barangay are related and are directly or indirectly affiliated with the MNLF.

- The widows recall how their husbands sought their permission to go to Zamboanga City by saying that they were asked by the MNLF leadership to participate in a peaceful rally.

- No support assistance was provided to the widows either by the MNLF or the Philippine government. Nevertheless, the community still supports Misuari.

- Because all the families in the entire neighborhood suffered the same fate, widows had to find individual ways to manage their emotions and tell their stories.
Shukran.
HADZER BIROWA
PROVINCIAL RESEARCHER
Q&A AND DISCUSSION
THANK YOU!

Read the full report at www.asiafoundation.org

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