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## Information bulletin

### Philippines: Returnees to Mindanao



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| <b>Glide n°</b>  | <b>Date of issue:</b> 25 June 2020                                    |
| <b>Expected date of crisis:</b> 30 June 2020   | <b>Point of contact:</b> Leonardo Ebajo, Disaster Management Services |
| <b>Operation start date:</b> N/A   | <b>Expected timeframe:</b> N/A  |
| <b>Category of disaster:</b> Yellow  |   |
| <b>Host National Society:</b> Philippine Red Cross   |   |
| <b>Number of people affected:</b> 5,300  | <b>Number of people to be assisted:</b> N/A                           |
| <b>N° of National Societies currently involved in the operation (if available and relevant):</b> - |   |
| <b>N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation (if available and relevant):</b> -  |   |

This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) is currently monitoring the situation and is preparing its support ahead of the arrivals of the returnees. Based on the ongoing consultations on the extent of needs, PRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) will determine whether external assistance is required.

[<click here for detailed contact information>](#)

## The situation

A major repatriation operation of Filipinos based in Sabah, Malaysia is scheduled to commence on 30 June 2020. It is reported that 5,300 Filipinos will return to the Philippines in groups of 400 people in 15-day intervals. City will serve as the processing area for the returnees.

While repatriation of Filipinos from Sabah is procedural and a regular occurrence for some years, this action is of concern due to the large number of returnees in this repatriation, and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic where additional safeguards are required. The government requires all returning Filipinos to undergo COVID-19 testing and a 14-day quarantine to control the local transmission of the virus.

The repatriations are being coordinated between the Philippine and Malaysian authorities. The Philippine Government has formed a repatriation taskforce that includes the Department of Health, Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, and the Bureau of Quarantine.



Map of Zamboanga City. (Source: Google Map)

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Philippines Red Cross is liaising with local authorities in preparation for the action and four chapters in Mindanao (Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi) are on alert for the arrival of the returnees. PRC chapters have

commenced staff and volunteer mobilization and are coordinating with the lead agencies in their respective local government areas, including Department of Health, Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, and the Bureau of Quarantine to discuss the protocols that need to be followed for the returnees and arrangements for preparation of quarantine facilities.

PRC is developing a plan of action for their response in the event that response needs exceed local government plans and interventions. PRC intervention may include distribution of hot meals and food items, hygiene kits, sleeping kits, first aid kits, restoring family links services including mobile phone simcards distribution, personal protective equipment (PPE) for volunteers and masks for returnees, and psychological first aid.

The IFRC Country Office is coordinating with PRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as well as supporting the National Society to disseminate information on preparation plans to in-country Movement partners and the IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) in Kuala Lumpur.

PRC is considering submission of a request to the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) in support of its response. An IFRC-supported response would be delivered in line with International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement policies and guidelines, including the IFRC Policy on Migration and its Supplementary Guidance.



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## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, **encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities** by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



**Save lives,**  
protect livelihoods,  
and strengthen recovery  
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**  
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**  
and a culture of  
**non-violence** and **peace**.

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