COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

CHR: Dignity of all

VISION: A just and humane Philippine society of persons equal in opportunity, living a life of dignity, and forever vigilant against abuses and oppression.

MISSION: As conscience of government and the people, we seek truth in human rights issues. As beacon of truth, we make people aware of their rights, and guide government and society towards actions that respect the rights of all, particularly those who cannot defend themselves—the disadvantaged, marginalized, and vulnerable.

CHRP Work on IDP Protection during the COVID-19 Emergency

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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

CREATED BY VIRTUE OF THE

1987 PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION

There is hereby created an independent office called the Commission on Human Rights.(Art. XIII, Sec.17)

The State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights. (Art. II, Sec. 11)

CHRP's work on IDP Protection in the Philippines

All photos of stakeholders were taken with permission.

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CHRP and IDP Protection

- Humanitarian mandate:
  - Emanates from the Constitution;
  - Monitor state compliance of international treaty bodies and international human rights laws/principles related to human rights protection in humanitarian contexts.
- Human Rights-Based Approach to humanitarian protection:
  - Inclusion of vulnerable communities in the decision-making processes;
  - Holding both government and non-government humanitarian actors accountable;
  - Observance of the humanitarian imperative, the humanitarian principles, and the principle of Do No Harm.

UNHCR-CHRP Collaboration

- UNHCR-CHR IDP Project (2011; 2013-2015)
- UNHCR-CHRP IDP Protection Project (2018-present);
- Project Components:
  - Protection monitoring in Region VIII and Mindanao regions;
  - Setting up of community networks for IDP protection;
  - Legislative advocacy for the passage of the IDP bill.

Current CHRP arrangements re: COVID-19 emergency

- The Philippines implements community quarantines in different levels across the country

- CHR offices under extreme enhanced or enhanced community quarantines

- Policy for IDP Monitoring in the CHRP during COVID-19 Emergency:
  - On-site monitoring is discouraged;
  - Remote monitoring (calls and text messages with community leaders, barangay leaders, CSO/NGO partners, etc.)

CHRP IDP Protection Work during COVID-19 Emergency

1. Remote protection monitoring in Regions VIII and Mindanao Regions;
2. Investigations on alleged human rights violations against IDPs;
3. Advocacy building and information dissemination;
4. Issuance of policy advisories and key messages; and
5. Referral and reporting of cases to local government units, the Mindanao Protection Cluster, and other bodies.

Monitoring Challenges

1. Remote monitoring limited the movement of CHRP IDP monitoring staff in the regions;
2. Difficulty in coordinating with local IDP leaders, barangay officials, and local chief executives;
3. LGUs are overwhelmed with the COVID-19 response;
4. Limited opportunities for information verification;
5. Difficulty in ascertaining number of IDPs in monitored sites:
   - Changes in IDP movement (families opted to return to home than be exposed to the virus in IDP camps);
   - Limited reporting from community-based networks

Ways Forward

1. Continue monitoring issues (remotely) in IDP areas, and refer issues to UNHCR, organizations, and local government units;
2. Continue HR investigations on alleged HR violations;
3. Refer issues on IDP inclusion to the government's social support/amelioration programs;
4. Support IDP communities through advocacy.

Thank you very much.

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