

JUNE
2020

2020 MID-YEAR REPORT

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND



UNFPA

Philippines

UNFPA 2020 MID-YEAR SALIENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This report summarizes the achievements, challenges, and plans of the UNFPA Country Office in the Philippines covering 01 January to 30 June 2020 in responding to the unique needs of Filipino women and girls.

The first half of the year 2020 - the beginning of the last decade toward the achievement of Agenda 2030 including the SDGs - witnessed a significant shift in the development landscape in the Philippines with the local transmissions of the global COVID-19 pandemic that followed the historic Taal Volcano eruption and the first typhoon for the country for the year, Typhoon Ambo (Vongfong). By the end of June 2020, in just five months since the confirmation of the first COVID-19 case in the Philippines (30 January 2020), the number of COVID-19 positive patients approached 38,000 (DOH). While the majority of the confirmed cases concentrated in the National Capital Region (NCR) with high population density, epidemiological centers started being spread to other areas. The pandemic and associated quarantine measures have further compounded the pre-existing vulnerabilities and inequalities faced by women and girls in the Philippines, especially where conflict- and disaster-induced displacements are common including BARMM. Despite these fundamental changes and unforeseen challenges faced during the period under review, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the Philippines with additional assistance from development partners, was able to adapt to the 'new reality' and provide needed assistance to the most vulnerable women and young people in the Philippines and support the health system strengthening, especially for addressing their sexual and reproductive health and rights and freedom from violence.

UNFPA Philippines estimates that, out of the targeted poor population in NCR, Provinces of Batangas and Cavite in Region IV-A, Cebu City in Region VII, Zamboanga City in Region IX, North Cotabato Province in Region XII, and BARMM, many had already been vulnerable prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, including pregnant and lactating women, young people, persons with disabilities, the elderly, as well as women who face heightened risks to violence. As of end June 2020, one out of six (17 percent) confirmed cases were healthcare workers, which indicates that those who take care of the patients take the brunt, both physically and mentally. 69 percent of them were female, including nurses, physicians, and community-based health workers.



The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic is putting the capacity of national and local health systems under strain. This entails a risk that necessary attention and resources for sexual and reproductive health services, as well as for the health sector response to Gender-Based Violence (GBV), can be diverted to deal with the outbreak, which can, in turn, result in a rise in pregnancy complications, maternal mortality and morbidity, as well as an increase in unmet need for modern contraception, teenage pregnancies, and GBV (see the table below for projections).

MATERNAL MORTALITY	UNMET NEED FOR FAMILY PLANNING	TEENAGE PREGNANCY	GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
22% increase in Maternal Deaths in 2020 3,170 from 2,600 in 2019	63% increase in Unmet Need in 2020 5.2 million from 3.1 million in 2019	23% increase 18,000 additional teenagers will get pregnant compared to 2019	16% increase 115,000 additional women will experience intimate partner violence compared to 2019

Source: UNFPA Philippines and University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) estimates

While UNFPA continued its response to the population displacements caused by the series of earthquakes in Mindanao and the Taal Volcano Eruption, it quickly integrated and adjusted its efforts with the new demands of the pandemic. Since the beginning of the year, UNFPA provided all possible assistance to the national and local governments led COVID-19 responses with a view to contributing to "building back better and differently" by meeting the unique needs and rights of women and girls. UNFPA donated hand-held thermometers, personal protective equipment (PPE), triage tents and Dignity Kits to the Department of Health (DOH) and its designated COVID-19 referral hospitals in NCR and Taal Volcano eruption affected areas, as well as to BARMM, especially for the protection of frontliners working on maternal health and GBV. To date, UNFPA has provided a total of USD 496,000 worth of donations for health workers and hospitals in coordination with DOH. UNFPA amplified its communication activities to reinforce advocacy and behavioural change communications (BCC) by publishing a series of video messages on safe motherhood, family planning and anti-domestic violence amid COVID-19. UNFPA also developed the Policy Paper, "Bayanihan to Heal As One Act (COVID-19 Response)", for the Philippine Senate to advocate for the continuity of the essential services including for SRHR and GBV while focusing on COVID-19. This Policy Paper has been cited by the DOH in its daily media brief as well.



Outcomes

SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

UNFPA, as Reproductive Health Sub-Sector Coordinator, ensured that Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights was incorporated in the Philippines' Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) Response Plan and ultimately in the 2nd United Nations Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) for COVID-19. Out of a total funding appeal of USD 10.97 million identified by UNFPA, USD 1.39 million have so far been mobilized through the GHRP/Humanitarian Trust Fund and through reprogrammed funds from DFAT/Australia and internal UNFPA resources. As part of its policy advocacy with the Department of Health (DOH), UNFPA incorporated maternal health, family planning, and protection against GBV to the Guidelines on Continuing Essential Health Services for Pregnant and Lactating Women and Children under COVID-19. UNFPA provided technical assistance to the Health Cluster and Crisis Communication Cluster in developing the BARMM Contingency Plan on COVID-19, which included advocating for the continuation of essential services such as maternal health, family planning, and clinical management of rape, for pregnant and lactating women and for young people during the pandemic.

While the response to COVID-19 has been a top priority for UNFPA during the period under review, work on other regular development and humanitarian streams under UNFPA's 8th Country Programme of Support to the Philippines was sustained as follows:

- **Provided technical inputs to the Department of Health (DOH) in the review and preparation of the 2021 budget for the National Family Planning Programme.**

UNFPA's analysis concluded that by 2021, 8.4 million women of reproductive age should have access to Family Planning services, to achieve the 2022 national goal of significantly reducing unmet need for FP. This would require an estimated PHP 3.95 billion in funding from the national government. UNFPA also provided technical advice to the DOH Family Planning Regional Coordinators on cost-effective methodologies to identify and monitor changes in unmet need at the LGU level, such as through Lot Quality Assurance Sampling (LQAS).

- **Reviewed the PhilHealth benefits packages for family planning in line with the implementation of the Universal Health Care Law,** including an analysis of policy and operational gaps and presentation of recommendations to respond to the gaps.

- **Launched an online platform** that targeted employees with correct family planning information (**through the Business Action for Family Planning (BAFP) initiative in partnership with the UN Foundation / UN Fund for International Partnerships**). Under COVID-19, this platform has been expanded to cover other services including maternal health, young people, HIV/STI, gender based violence, mental health, and health reminders on how to prevent COVID-19 infection. A total of 425,585 individuals have visited the rh-care.info site and social media pages since 10 May 2020.

- **Completed the analysis of bottlenecks and non-health determinants to farmers' and fisherfolks' access to family planning information and services (with support from Global Affairs Canada).** The results will be presented to the government and stakeholders in Q3/2020.

- **Responded to the SRH and GBV life-saving needs of the affected women and girls by Typhoon Ambo (Vongfong) (in partnership with DFAT/Australia and coordination with the DOH).**

The assistance amounted to approximately PHP 4.7 million (USD 93,000) and targeted 10,160 women and girls in the provinces of Northern and Eastern Samar. In partnership with the provincial governments, UNFPA distributed 2,591 solar radios and 369 dignity kits to PLWs, and provided 8 sets of RH kits and 3 RH Medical Mission sets to 2 rural health units and 2 provincial hospitals.



In focus

TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION RESPONSE

Compared to the other COVID-19 high-burden areas such as NCR, BARMM etc., CALABARZON does not seem to have attracted much attention from development partners. UNFPA is however among very few UN agencies in the Philippines which provided emergency response to the Taal Volcano eruption and Typhoon Ambo affected women and girls until recently, and therefore has already established a strong network with regional/local government and NGO partners in the region especially in the SRHR and GBV sectors.

- Set-up functional multi-media health and protection information hubs in 7 evacuation centers (through the UNFPA Emergency Fund). As part of making information and materials on SRH and GBV accessible, UNFPA also focused on recalibrating the delivery of key messages and targeting key populations with specific SRH and GBV advocacy despite strict protocols due to the community quarantines. Instead of the traditional face-to-face awareness-raising sessions, behavioral change communications (BCC) was integrated into the psychosocial support activities, "teleradyo/radio-baryo", Public Announcement systems (with an estimated reach of 3,840 women, adolescents and youth), Facebook platform (40,184 viewers), and SMS Text Blasts (5,177 women and youth reached). The project distributed printed IEC materials in the 7 ECs through 4,500 bottles of alcohol with sticker messages on COVID-19 precautions; 4,500 handy fans with referral pathway design; and 28 roll-up banners carrying the core theme on GBV with COVID-19 messages. Together with this, helpline tarpaulins were printed by the Batangas Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO) with the different contact numbers of agencies comprising the GBV referral pathway, the first of its kind in the province.

In addition, 17 service providers from the municipal social welfare offices and partner CSOs completed the Training of Trainers (ToT) on Women Friendly Space (WFS) management and functionality which enabled them to serve as facilitators in implementing these innovative BCC modalities in the evacuation centers, including responding to online and mobile call questions from the IDPs themselves.

- Provided Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) for frontline service providers and women and girls displaced by the Taal Volcano eruption (through the UNFPA Emergency Fund). UNFPA partnered with the Philippine Mental Health Association (PMHA) to deliver MHPSS online intake consultations for 65 individuals (including 6 frontliners), online counseling and follow-up sessions for 21 individuals (including 6 frontliners), and psychiatric consultations for 20 individuals (including 2 frontliners). Among the concerns that surfaced during these sessions were the feelings of anxiety and depression, which the patients have been experiencing even before the volcanic eruption and COVID-19 but were triggered and compounded by these emergencies. 226 health service providers and social workers from the LGU and CSO partners completed a four-day online training on topics that included "Frontliners' Self-care" and "Psychological First Aid" while 546 individuals from Batangas (out of 804 attendees from Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao) participated in a series of webinars on "Understanding Anxiety, Depression and Suicide", "Mental Health of Children and Adolescents", "Geriatric Depression: Need to Address ASAP", "Maintaining Wellness During COVID 19 Outbreak: For Patients and Caregivers" and "Finding Meaning Amidst Crisis: Using Positive Psychology to Enhance Well-Being".

- Initiated the "24/7 Ligtas-Buntis Helpline or Safe-Pregnancy Helpline" for pregnant women about to give birth in the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon (through the UNFPA Emergency Fund). This provided access to information regarding functional Rural Health Units (RHUs), lying-ins or hospitals for 71 pregnant women from May 25 to June 30, and helped ensure continuity of facility-based deliveries and the prevention of home deliveries. In addition, social media boosting for this Helpline reached 72,125 viewers with 12,936 engagements.

- Created the "Health Emergency Locator Platform (Help-Now)," a rapid assessment mobile application that aims to collect data on SRH and GBV during the onset of any humanitarian emergencies (through the UNFPA Emergency Fund). The Help-Now application has been launched in partnership with the DOH Central Office and DOH Center for Health Development (CHD) Office in Calabarzon, Family Health Unit and the Humanitarian Emergency Unit, and will be an important information management tool to adopt in future humanitarian responses.

In focus

TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION RESPONSE

- Distributed 850 maternity packs, 2,160 hygiene kits, 700 solar lamps, maternity tents, women-friendly space tents, COVID-19 triaging tents and surgical masks for women with disability, pregnant and lactating women, young people, and frontline health and GBV service providers (through the Multi-Year SRH and GBV Prepositioning Project in partnership with DFAT/Australia and the UNFPA Emergency Fund). As the number of COVID-19 cases rose in the country, UNFPA supported the communities further and delivered emergency tents to expand the maternity care of the provincial and district hospitals and tents on triaging for COVID-19, and distributed 20,000 face masks to health care workers and 500 masks to GBV frontliners. The three emergency maternity tent facilities (EMTF) donated by UNFPA supported the safe deliveries of at least 200 pregnant women, who also received dignity kits and maternity packs after they gave birth. Due to the community quarantines and the fear of being infected by COVID-19, a decrease was observed in the number of survivors seeking help in hospital-based Women and Children Protection Units (WCPU). With UNFPA's donation of a WFS tent and supplies to the Batangas Medical Center's WCPU, which was set up outside of the hospital proper to assuage potential clients' fears of getting infected by COVID-19, the continuity of the health sector response to GBV was ensured resulting in 69 GBV survivors being served during the period under review.

- Co-organized with DOH the Regional Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) Inter-Agency Reproductive Health Coordinating Team (through the UNFPA Emergency Fund) for the Taal Volcanic Eruption and COVID-19 humanitarian response. UNFPA provided technical assistance in developing the Regional Guidelines on the MISP Regional Inter-Agency Reproductive Health Coordination Team and the Continuity of Antenatal, Intrapartum, Postpartum and Neonatal Services during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- Co-convened with CARE Philippines the Inter-agency Rapid Gender Analysis on the impact of Taal Volcano eruption in the lives of men, women and young people in February 2020. The results were presented to the Provincial and Municipal Camp Coordination and Management Team (CCMT) of Batangas and informed a more gender-responsive delivery of services in the evacuation centers.



Outcomes

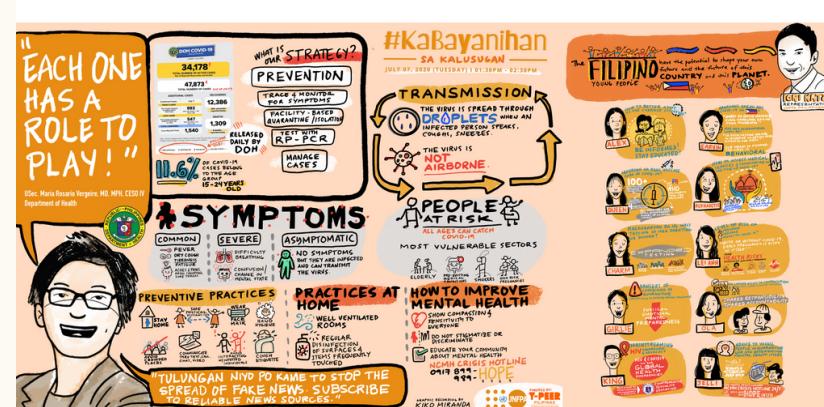
ADOLESCENTS & YOUTH

UNFPA continues to be the lead development partner in providing technical assistance to the Department of Education (DepEd) in rolling out Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in schools. In April 2020, the DepEd Secretary requested for the National Economic and Development Authority's (NEDA's) assistance in securing funds for CSE roll-out in School Year 2020-2021 amounting to PHP 448 million (~USD 8.97 million compared to the USD 400,000 initially allocated for 2020), and cited the CSE Costed Implementation Plan (CIP) - jointly developed by DepEd and UNFPA - as basis for the request. UNFPA also provided TA to the DepEd in orienting regional supervisors nationwide on CSE to galvanize support for its implementation using materials (e.g. lesson plans, modules) developed with UNFPA assistance. In addition, the technical assistance to the Bangsamoro Youth Commission, development of a youth governance model and accompanying capacity building modules to address structural barriers to youth participation under the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus, are ongoing.



- **Launched the #KaBayanihan National Campaign**, an intergenerational dialogue of young people with key government officials on issues related to health, education, economic opportunities, human rights, and peace and security. To date, the KaBayanihan campaign has reached about 500,000 individuals through various social media platforms. The KaBayanihan (*Kabataan + Bayanihan*) aims to strengthen young people's participation in decision-making processes and inform government policies and priorities, strengthen existing support mechanisms and services for young people's empowerment and development, and provide grants to youth-driven innovative solutions to health, education, economic opportunities, human rights and peace and security. This initiative resulted from the #UNFPAasks: Pilot Crowdsourcing on Adolescents and Young People's Leading Concerns launched during the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak.

- **Distributed 8,916 condoms and 1,360 lubricants to young key populations in urban poor barangays (through UBRAF)**, in partnership with the Community and Family Services International (CFSI) and Red Whistle, in Pasay City and Makati City for the prevention of HIV infections and unplanned pregnancies during the pandemic.





Outcomes

GENDER AND PROTECTION AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

UNFPA, as GBV Sub-Sector Co-lead, successfully advocated for the inclusion of Protection-related issues in the Philippines' Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) Response Plan and in the 2nd Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) for COVID-19 even as the government and most development partners were heavily focused on the immediate health-related response in the initial phase of the pandemic. The latest revision of the HRP reflects a USD 4.0 million funding request to support enhanced and innovative GBV prevention and response programming in the COVID-19 context.

- As the COVID-19 pandemic that worsened during the period under review has posed a devastating impact on vulnerable women and girls, UNFPA **as GBV Sub-Sector Co-lead also initiated and coordinated an inter-agency Gender and Inclusion Assessment (GIA) of COVID-19 Impacts (with support from DFAT/Australia)**. UNFPA was able to secure the engagement and participation of 26 agencies in the GIA, including the endorsement of the national Commission on Human Rights and the BARMM Ministry of Social Services and Development (MSSD). 100 enumerators interviewed 951 individuals across 11 categories of vulnerable sub-populations, and formulated policy recommendations. The report will be ready in Q3/2020.

- Supported the Commission on Human Rights in the community-based peer monitoring led by women with disabilities (WWDs) in the National Capital Region (NCR), Cebu and Cagayan de Oro amid COVID-19. Forty-two WWDs were trained on GBV prevention and response, and provided with cash for work to monitor cases in their respective areas and facilitate their referral to the appropriate agencies in the GBV referral pathway. In addition, UNFPA supported CHR in developing a **Gender Ombud GBV online reporting portal (www.gbcovid.report)** that provided an accessible platform to facilitate reporting, referral, response, and documentation of GBV during the COVID-induced community quarantines. To date, **94 cases of GBV** have been documented and whose progress is being tracked through the online portal.

- Developed a prototype Women and Children Protection Unit - Violence Against Women and Children (WCPU-VAWC) database in collaboration with the DOH to strengthen the documentation, tracking, analysis and reporting of the health sector response to GBV cases. The cloud-based database is designed to be interoperable with the data systems of other member-agencies of the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Children (IACAT-VAWC) by integrating the minimum common set of data points necessary to enable an efficient and effective multi-sectoral response to GBV-related cases.

In focus

HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACEBUILDING NEXUS

UNFPA believes that the success in addressing the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding triple nexus in the conflict- and disaster-afflicted Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in the Southern Philippines during and after the COVID-19 outbreak, hinges on ensuring the protection, choices and socio-economic rights for the half of the population, i.e. women and girls, including through advancing their sexual and reproductive health and rights and participation in the peace-building processes. In this light, UNFPA has scaled up its interventions with a view to addressing the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus from a 'gender' lens, targeting the most marginalized women whose lives are becoming even more difficult because of COVID-19.



- **Reached 1,902 women for Cash for Health (cash voucher assistance) in disaster- and conflict-affected areas in North Cotabato (through the Central Emergency Response Fund) and Lanao del Sur including Marawi City (through the Humanitarian Trust Fund)** and initiated cash disbursement to 50 traditional birth attendants (TBAs or "hilot"). Cash for Health eliminates the economic barriers to access health services and incentivizes positive health-seeking behavior among pregnant women while engaging and transforming the role of TBAs from birth attendants to pregnancy trackers thereby integrating them to the formal health referral network (rather than assisting deliveries at home by themselves). Cash for Health is one of UNFPA Philippines' newest programs for reducing unsafe delivery practices, increasing women's access to life-saving maternal health interventions (i.e. antenatal, postnatal care), and serving as a critical social safety net for poor pregnant women. The Mayor of Marawi City has included pregnant women as recipients of the COVID-19 Social Amelioration Program, taking off from the Cash for Health programme UNFPA is pilot-testing in the City. By doing so, the Mayor has expanded the number of pregnant women being reached by cash assistance in Marawi. In North Cotabato, 633 pregnant women who received Cash for Health were from different ethnic groups, including IPs and Moros.
- **Disbursed Cash for Protection (through CERF) to 146 individuals in North Cotabato earthquake-affected sites, 61 of whom were survivors of SGBV and 85 were people with psychosocial disabilities (i.e. diagnosed with severe mental health problems).** This cash assistance helps survivors meet immediate needs such as food, medicine, health services, communications and transportation expenses when accessing protection services. A qualitative assessment done by UNFPA showed that giving attention to the **practical needs of GBV and MHPSS** survivors is a significant intervention in **strengthening resilience** as it impacts the **dignity and self-worth** of the survivors particularly women and girls.
- **Paid Cash for Work** to 120 Women Friendly Space (WFS)/Youth Friendly Space (YFS) facilitators and 60 GBV Watch Group monitors who led the awareness-raising sessions on gender rights and GBV in the earthquake-affected communities in North Cotabato (through CERF). In Marawi City, Marantao and Piagapo in Lanao del Sur, 60 IDPs and 60 members of the Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade (BIWAB) demonstrated increased knowledge and skills required as WFS Facilitators while at the same time receiving Cash for Work (through DFAT/Australia). As a Protection strategy, Cash for Work was used to reduce risks and vulnerability to GBV and was a welcome relief from the stress brought about by the lack of funds to bring food to the table, a factor recognized as aggravating risks and vulnerability to GBV in households.
- **Maintained eleven Women-Friendly Spaces (WFS)** in municipalities in Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, and North Cotabato (through DFAT/Australia, HTF, and CERF, respectively).
- **Responded to the needs of IDPs (through HTF) affected by land disputes, family feuds and military interventions in South Upi, Maguindanao.** Cash for Work benefited 77 pregnant women, 177 lactating women, 16 women with disabilities, and 9 pregnant adolescents who were providing child care work in the evacuation areas.

In focus

HUMANITARIAN- DEVELOPMENT- PEACEBUILDING NEXUS

- **Provided livelihood assistance to 150 IDPs, including 30 women with disabilities, in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur (through DFAT/Australia)** in the form of seed capital worth PHP 15,000 (~USD 300) each and a package of capacity-building courses that included Marketing Management, Human Resource Management, Project Management, Financial Management, and Business Planning for Micro Businesses, which was designed in partnership with the Mindanao State University College of Business Administration and Accounting.
- **Supported 1,799 safe pregnancies/deliveries (through CERF)** in the 3 Emergency Maternity Tents established in the earthquake-hit city/municipalities of Kidapawan, Makilala, and Tulunan, North Cotabato.
- **Two maternal deaths successfully reviewed** - to better understand their health, social, cultural and economic causes - as part of the **Online Course on Maternal Death Surveillance and Response (through HTF)** completed by 5 health officers of the Lanao del Sur Integrated Provincial Health Office, Marawi City Health Office and Amai Pakpak Medical Center. Two action plans were developed to address the identified systemic gaps contributing to maternal deaths.
- **Developed the Child Protection-GBV referral pathway for North Cotabato (through CERF)** jointly with the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO) and UNICEF, and supported its launch during the provincial celebration of International Women's Day. In addition, the Provincial Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Children (PIACAT-VAWC) was reactivated by virtue of Executive Order 53 Series of 2020.
- **Established the MHPSS referral pathway in North Cotabato (through CERF)** for GBV survivors requiring psychosocial services. Through UNFPA's partnership with the Ateneo de Davao University Center of Psychological Extension and Research Services (COPERS), 36 service providers from the provincial/municipal health and social welfare offices completed an online training on MHPSS and Psychological First Aid (PFA).
- **Twelve psychosocial support sessions benefited 326 IDPs in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur (through DFAT/Australia)**, composed of 162 women, 118 young and adolescent girls, 8 adult men and 38 adolescent boys.
- **243 women and 143 male members of local inter-agency protection mechanisms in 4 municipalities/city in Lanao del Sur completed capacity-building sessions on delivering client-centered services to GBV survivors following ethical and safety standards (through DFAT/Australia)**. UNFPA also provided technical assistance to the municipalities to strengthen the implementation of the Joint Memorandum Circular released by the DILG, DSWD and DOJ for the creation of city, municipal and provincial-level local committees on anti-trafficking and violence against women and their children (LCAT-VAWC). To adapt to COVID-19-induced mobility and physical distancing restrictions, 180 hours of one-on-one mentoring via telephone were provided to 30 members of LCAT-VAWCs. In turn, these participants re-echoed their training to an additional 100 LGU officials and constituents. To date, the municipal governments of Marantao and Piagapo in Lanao del Sur have passed an Executive Order and a Resolution, respectively, supporting the LCAT-VAWC creation.
- **Established the Women and Children Protection Units (through CERF and HTF)** at the Cotabato Provincial Hospital in North Cotabato and in Maguindanao with 3 physicians, 3 social workers, and 4 police officers completing the virtual training on WCPU and GBV case management.
- Pre-COVID, UNFPA reached 2,461 WRA and 4,084 young people through **face-to-face SRH/GBV/MHPSS information sessions** and 2,882 WRA and 1,551 young people through **face-to-face GBV prevention/response sessions** in North Cotabato (through CERF). 7,132 women and girls and 3,588 men and boys, meanwhile, were reached in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur (through DFAT/Australia).

In focus

HUMANITARIAN- DEVELOPMENT- PEACEBUILDING NEXUS

- With the rapid spread of COVID-19 in March, **UNFPA shifted its implementation strategies to conform to the mobility restrictions and physical distancing requirements brought about by the government's declaration of community quarantines.** UNFPA created innovative avenues such as "Intergenerational Dialogues" where women and girls can fulfill their role as active participants and change agents for peacebuilding and recovery from COVID-19 while bridging understanding between community elders, leaders and members on the socio-economic and cultural determinants affecting women and girls' rights and choices.

- During the pandemic, these Intergenerational Dialogues took the form of **local radio spots on SRH/GBV/MHPSS in the COVID-19 context.** Resource speakers were invited to engage in dialogues e.g. between Muslim Religious Leaders (MRL) and the general public in the communities, between men and women, between adults and young people, and between the providers and users of SRH, GBV and MHPSS services in the communities, etc., and the listeners sent in their questions and comments. The radio spots had an estimated listenership of 27,600 WRA and 21,800 adolescents. **Community-based mobile/roving public announcement systems** were also launched, reaching about 70,000 women and 53,800 young people in 107 barangays in Kidapawan, Makilala and Tulunan, North Cotabato (through CERF).

- In Maguindanao, 40 hours of radio spots and 100 hours of roving/mobile public address (through HTF) dedicated to IDP rights, VAWC laws, SRH and GBV referral pathways, and COVID-19 topics reached 20,100 women, 8,600 girls, 19,500 men, and 7,100 boys. In Marawi City and Butig, Lanao del Sur, 31 barangay VAW desk officers were mobilized for the roving public address activities (through DFAT/Australia). At the same time, IEC materials, including 1,500 posters and 4,008 sanitary alcohols, that contained key GBV and COVID-19 messages were distributed. 4,248 sanitary alcohols with the same key messages were distributed in the municipalities of Mamasapano, Datu Saudi Ampatuan and Shariff Aguak in Maguindanao.

- A recent telesurvey by UNFPA showed that the adapted approaches to information dissemination were consistent with the most effective modalities of receiving key information in the communities (i.e. radio - 45%, information sessions - 36%, TV - 34%, barangay - 29%, internet - 21%, SMS - 20%, recorrida - 18%, calls - 11%).

Provided logistics support to the Department of Health in delivering various family planning commodities and materials to BARMM (through HTF). This assistance enabled 666,000 COCs, 81,600 POPs, 7,500 IUDs, 105,600 DMPA, 1,059,000 condoms, 3,500 cycle beads, and 114,000 FP materials reach the different BARMM provinces.

- UNFPA extended technical assistance to the BARMM Ministry of Social Services and Development (MSSD) **in integrating gender/GBV-related interventions in the BARMM MSSD Priorities for 2020.** UNFPA co-convened with the BARMM MSSD and UNICEF the sub-national Joint Child Protection and Gender-based Violence Working Group to ensure the continuity of essential life-saving protection services despite the COVID-19 pandemic.



DEMOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE

UNFPA and the Government of the Philippines remain committed to the agreements made during the 25th Anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development in November 2019 in Nairobi. More critically, in the time of COVID-19 which requires more targeted and effective policy and programmatic action by the government to address the pandemic's impact, the unique needs of women and girls especially regarding their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) need to be assessed and quantified. While Wave 4 of the Longitudinal Cohort Study of the Filipino Child (2016-2030), UNFPA Philippines' flagship study, is complete and phone data collection to evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on the cohort ready for implementation, UNFPA initiated the following policy-oriented researches to demonstrate its thought leadership on issues that affect women and girls:

Region

(All)

CONFIRMED CASES

RT-PCR positive by DOH certified lab

63,001 (+1841)

18,312 (+537)

210

- **Initiated a study estimating the extent of decline in access to key SRHR services due to the COVID-19 pandemic in collaboration with the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI).** The study analyzed the impact of COVID-19 on SRHR outcomes due to lockdown-induced service reductions. Results of this analysis, in particular the projected increase in maternal deaths, unintended pregnancies, unmet need for FP, teenage pregnancies and GBV, have been adopted and cited by the Philippine Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM) and widely reported on in several major and international media channels.

- **Validation of the Common Operational Data Set (CODS) for Humanitarian Settings (through DFAT/Australia)** to help government agencies and humanitarian organizations to use relevant population data for advocacy, fundraising, and programming during emergencies. The CODS is a tool that provides users a simple way to access the "best available baseline data" sourced from various government agencies. The team held focus group discussions with the Information Management Working Group of the UN as well as key informant interviews with national government agencies like the Philippine Statistics Authority, Department of Health, Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the Office of Civil Defense, among others, and presented the consolidated results in a multi-sectoral validation workshop convened on 24 June.

- **Pilot-tested the use of Big Data as an innovative solution for obtaining untapped data from social media (through the UNFPA Innovation Fund)** to further improve the planning, execution and monitoring capacities of government and NGO partners that implement programs to eliminate unwanted pregnancies, preventable maternal deaths, and teen pregnancies. To date, the Big Data platform has scraped 3,318 tweets at 76% taxonomy accuracy (i.e. relevance of contents to family planning) and 78% sentiment analysis accuracy.

- **Launched the SRHR relevant COVID-19 Online Dashboard.** The public dashboard is established based on the DOH's data drop. It aims to track, display and analyse the COVID-19 pandemic specific to key SRH conditions of WRA, provide a critical evidence base that will be used for pandemic response and post-pandemic recovery phase, and provide data for analysis on the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls.



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

UNFPA CASH CONTRIBUTION	2020 ALLOCATION (USD)	UTILIZATION (USD) AS OF 30 JUNE 2020	UTILIZATION RATE
Contribution to the Government	1,880,812.84	1,378,607.61	73%
Technical Support to Government	4,671,747.28	2,746,063.56	59%
Total	6,552,560.12	4,124,671.17	63%

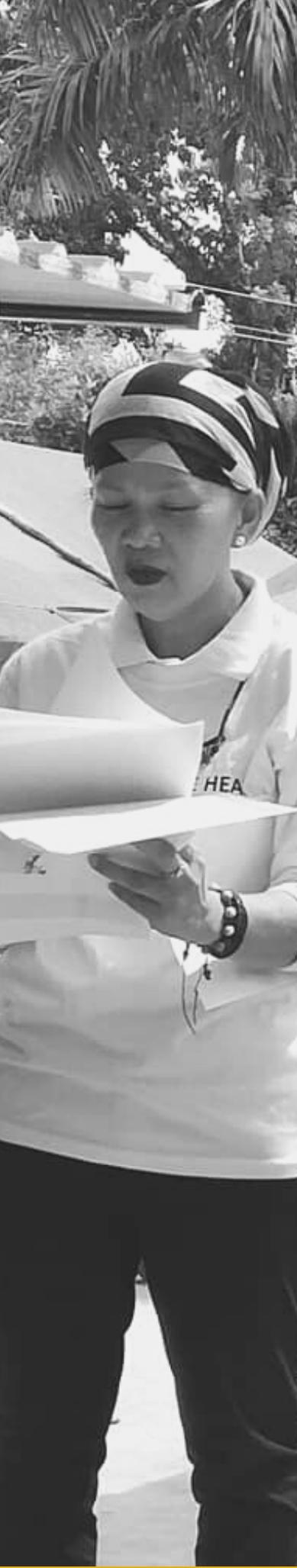
Out of the USD 4.12 million spent during the period under review, UNFPA dedicated USD 3.21 million for COVID-19-related interventions. Following severe mobility constraints posed by COVID-19, the Country Office demonstrated agility and adaptability by quickly reprogramming existing budgets from its regular development and humanitarian programmes to instead support the government by being one of the very first to respond to the emergent and urgent needs of women and girls under COVID-19, such as the procurement of PPEs for female frontline health workers and other medical supplies. No less than the President of the Philippines acknowledged this early contribution of UNFPA Philippines in his COVID-19 address to the nation on 30 March 2020.



CONTRIBUTION TO THE UN SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES

UNFPA's active participation in all critical One UN activities is contributing to the new wave of UN Reform.

- UNFPA supported the rest of the UN system in the Philippines in successfully organizing the first National Steering Committee meeting for the UN-Philippines Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development (PFSD) 2019-2023 on 6 March 2020, chaired by National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary.
- UNFPA contributed to the formulation of a joint programme for SDG Fund support with UNDP and UNICEF on "*Reaping the Demographic Dividend and Managing the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 by Applying an Integrated National Financing Framework in the Philippines*".
- Working within the triple nexus and the Women, Peace and Security frameworks, UNFPA contributed to the formulation of a joint programme together with IOM for funding support by the Government of Norway on "*Advancing women's Rights and Influence through Socio-economic Empowerment of BIWAB (ARISE BIWAB)*" that aims at increasing women's participation in advancing gender rights and involvement in socio-economic and political affairs by building the capacities of skilled Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade (BIWAB) members.
- UNFPA, together with UNICEF, WHO and WFP, issued [a joint statement](#) emphasizing that the most effective way to save newborn lives is still through the practice of Essential Intrapartum and Newborn Care and breastfeeding while strictly following precautions for infection prevention and control. UNFPA, WHO, and UNICEF also jointly supported the DOH in crafting guidelines to ensure continuity of maternal health services during COVID-19.
- UNFPA, in partnership with UNICEF and UNHCR, organized a webinar on GBV and Child Protection in the time of COVID-19 together with the Commissioner of Human Rights and other key interlocutors, attended by more than 1,200 participants nationwide.
- UNFPA organized a webinar for the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster on COVID-19 Protocols for Evacuation Centers, in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development, IOM, and USAID.
- UNFPA assumed the Co-Chair (Alternate) for the PFSD People Pillar chaired by FAO, and the Co-Chair of the UN Operations Management Team (OMT) chaired by WFP. UNFPA is also an active participant in other inter-agency working groups such as the UN Technical Working Group on the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19, PFSD Theme Group on Youth, UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) grave violations committed against children during armed conflicts, UN Communications Group, UN Monitoring and Evaluation and Data Theme Group, and co-led the UN Operations Management Team (OMT) and the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) Working Group.
- UNFPA contributed to UN joint initiatives in Mindanao, including the implementation of the HCT Protection Strategy for Mindanao, through the Mindanao Humanitarian Team (MHT).



OPERATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

(Results-based Programming, Operational Efficiency, Resource Mobilization, Partnerships, and Communications)

UNFPA in the Philippines is affirmed in its delivery of relevant, innovative, results-oriented and quality programmes, having been cited as one of only five UNFPA Country Offices whose Country Programme Evaluations earned a "Very Good" quality rating in early 2020. This recognition is critical as UNFPA globally intensifies efforts to scale up programmes for impact.

- UNFPA Philippines highly appreciated the annual financial contribution from the **Government of the Philippines** to its headquarters Regular Resources (core funding) for 2020, amounting USD 44,000, received during the period under review through the Philippine Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM).
- UNFPA Philippines sincerely appreciates the new partnership concluded with the Government of **Japan**, as well as with the Royal **Norwegian** Embassy (through IOM). UNFPA is grateful to **DFAT/Australia** for its additional funding support to extend two existing partnerships. In 2020 to date, UNFPA has mobilized additional USD 3.81 million locally. This also includes an allocation from the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan through UNFPA HTF/EF.
- **UNFPA Philippines social media** accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) are now all verified and appearing with blue badges, demonstrating the legitimacy of the UNFPA Philippines accounts and the high level of trustworthiness accorded to the UNFPA Philippines brand.
- UNFPA developed **COVID-19 chronicle videos** for **Gender Based Violence** ("Katok"), **Safe Motherhood** ("Baby"), **Family Planning** ("Love in the Time of COVID"), and **A Tribute to Frontliners** ("Di Mandirigma/Not Warriors") to reinforce advocacy and behavioral change communications (BCC). Approximately 500,00 individuals have been reached by the videos through Facebook.
- UNFPA continues to be present in online forums related to the health and rights of women and young people. On 28 May (International Day of Action for Women's Health), the UNFPA Country Representative served as a panelist in "Usapang Human Development", an online policy talk show series hosted by the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD) via Facebook Live, to speak about the vulnerabilities of women and girls and ensuring their reproductive health and rights even during the pandemic. UNFPA also served as an expert resource in the Webinar on "*Implementing WHO COVID-19 Clinical Management Guidelines - Issues in Pregnancy and Care of Children*" organized by the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office.



UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

Ensuring rights and choices for all

15F North Tower, Rockwell Business Center Sheridan,
Sheridan cor. United Sts., Highway Hills,
Mandaluyong City, Philippines 1550
www.phippines.unfpa.org



@UNFPAPH



(632) 7902 9900



pdl.co@unfpa.org