

Situation Report

Jolo Fire

July 25, 2018

Introduction:

A massive fire razed in 2 seaside communities in the municipality of Jolo, Sulu. According to local reports, the blaze reportedly started Tuesday afternoon at a coffee shop and quickly spread to houses made of light materials in Barangays Busbus and Walled City, which are both the most populated barangays in Jolo. The fire started 300 meters away from the Philippine maritime detachment.

As of July 30, 2018 DSWD reported **3,696 families or 22,895 individuals** affected by the fire from the two barangays. a total of 13 hectares of residential area with 2,600 houses with estimated damages to around Php 35,000,000. As of July 27, 2018, the local government of Jolo declared state of calamity on the areas.



Country/Location: Philippines

Title of emergency: Jolo fire

Dates covered by report: July 30, 2018

Situation Report No: 1

General overview (for EXTERNAL use)

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The Jolo fire engulfed the communities of barangay Busbus and Walled City last July 25 has resulted to blazing 2,600 houses resulting to 3,696 families displaced and displaced in 6 evacuation centers within the 2 barangays affected.



The local government of Jolo has declared a state of calamity to immediately release needed emergency funds to be used to provide relief/immediate needs of affected family.

Though the local government has provided the immediate needs of the families, crowded evacuation centers and poor coordination mechanisms resulting to disorganized distribution are the top issues right now that can result to further humanitarian issues if not managed the soonest.

Country Office Program Areas:

The two affected barangay's, Busbus and Walled City are among the five covered barangays of local partner in the area, **VSDFI**. Based on their head counting and assessment a total of all 166 enrolled families are accounted. Of the 166 there are 76 enrolled families that are currently staying in the 6 evacuation centers while there are 26 families staying with relatives.

Immediate/Relief needs (*food, water, medicine needs and non-food items*) of affected families are being provided by the local government (municipal and province), regional DSWD, Philippine Red Cross and by the Armed Forces as well. Religious groups and other businesses are supporting also in providing immediate needs of the affected families. Local Government of Jolo declared State of Calamity last Friday July 27. Last July 27, the President of the Philippines visited the affected areas and brought with him substantial amount of relief packages to be distributed to the families.

Based on the monitoring and assessment of VSDFI staff in coordination with local DSWD in evacuation centers, there are no reported separated children from their families and or experiencing trauma. Though with evacuation centers established getting crowded and there is no concrete plan yet as to how long will the evacuees will be staying in the EC's, establishing CFS or normalizing activities would be ensured for the affected children. Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is in partnership with Department of Education (DepEd) and have conducted immediate training to selected teachers on PSA to provide support in assisting and providing families needing psychosocial support.

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DSWD staff as well were reported conducting simple psychosocial activities to children in evacuation centers. As of now classes are still suspended in the affected barangays but DepEd is planning already to immediately resume classes the soonest. No date yet as to how long will families be staying in the evacuation centers.

Local partner VSDFI was able to mount some immediate relief operations to affected families in evacuation center through the funds of their church congregation (no estimate amount available). Also, trained staff on CFS was able to coordinate and assist the DepEd in conducting initial psychosocial session in one evacuation center resulting to **100 children** participating in the normalizing activity.

In coordination with DSWD and local disaster risk reduction and management council (LDRRMC), VSDFI is planning to conduct additional 2 CFS sites in some of the evacuation centers using their emergency funds from their church congregation.

Overview of ChildFund response (for EXTERNAL use)

The CO has been monitoring the development of the Jolo fire incident, as a team led by the DRM specialist, CP specialist and Area Manager together with its program officers are in close coordination with the Project Manager of VSDFI on the developments of the incident and providing them with timely remote technical coaching and guidance.

Based on the result of the assessment made by the local partner and reports coming from the DSWD and local government, the government is on top of the situation despite noticeable gaps on their coordination system. The disaster is just labeled a small scale disaster only. Major gap noticed in the government's coordination system even though they are conducting profiling of community members and identifying real fire victims some other families are pretending to be victims resulting in some delays in the distribution of their relief operations.



As of today, VSDFI has not yet expressed intention to use their 25% emergency fund for their response operation as they are using their church congregation funds to operate their response. VSDFI is planning to conduct additional psychosocial sessions in two sites to EC's they identified with their coordination with the local DSWD. VSDFI is the only Civil Society Organization allowed by the local government of Jolo to work with during assessment and monitoring. VSDFI will determine if they will be needing additional funds and utilize emergency funds from their subsidy to operate their planned additional CFS sites after result of further assessment and coordination with the local DRRMC.

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The country office is planning to send one its program quality officer to provide technical support to the VSDFI on their coordination and assessment efforts and be able to provide sound technical recommendations on moving forward the response operation of the local partner.

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1. Security & logistics

No security threats are reported. Military detachment is near the affected communities and can provide security support anytime needed. Military cargo planes are providing support in transporting relief goods coming from Manila and sea port as well is very accessible for relief goods coming from nearby island province to be transported easily.

2. Partnership and coordination

Only ChildFund is present as of the moment in the area as both as an INGO and national or local NGO. ChildFund through its local Partner is in close coordination with the local government unit of Jolo particularly in assessing immediate needs of the affected population.

Though local state of calamity is declared, the government is on top of the situation and no need to have assistance from the humanitarian organizations as this can just be labeled as a small scale disaster.

3. Program:

The local partner VSDFI has been operating in the areas and as partner of Childfund for the past 30 years. They are operating currently programs on school drop-out reduction, early childhood education and alternative life-long learning skills programs.

The local partner has a total of 720 enrolled families in the municipality of Jolo. Most of program participants are from the Indigenous People and Muslim communities.

4. Staffing

The CO is planning to send Program Quality Program Officer Lailah Mala to area to provide technical support in their assessment and coordination effort of the local partner

5. Donors

No donors have committed at this point as initial assessment result to only minimal impact to program area. Emergency response operations will be from the reallocation of the local partner subsidy funds to emergency funds.

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6. Finance (Budget Source)

The country office will support the local partner in accessing their 25% allocation once they decide to avail it.

7. Media/Communications (N/A)

8. Next steps what are the next steps? Recommendation.

Possible next steps would be conducting deeper assessment if ever critical humanitarian needs will arise.

9. Additional Information

Above initiatives are being done while regular programming continues.