



UNITED NATIONS  
PHILIPPINES



# UNited

## to Leave No One Behind

A monthly newsletter  
of the United Nations in the Philippines

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### Message from the Resident Coordinator

**O**n November 8, 2020, I went to the province of Albay and Catanduanes in the Bicol Region to see for myself the devastation caused by Typhoon Goni—the most powerful storm of 2020. In the small town of Tiwi, I came across a single mother and her children looking at the wreckage of their home. I asked her what she needed most. Her answer surprised me, and showed me the depth of her resilience.

She said, “I just need tools to rebuild my home.”

She reminded me of the many thousands of Filipinos whom as a result of many different circumstances, such as poverty, conflict, and, most recently, COVID-19, have lost their footing and fallen far behind. Yet, like her, their hope remains and this is the foundation of their recovery.

Our goal is to support and reinforce their capacity to take control of their lives.

This newsletter is a collection of stories of resilience and empowerment—700 Sama Bajaus in Zamboanga City who had formerly been stateless and now have legal identity and the protection that comes with it through

birth certificates; 1400 typhoon-affected farmers and fishers in Cagayan Province who are able to start over with the provision of seeds and fingerlings; over 3,000 soon-to-be decommissioned combatants, indigenous people and food insecure families in conflict-affected communities in Lanao del Sur and Basilan who have signed up for a programme for food security; 170 families displaced by the 2017 Marawi Siege who have homes to call their own; 500 households and over a thousand schoolchildren in Looy, South Upi, Maguindanao who have access to clean water through a water system built by indigenous people; women fishers who are rehabilitating mangroves across the regions of Bicol, Eastern Visayas, Caraga, and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

These are just a few of the remarkable stories of Filipinos across the country whose lives and communities are being transformed. We will continue to help create these stories as we UNite to leave no one behind.

- Gustavo Gonzalez

# Child Vaccination

## A polio survivor helps families overcome vaccination fears

Rodel Battaler, 40 years old, is a social mobiliser for UNICEF partner Relief International. He has the same drive and dedication as his fellow vaccine champions, yet something sets him apart—he has polio. Wearing crutches, his colleagues were initially concerned whether he would be able to handle the tiring and intensive fieldwork that his job requires. Battaler works tirelessly, inspiring and encouraging colleagues to be patient and persevering.

Social mobilisers play an important role in the fight against preventable diseases. They are trained

communicators working hand-in-hand with barangay health workers (BHWs), local officials, and community leaders to ensure every child is vaccinated. Like BHWs, they act as a second line of defense against vaccine refusals and hesitancy, going to the most isolated and hard-to-reach areas, often walking long distances across difficult terrain, or crossing rough seas.

Read more: [A polio survivor helps families overcome vaccination fears](#)



Rodel on field visit  
Credit: Relief International

# Emergency Response and Disaster Preparedness

## Anticipatory Action saves lives



WFP's SCOPE platform involves an in-depth collection of information from beneficiaries to avoid duplication and allow for an efficient distribution of cash assistance. Credit: WFP/Arete Ramon Angelo Mendoza

The World Food Programme (WFP) has started preparations for its new Anticipatory Action pilot that aims to support vulnerable populations prior to a disaster. WFP will register 25,000 families in the disaster-prone provinces of Albay, Sorsogon and Catanduanes (region V) who will receive cash assistance in cases of imminent extreme weather events (such as typhoons or flooding), enabling families to take anticipatory actions to protect their food security and livelihoods. The cash assistance provided by WFP will be complemented by a top-up from the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) supporting pregnant and nursing women. This joint UN agency project is funded by the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). WFP will implement the project in partnership with the Bicol Consortium for Development Initiatives (BCDI).

WFP and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Region V signed an agreement in July to partner on the update and enhancement of DSWD's Emergency Shelter Assistance beneficiary registry. WFP will use SCOPE, WFP's corporate beneficiary information and transfer management platform to support DSWD with the profile update of around 50,000 families and the collection of additional information (such as phone numbers and pictures). This will facilitate the use of the registry in case of an emergency response in an accountable and efficient manner.

WFP will also be able to use the registry for its own programmes (such as the Anticipatory Action pilot), reducing the duplication of efforts and providing better targeted, transparent cash handouts.

# Food Security and Nutrition



## Healthier diets for mothers and babies in Maguindanao

The World Food Programme (WFP) presented to a large forum the results of its research on social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) that aims to improve nutrition in Maguindanao by addressing barriers which contribute to poor dietary practices. The research called BAMBINA (Better Access of Mothers and Babies on Integrated Nutrition Agenda) analysed topics from food choices in the home, to myths and taboos, to the challenges and barriers of eating nutritious meals. For example, one finding indicated that though families generally believed that healthy eating is important, only 38 percent wanted to eat more fruits. The findings will inform the development of a SBCC strategy in Maguindanao, which has one of the highest stunting prevalence rates (39 per cent) in the country

Read more: [WFP Introduces BAMBINA to Parents and Caregivers in the Bangsamoro Region](#)

**Photos from left:** WFP Research Assistant, conducts an in depth interview with a mother and participant in the study from Barangay Kuya, Maguindanao. Credit: WFP SBCC BAMBINA Team • Talib, a team leader from one of the Kayod Ka Bangsamoro garden sites, showcases part of their harvest from land integrated in the FFA programme of WFP. Credit: WFP/ Fahima Abdulaziz • A woman worker in a banana plantation in the Philippines. Credit: ILO/L. Aspiras

## Former combatants in BARMM are partners in building community food security

In the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), World Food Programme (WFP) has started the registration of a further 3,700 participants for Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) activities. Participants include soon-to-be decommissioned combatants, indigenous people and food insecure families in conflict-affected communities in Lanao del Sur and Basilan. FFA activities will focus on agriculture production and environmental protection, using a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach.

# Employment / Jobs



## Rural workers enjoy stronger worker protection

The International Labour Organization (ILO), with support from the United States Department of Labor, held a virtual launch of the new project on “Improving Workers’ Rights in the Rural Sectors of the Indo-Pacific with a focus on Women”, on 11 August 2021, via Zoom, in Manila, Philippines.

The project aims to promote and improve compliance with labour laws, occupational safety and health (OSH), and gender equality in the rural sectors in agriculture, fishing and mining, in the Philippines; while the project will focus on the rural sector in the palm oil industry in Indonesia. The Project is being implemented as part of the ILO’s Safety + Health for All Flagship Programme to improve safety and health globally.

# Environment



## Young innovators hack solutions to help cities reduce marine plastic litter

Seasoned hackers, tech enthusiasts, and young innovators hacked solutions to the country’s pressing marine plastic litter (MPL) problem at the Plastic 3R Hacks PH Grand Finals on 8 June 2021, in celebration of World Oceans Day.

Plastic 3R Hacks is a nationwide virtual hackathon co-organized by UN-Habitat through the Healthy Oceans and Clean Cities Initiative (HOCCI), a project funded by the Government of Japan aimed to help cities and communities in the Philippines in MPL reduction.

The hackathon highlighted some of the brightest ideas from the youth to save our oceans including AI-based rewards-system waste segregation app for individuals and households, and mobile application monitoring and grading tool for local government units.

The hackathon served as a venue to harness youth-led innovative 3R solutions that are now being adopted by HOCCI partner cities to enhance their existing solid waste management and MPL reduction initiatives. These initiatives will be included under the strategies in the City Plan of Action on Marine Litter, the localized version of the National Plan of Action on Marine Litter, that are being developed by cities with support from HOCCI.





## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

### Households and schools benefit from water system built by indigenous peoples

About 500 households and over a thousand schoolchildren will benefit from the new level II water system built by Teduray, a group of indigenous peoples (IPs), under the ILO Japan Water and Sanitation Project in Looy, South Upi, Maguindanao.

Through this safe and reliable water system, indigenous peoples and communities will no longer rely on dugwells, rivers, streams and rainwater, which are often unsafe water sources. It will also reduce long hours of walking to fetch water outside the village. Mothers and children will save time, and will no longer face risks from carrying heavy water containers.

The Ke'minanam Luwey Wayeg Association (KLWA), an indigenous peoples' organization was involved in the construction. Over 250 indigenous peoples were trained and hired as workers, of whom 75 were women, and received direct income and social protection benefits.

To date, the KLWA has expanded the water system through additional tap stands. They also implemented policies, and conducted regular monitoring of the water system.

Read more: [Indigenous peoples build new water system in Looy, Maguindanao](#)

Watch on [YouTube](#).

## Women Empowerment

### Women take leadership role in fisheries development

Women are emerging as leaders in the traditionally male-dominated fishery sector with the support of the Fisheries, Coastal Resources and Livelihood (FishCORAL) Project.

The FishCORAL Project, which bagged the 2021 Gender Awards of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), integrates women's empowerment in its interventions to reduce the poverty of fisherfolk and strengthen local food and nutrition security in economically-challenged target coastal communities.

As a result of the Project, 8218 women out of the total 28,280 direct beneficiaries reached have been empowered to become leaders and to participate in economic decisions. Forty two percent of these women are leaders of fisherfolk organizations. Women actively participated in mangrove rehabilitation on 518 hectares across the regions of Bicol, Eastern Visayas, Caraga, and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Thirty eight percent of executive positions in Bay Management Councils and 21 percent in fishery advisory and policy-making bodies are held by women.

At the same time, 212 project participants, of whom 70 percent are women, have started their own businesses producing cassava and mussel crackers, deboned and fresh milkfish, and seaweed noodles, among others.

The FishCORAL Project is a six-year project under the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) to be implemented from January 2016 to December 2021. It is jointly funded by IFAD, with counterpart funding from the Government of the Philippines, participating local government units, and partner people's organizations.

Read more: [Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Fisheries](#)

**Photos from top:** The all-women group of Taytay Abante Kababayan-an Association of Taytay, Guiuan in Eastern Samar is a fisherfolk group supported by FishCORAL Project. The members are graduates of Aqua-based Business School and are now producing value-added dried fish that is being sold within and outside Eastern Visayas. Credit: CIP & FishCORAL Project • Households and schools benefited from a new water system built by indigenous peoples under ILO Water and Sanitation Project in Looy, South Upi, Maguindanao. Funded by the Government of Japan, about 500 households, and 1,169 schoolchildren now have access to safe and clean water: [bit.ly/ilowatsan](https://bit.ly/ilowatsan). Credit: ILO Barangay Looy, South Upi in Maguindanao, Philippines





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