international alert
PHILIPPINES

Conflict Alert 2018

War and Identity

Peace
is within
our power

About International Alert

International Alert works with people directly affected by conflict to build lasting peace. Together, we believe peace is within our power. We focus on solving the root causes of conflict, bringing together people from across divides. From the grassroots to policy level, we come together to build everyday peace. Peace is just as much about communities living together, side by side, and resolving their differences, without resorting to violence, as it is about people signing a treaty or laying down their arms. That is why we believe that we all have a role to play in building a more peaceful future.

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Acknowledgements

Work on this edition of the Conflict Alert report began in 2017, an especially difficult year for our Mindanao partners who were inevitably affected by the explosion of conflict in Marawi, the increasing number of attacks by violent extremist groups, and the ensuing declaration of martial law. They remained steadfast in their commitment to the project amidst these challenges. We dedicate this report to them.

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Foreword

Amanda Gorely

AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE PHILIPPINES

On behalf of the Australian Government, I congratulate our partner, International Alert Philippines, for this **Conflict Alert 2018** report.

Australia has been a steadfast supporter of development, education, and peace in the southern Philippines for over 20 years. Together with our trusted partners, we are helping to resolve conflict and build peace.

A robust conflict monitoring mechanism is essential to understanding the drivers of conflict and to making conflict resolution efforts effective. Alongside the World Bank, Australia has been a strong

supporter of International Alert's conflict monitoring system, Conflict Alert. Conflict Alert provides timely and reliable conflict data on the incidence, causes, and human costs of violent conflict in the Philippines.

As the peace process enters its next critical phase, it is my hope that the data from the Conflict Alert 2018 report will help shape policymaking and development strategies and contribute to lasting peace and prosperity in Mindanao.

"

A robust conflict monitoring mechanism is essential to understanding the drivers of conflict and to making conflict resolution efforts effective.

Mara Warwick

COUNTRY DIRECTOR, BRUNEI, MALAYSIA, PHILIPPINES, AND THAILAND
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I t takes time for development to take root in communities affected by conflict. Rebuilding sustainable peace is an even longer process. In the realm of post-conflict development, there are no easy fixes.

In 2017, violent extremism in Marawi shone a spotlight on the changing dynamics and risks to peace and development in the Philippines. The Philippine government is addressing the factors that led to the Marawi siege and has started rebuilding the city. The formation of the Bangsamoro government is also underway. Success in these efforts requires a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the Bangsamoro region, especially those that are critical for ensuring good governance, fostering sustainable development, and securing lasting peace in Mindanao and the Philippines.

The 2018 Conflict Alert Report is an important resource that provides all stakeholders, including policy makers and development partners, a deep and comprehensive analysis of Mindanao. The report is unique because it has been prepared by highly respected conflict management specialists hand in hand with researchers based in Mindanao universities and Multi-Stakeholder Validation Group members across the provinces of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, some of whom were themselves displaced by conflict. In this way, it is an insider's look at the underlying roots of conflict and suggests practical interventions that can help Mindanawons overcome violence in their communities.

Violent extremism and conflict are detrimental to the aspirations of the Filipino people for a stable, resilient, and prosperous society. International Alert's work helps us understand these complex phenomena and in doing so strengthens the country's efforts to build resilient, peaceful and progressive communities in Mindanao. The World Bank is proud to continue our support for International Alert's important work in the Philippines.

"

Violent extremism and conflict are detrimental to the aspirations of the Filipino people for a stable, resilient, and prosperous society.

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Abbreviations

ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
BASULTA	Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi
BIFF	Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
DI	Dawlah Islamiya
EO	Executive order
IDP	Internally displaced persons
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MG	Maute Group
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MSU-IIT-IPDM	Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology-Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao
MSVG	Multi-Stakeholder Validation Group
NPA	New People's Army
NUP	Non-uniformed personnel
PAGCOR	Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation
PAGs	Private armed groups
PCSO	Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office
PD	Presidential decree
PNP	Philippine National Police
PPO	Police Provincial Office
PRO	Police Regional Office
PSA	Philippine Statistics Authority
NDU-URC	Notre Dame University-University Research Center
VE	Violent extremism
VII	Violence intensity index
WMSU-RDEC	Western Mindanao State University-Research Development and Evaluation Center

Executive summary

The year 2017 was a turning point in the magnitude of violent conflict in the Bangsamoro, amplified by the astonishing increase in conflict deaths due to the war in Marawi City and other places in Mindanao. Fewer incidents produced deadlier results in contrast to previous years. The question is whether this sort of outcome will persist in the future.

Data from the Conflict Alert conflict monitoring system highlights five other important findings: (a) the collapse of rebellion-related violence; (b) the dampening effects of martial law on other flashpoints beyond the war in Marawi; (c) the rise in inter- and intra-religious identity violence; (d) the spike in urban violence; and, (e) the spread of new conflict strings that reinforced the cycle of violence in the Bangsamoro.

Deadly spike in violence

The magnitude of violence was brought about by the convergence of violent extremism and illicit drug-related killings that led to more deaths per incident of violence in 2017 than at any time in the past seven years since Conflict Alert was established. The major flashpoints in 2017 occurred in Marawi and other places of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao.

Extremist violence trumps rebellion

The onset of all-out war in Marawi accentuated the near absence of rebellion-related violence from armed groups that operate in areas within and adjacent to the provinces of the ARMM in 2017. These rebel groups include the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA).

Two narratives are often used to explain the explosion of war in Marawi and other violent flashpoints in 2017. The first narrative suggests that the war in Marawi signifies the rise of a newly-emerging strand of violent extremism and its agents such as the Maute Group/Dawlah Islamiya and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), over the previous subnational

rebellions and their dominant actors (MNLF and MILF).[1] The second narrative acknowledges the newly emerging threat of violent extremism but argues that many of its adherents and combatants evolved from previous struggles for secession and self-determination and merely shifted their allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and its local agents.[2]

Both narratives found traction in the conditions before, during, and after the war in Marawi.

The shift in the pattern of vertical political violence began in 2016 with the rise in violent attacks against government forces by armed groups pledging allegiance to Daesh (Conflict Alert, 2016).[3] However, few expected rebellion-related violence from the mainstream rebel groups such as the MILF and MNLF to be overshadowed by the relentless battle between government forces and the Maute Group/Dawlah Islamiya and the BIFF in central Mindanao.

Instead, many expected violent conflict to be sparked by the growing tensions over delays in legislating a Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL).[4] The connection between extremist violence and the beleaguered Mindanao peace process has been argued forcefully by the MILF and others in the development and peacebuilding community, citing that the early passage of the BBL could have prevented the tragedy (Loesch, 2017). However, a glaring disconnect remains between the actors involved in Marawi and those struggling for more meaningful autonomy in the Bangsamoro, notwithstanding reports from the security sector that some other rebel combatants slipped into Marawi to join the fighting on the side of Dawlah Islamiya.[5]

The spike in extremist violence in 2017, evidenced by the eruption of full-scale war in Marawi and its environs, defied all expectations. The fierceness and tenacity demonstrated by the young and multi-ethnic combatants of Daesh-affiliated armed groups, and the absence of any clear subnational political agenda were in stark contrast to the secessionist goals of their forebears.

A conflagration snuffs out smaller fires

Despite the outbreak of full-scale war and the consequent rise in fatalities, the number of violent conflict incidents declined in absolute numbers in 2017 compared to 2016, except in Marawi and the rest of Lanao del Sur.

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[1] Nikko Dizon, "It's a battle of old vs new", Inquirer.net, July 6, 2017, http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/911354/its-a-battle-of-old-vs-new

[2] Joseph Hincks, "The Battle for Marawi City", Time, May 25, 2017, http://time.com/marawi-philippines-isis/

[3] Acronym of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) Arabic name, ad-Dawlah al-Islāmiyah. ISIL is also known as ISIS.

[4] "Congress adjourns, fails to pass BBL", Inquirer.net, February 4, 2016, http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/761319/congress-adjourns-fails-to-pass-bbl; Regine Cabato, "Delaying passage of Bangsamoro law will worsen instability in Mindanao", CNN Philippines, June 21, 2017, http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2017/06/21/ferrer-pass-BBL.html; Carmela Fonbuena, "MILF, Maute Group battle for legitimacy", Rappler, July 3, 2017, https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/in-depth/174531-milf-maute-group-peace-process-marawi-crisis

[5] "Frustrated ground fighters of Philippines Muslim rebels engaged in peace talks with government join Islamic State group", Mindanao Post, December 1, 2017, https://mindanaopost.com/frustrated-ground-fighters-philippines-muslim-rebels-engaged-peace-talks-government-join-islamic-state-group/; Multi-Stakeholder Validation Group, February 1, 2018; Interview with MILF member and AFP official, names and dates withheld.

A bullet-riddled mosque stands among damaged homes and buildings inside Marawi City's most affected area. Photo by **Manman Dejeto**

This paradox has been explained by security officials and confirmed by key informants and traditional leaders on the ground, as the outcome of the imposition of martial law and the onset of stricter rules and regulations that prevented the open and easy access to, and use of, illicit weapons across the region.[6] There are suggestions too that the decline in violence elsewhere may be due to the migration of armed groups into Lanao del Sur. Whatever the case was, the Marawi conflict was used to justify the imposition of martial law, which in turn snuffed out other potential flashpoints from erupting at the same time.[7]

Causal trends remained generally the same over the past few years, and even the intensity of the war in Marawi failed to disrupt the pole position of shadow economy-related violence, except in terms of conflict deaths. The findings from previous years about the higher human costs associated with political violence endured (BCMS, 2014; Conflict Alert 2016, 2017).

Inter- and intra-religious conflict

Identity issues pertaining to inter- and intra-religious affiliations rose dramatically to levels unseen since the start of the Conflict Alert database in 2011. Conflict Alert underscores

this important trend as a counterpoint to the sort of precursor violence that attended the rise of extremism in the Middle East and North Africa or MENA (Andrews, 2015). The literature on ISIS in the MENA region shows the breadth of inter- and intra-religious conflict in the region which includes Muslim-Christian, Shia-Sunni, Muslim-Jew, and Muslim versus Muslim conflicts (e.g., Fatah versus Hamas) (Svensson, 2013; Cockburn, 2015; Gerges, 2016).

However, the precursor violence to extremism in the Philippines has more to do with horizontal violence between political clans, land and other resource-based violence, and strings of clan feuds in previous years. The conclusion we get is that the spike in inter- and intra-religious violence is not the cause, but rather the outcome of the war in Marawi and the contingent extremist violence in many parts of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi.

Spikes in urban violence

There were more violent conflicts in the urban centers and surrounding barangays of the ARMM, including the cities of Cotabato in Maguindanao and Isabela in Basilan that are located within, but administratively separated from the ARMM. This trend began to emerge in

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[6] Ed Quitoriano, "In the aftermath of the Marawi Crisis and with Martial Law, what to do with illicit guns?", Inquirer.net, August 4, 2017, http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=Opinion&title=in-the-aftermath-of-the-marawi-crisis-and-with-martial-law-what-to-do-with-illicit-guns&id=149265; Jeannette I. Andrade, "Martial law effective in Mindanao—Bato", Inquirer.net, January 5, 2018, http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/957616/martial-law-effective-in-mindanao-bato; Multi-Stakeholder Validation Groups, June 14, 29 and 30, 2018.

[7] "Cotabato City is safest place in Region 12", PTV News, January 31, 2018, http://www.ptvnews.ph/cotabato-city-safest-place-region-12/

the Conflict Alert database in 2014 and became more pronounced in 2016. However, the war in Marawi broke all precedents and demonstrated how a full-scale war could be transposed to an urban area.

Wide-scale urban violence is not new to the region though, examples of which are the burning of Jolo, Sulu in 1974 and the siege of Zamboanga City in 2013. However, the war in Marawi demonstrated how extremist violence in urban areas in the age of social media can produce more devastating effects and reach a much wider audience than previous conflicts.

Conflict strings
The distinctive nature of extremist violence in the Philippines, in contrast to the rest of the world, also underscores the multi-causal and parallel spread of conflict strings. Many of those affected by the Marawi conflict outlined strings of violence emanating from the 2012 Coco Rasuman pyramiding scam and various clan feuds that involved the Maute clan, including election-related violence before, during, and after the 2016 elections.

The evolution of stronger ties and alliances between drug lords and extremist groups and the seizure of elective office by many politicians engaged in the production and trade of illicit narcotics constitute some of the most important factors that led to strings of conflict that continue to this day.[8] These began in 2016 and intensified in the months leading to the siege of Marawi on May 23, 2017. Many case studies of multi-causal violence that produced strings of violence that led to extremism were reported in 2017.

Conflict trends
In terms of conflict incidence per capita, Basilan stayed ahead of Maguindanao in 2017. However, in absolute terms, Basilan fell to third place overall, trailing Lanao del Sur in second place and

Maguindanao in first place. In terms of conflict deaths per capita in 2017, Lanao del Sur rose to first from second in 2016 because of the Marawi outlier. Maguindanao was the second deadliest province per capita, as Basilan fell to third place.

The long view (2011 to 2017) on conflict incidence per capita suggests a steady trend with Basilan at first and Maguindanao at second. But Lanao del Sur climbed to third from the fourth spot. The order among the provinces for conflict deaths per capita over the past seven years saw Lanao del Sur take the first place as Basilan slid to second place and Maguindanao to third.

Causal trends
The most dramatic shift in the causal features of violence in 2017 is the increase in identity-based violence marching in step with political violence as the multi-causal source of violent extremism. Extremist violence pushed identity issues to the forefront, becoming the second top cause of conflict, whether in per capita or per kilometer terms.

The same features were witnessed in the case of conflict deaths per cause, as political violence and identity-based violence combined to make violent extremism the deadliest form of conflict in 2017. Meanwhile, shadow economy-related violence continued to hold pole position in terms of causes per capita and was third in terms of deaths per capita by main cause.

Temporal trends
The temporal trends over the past seven years were sustained and even reinforced by the eruption of war in Marawi in the month of May that lasted until the last quarter of 2017. The Marawi siege also coincided with violence that occurs during the enrollment period in May, prior to the opening of classes in June, and the period of Ramadhan (from May 27 to June 26, 2017), and the expected rise in violence during the pre-harvest season from July to September.

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[8] Ruth Abbey Gita, "Palace: Duterte has 'plan in mind' vs narco-politicians in Marawi rebellion", Sun.Star, September 25, 2017, https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/165931

Introduction

The year 2017 was a year of acknowledging hard truths—that no city or town nor ethnic or religious group was going to be safe from extremist violence, and that while the war in Marawi and in other places may be over, reconstruction and recovery would take far longer than expected and may even create new flashpoints.

It was a year to adjust and improve the Conflict Alert monitoring system to capture the shifts in the multi-causality of conflict, the dynamics of conflict, and the new alliances among armed actors in the Muslim Mindanao region. We refined the process of ascertaining the causes of conflict by further improving the typology of shadow economy issues, political issues, identity issues, governance issues, resource issues, and common crimes.[9] New categories have been added while some existing categories have been sharpened and clarified. To date there are 59 sub-categories of violence.

The dynamism and research capabilities of partner universities located in three strategic areas of Mindanao played an important and crucial role. They gathered police and newspaper reports in an adequate and timely manner to build and strengthen Conflict Alert's key sources of data in their respective areas of coverage. Western Mindanao State University in Zamboanga City covered Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi, and Isabela City; Notre Dame University covered Cotabato City and Maguindanao; and the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology in Iligan City covered Lanao del Sur.

The MSVGs helped enrich the database by validating incidents, providing additional incidents, and determining the causes of conflict of many incidents which were initially undetermined. The MSVGs secured the participation of local people from diverse backgrounds who knew about local conflicts and could provide the context and reasons behind conflict trends. Because of their efforts, the

[9] See Annex C for more details.

determination of the causes of conflict improved to 73% of the total incidents in 2017 from 65% in the previous year. **(See Figure 1)**. Meanwhile, the multi-causality of violence that was highlighted in the latest iteration of the database showed that 31% of incidents in 2017 were ascribed to multiple causes, up from just 16% in 2016.

For the 14,873 incidents collected over the 2011-2017 period, 64% were attributed to a cause or combination of causes, better than the 61% achieved for the 2011-2016 dataset. **(See Figure 2)**. Of this seven-year total, 19% were due to multiple causes, rising from 15%.

FIGURE 1: **Proportion of incidents with determined and undetermined cause, 2017**

27% Undertermined

42% Single cause

4,138 Total

31% Multiple causes
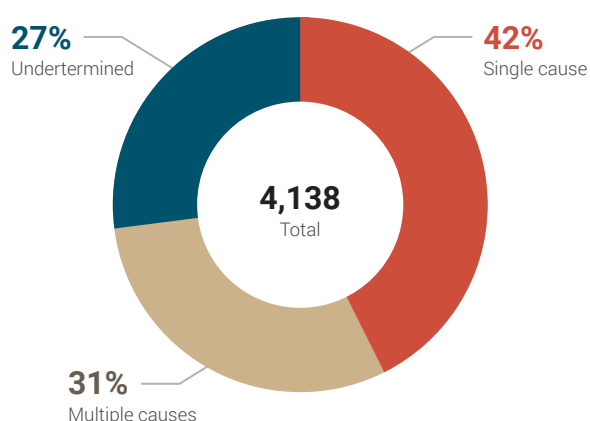
FIGURE 2: **Proportion of incidents with determined and undetermined cause, 2011-2017**

36% Undertermined

45% Single cause

14,873 Total

19% Multiple causes
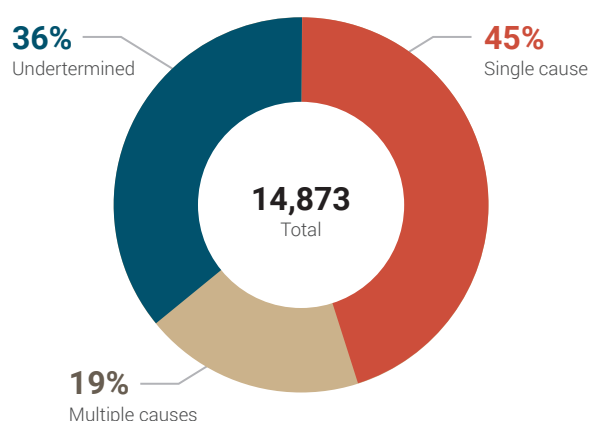
This report highlights the war in Marawi and how that event changed the conflict landscape of Muslim Mindanao. The data accounts for how violent extremism took hold in many parts of the region and fueled conflict. It begins with descriptive statistics on the incidence and human cost of conflict, followed by a discussion of the causes of conflict and shifts in the typology and nature of violence. It provides a robust record of the triggers of violent conflict: from the emergence of violent extremism to the conduct of State-led campaigns against illegal drugs, weapons, and other shadow economies. It examines violence against women and children as well as the urbanizing and temporal nature of conflict.

Analytical pieces on the cost of the Marawi war, the dynamics of violence in the so-called SPMS Box in Maguindanao, and illegal gambling are included, as well the latest rankings of the ARMM provinces in Alert's Violence Intensity Index.

The reign of terror in Marawi and beyond

Photo by **Mark Navales**

T

he levels of violence unleashed in Marawi and other parts of Mindanao in the past year will live long in the country's memory. Terror gripped the central and northern parts of the region and resonated across the country.

The explosion of a full-scale war in the Islamic City of Marawi on May 23, 2017 caught the attention of the nation as well as the regional and international community.

The city was ripped apart after violent extremists killed, bombed, burned, and later took over parts of the city and after the State responded with the same intensity, determination, and ferocity to regain control. The magnitude of violence was seen in the extent of damage in terms of lives lost, people injured and displaced, properties and businesses destroyed, and a population subdued by fear. The magnitude of violence had no rival in the region's recent history.

Coming on the heels of a vicious war against illegal drugs in 2016, the government sought to tamp out extremist violence in 2017, while simultaneously putting out other conflicts in other places in the ARMM, such as Maguindanao and Basilan. However, the epicenter of the government's campaign was Lanao del Sur, particularly the city of Marawi, where a confluence of illicit drugs and extremist violence had government security forces fully engaged since the last quarter of 2016.

Conflict incidence

An unexpected decline in the number of incidents

Violent conflicts in 2017 tallied 4,138, which was less than the total number recorded in 2016. However, the 2011-2017 panel data of Conflict Alert encompassing a total of 14,873 discrete cases showed that 2017 remains significant because the total number of incidents accounted for over a fourth of all the violence since 2011. **(See Figure 3)**.

The increased violence in the 2016-2017 period was driven by two factors. First, the government clampdown on the use and trade of illegal drugs and weapons, illegal gambling, and other illicit activities. Second, the upsurge in extremist violence as some rebel and criminal groups

pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or Daesh starting in 2014. This led to armed assaults against government forces and civilian communities in areas within and outside the ARMM prior to the war in Marawi.

The period coincided with the twists and turns in the peace process between the government and the MILF, the subsequent delays in the legislation of a BBL, and the brokering of alliances between armed groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group in Basilan, the BIFF in Maguindanao, and the Maute Group in Lanao del Sur.

FIGURE 3: Conflict incidence in ARMM
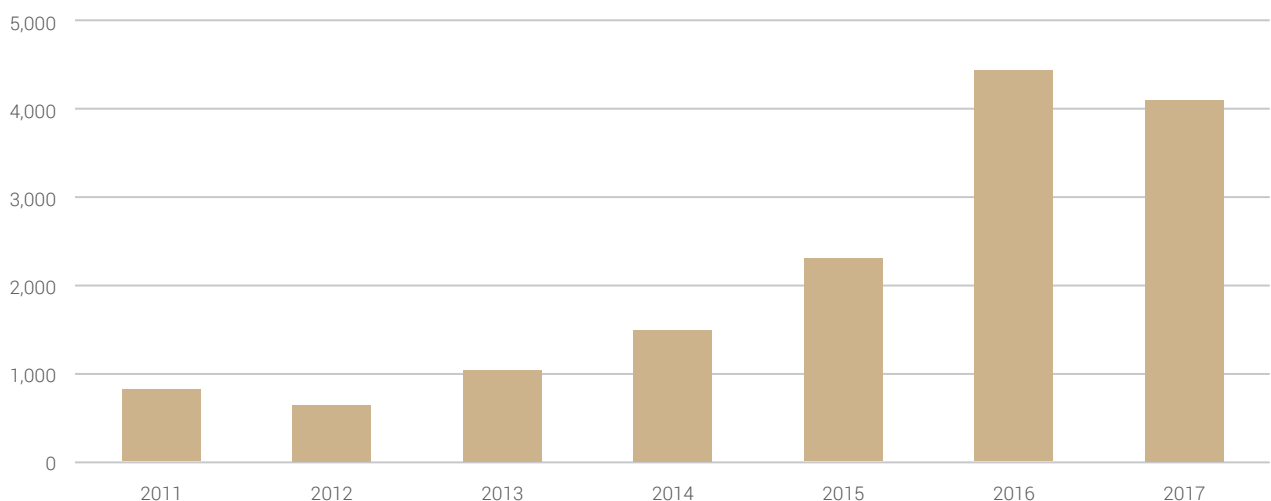
Conflict incidence

Marked changes in the distribution of conflict incidents

The number of conflict incidents fell in all provinces in Muslim Mindanao in 2017, except in Lanao del Sur, where it climbed by 83% to 942 incidents from 514 in 2016. Lanao del Sur climbed to second place in the number of incidents, overtaking Basilan, but remaining behind Maguindanao. **(See Figure 4)**.

Marawi City, the capital of Lanao del Sur, saw the number of conflict incidents rise to 533 in 2017 from 164 in 2016, most of which took place between May and October 2017. **(See Box 1)**. Lanao del Sur saw not only an explosion in extremist violence in Marawi but also more conflicts between clans, conflicts fueled by illegal guns, carjacking incidents, and gender-based violence.

The city of Cotabato within the province of Maguindanao experienced a 42% reduction in the number of conflict incidents in 2017 compared to the previous year. The city is included in the database because it is located within ARMM's most populous province, Maguindanao. Many offices of the ARMM regional government are also located in Cotabato even though the city is administratively under Region 12. The reduction in the number of incidents in Cotabato certainly contributed to the decline in conflict incidence in Maguindanao to 1,885 in 2017 from 2,358 in 2016.

Meanwhile, in the island provinces, conflict incidence fell by 21% to 630 from 796 in Basilan (including Isabela City); by 1% to 552 from 558 in Sulu; and by 4% to 129 from 135 in Tawi-Tawi.

The advent of martial law and its continued imposition saw local government units and security forces enforce daily curfews. The police and military also set up checkpoints that captured illicit weapons and put them out of use and ensured that various urban centers would not be infiltrated by armed groups intending to do a repeat of Marawi. Security was heightened across the ARMM, with government security forces keeping an eye on the BIFF in mainland Mindanao and the Abu Sayyaf Group in the island provinces. In sum, the imposition of martial law that was sparked by the events in Marawi helped reduce the number of incidents across the ARMM.

F I G U R E   4 :   **Conflict incidence by province**
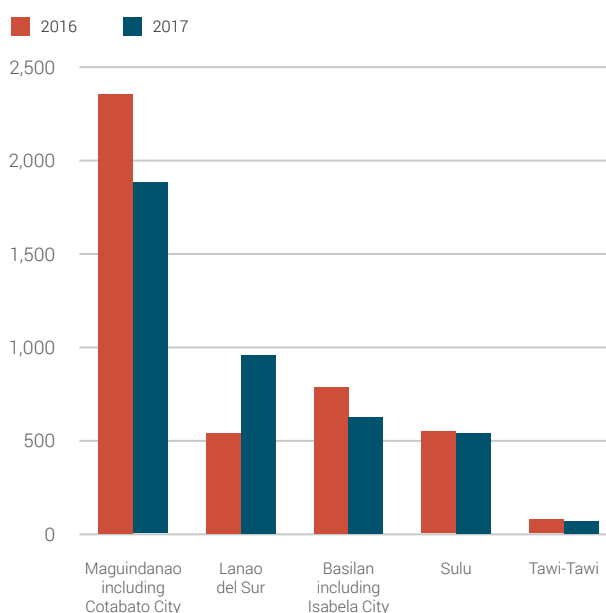
*A tricycle full of passengers stops for inspection at a military checkpoint in Maguindanao. Checkpoints have been set up in all entry and exit points after the imposition of martial law in Mindanao. Photo by **Mark Navales***

Maguindanao tallied the highest number of conflict incidents at 7,133 for the period 2011-2017, just a little under half of the total 14,873 for the whole region. Lanao del Sur was pushed to second place with 18% due to the increase in the number of incidents in 2017. Basilan and Sulu accounted for 17% and 13%, respectively, while Tawi-Tawi maintained the fifth ranking for the seventh straight year with just 4% of the total number of incidents. **(See Figure 5)**.

F I G U R E   5 : **Conflict incidence by province, 2011-2017**
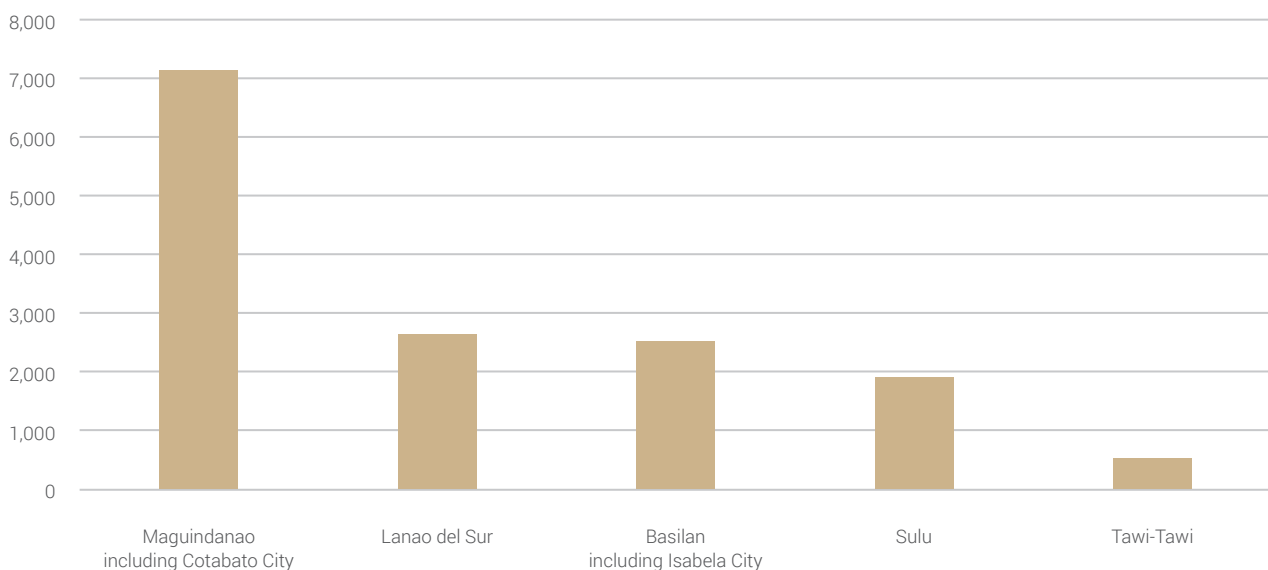
BOX 1
The Marawi war

Judy T. Gulane

The Islamic City of Marawi rests on the northern bank of Lake Lanao and is the hub of economic, social, political, and cultural activity in the province of Lanao del Sur. The city also hosts the main campus of the Mindanao State University, a center of higher education for students from all over Mindanao. Before the war in 2017, there was only one other time it was taken over by an armed group. In October 1973, a month after then President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in the Philippines, MNLF took over the city to mark the start of a rebellion to secede from the Philippines and establish an Islamic state. The MNLF siege lasted three days. Forty-five years later, extremist groups would take control of parts of the city and it would take the Philippine government five months to regain control. Residential, commercial, and government structures located in 24 barangays in the city center would be destroyed in the process.

Conflict Alert combined data from newspaper reports and from the military to come up with an estimate of the number of incidents and deaths in Marawi.[10] Of the 533 incidents that took place in the city in 2017, 87% were war-related. People killed during the year numbered 1,169, soaring from just 60 in 2016. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of the deaths were a direct result of the war.

The war was most intense in June and July. Many of the war-related deaths occurred during this period. Armed clashes between the military and the combined Maute Group and Abu Sayyaf Group slowed in August and September, before regaining intensity in October as the military sought to finally retake the city.

FIGURE A. **Conflict incidents and deaths in Marawi City, 2017**
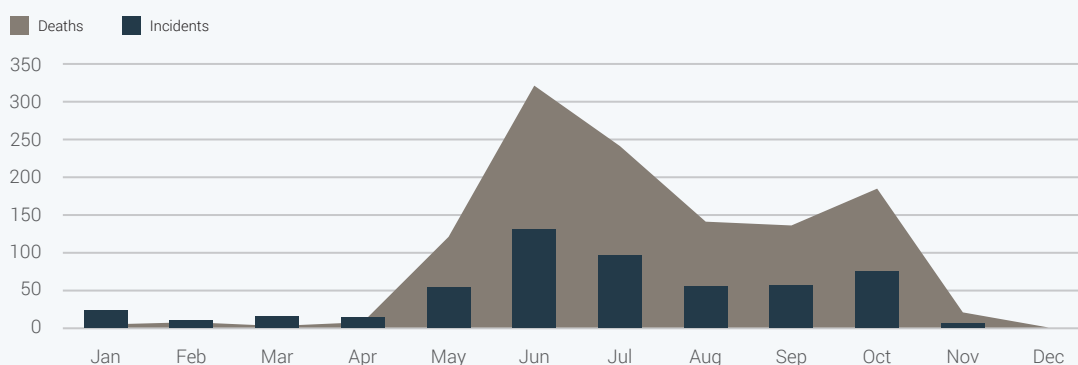
The war also resulted in the exodus of Marawi's residents to Iligan City, to municipalities in Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte, and to other places, where they stayed with relatives or in evacuation centers. Residents of surrounding municipalities were also affected due to a constriction in food supplies as the war dragged on. The war displaced 77,170 families or 353,921 persons, according to data from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (2017).

As of March 2018, some 28,000 families were able to return (DSWD, 2018), but not those who lived and worked in the city's most affected area—the commercial center that was decimated by burning and bombardment.

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[10] See Annex B for more details.

Conflict incidence

Comparable declines in conflict per capita and conflict per kilometer

Conflict per capita and per kilometer slid in 2017 compared to 2016, except in Lanao del Sur.[11] The province recorded 85 conflicts per 100,000 persons and 63 conflicts per 1,000 square kilometers, nearly doubling the 48 and 34 conflicts per capita and per kilometer, respectively, that were recorded in 2016. As a result, Lanao del Sur overtook Sulu in conflict per capita and Tawi-Tawi in conflict per kilometer in 2017.

In the other provinces, conflict per capita decreased to 130 from 168 in Basilan; to 121 from 156 in Maguindanao; to 63 from 66 in Sulu; and to 31 from 34 in Tawi-Tawi. In terms of conflict incidence per kilometer, the numbers fell to 186 from 232 in Maguindanao; to 171 from 216 in Basilan; to 121 from 123 in Sulu; and to 36 from 37 in Tawi-Tawi. **(See Figures 6-7)**.

FIGURE 6: Conflict incidence per 100,000 persons
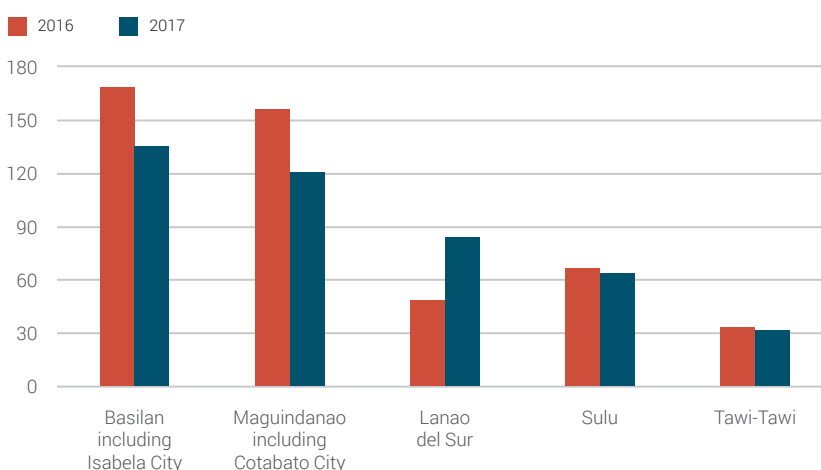
FIGURE 7: Conflict incidence per 1,000 sq. km.
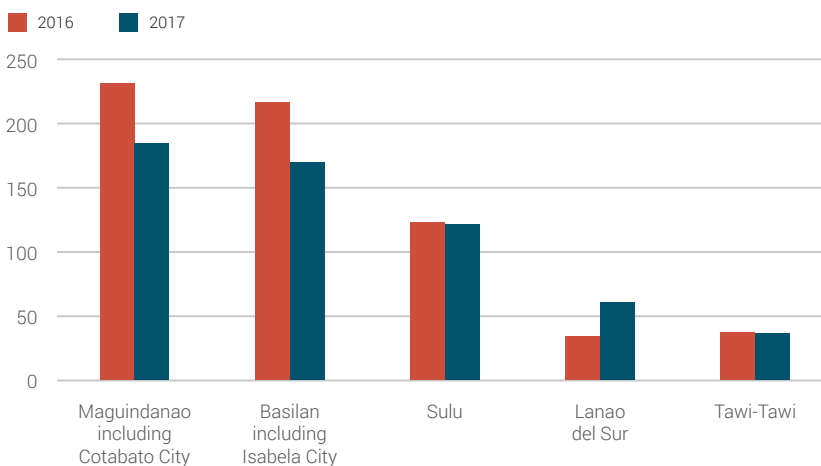
[11] Conflict per capita refers to the number of incidents per 100,000 population. Conflict per kilometer refers to the number of incidents per 1,000 square kilometers.

The 2011-2017 long view of conflict incidence per capita and per kilometer demonstrates a more subdued shift. Basilan and Maguindanao remained worse off than the others. In Basilan, there were 79 conflicts for every 100,000 persons and 99 conflicts for every 1,000 square kilometers.

Meanwhile, in Maguindanao, there were 69 conflicts per 100,000 persons and 100 conflicts per 1,000 square kilometers. **(See Figures 8-9)**. Both have suffered from the heavy presence of armed groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group and the BIFF, the presence of pernicious and

deadly shadow economies, violent crimes such as robberies, and gender-related violence.

The Marawi crisis likewise pushed Lanao del Sur above Sulu in conflict per capita, and Tawi-Tawi in terms of conflict per kilometer.

FIGURE 8: Conflict incidence per 100,000 persons

2011-2017 Average
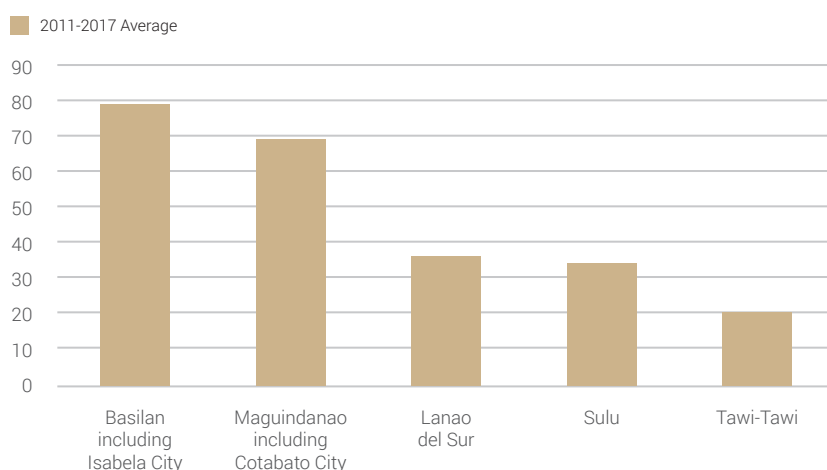
FIGURE 9: Conflict incidence per 1,000 sq. km.

2011-2017 Average

"
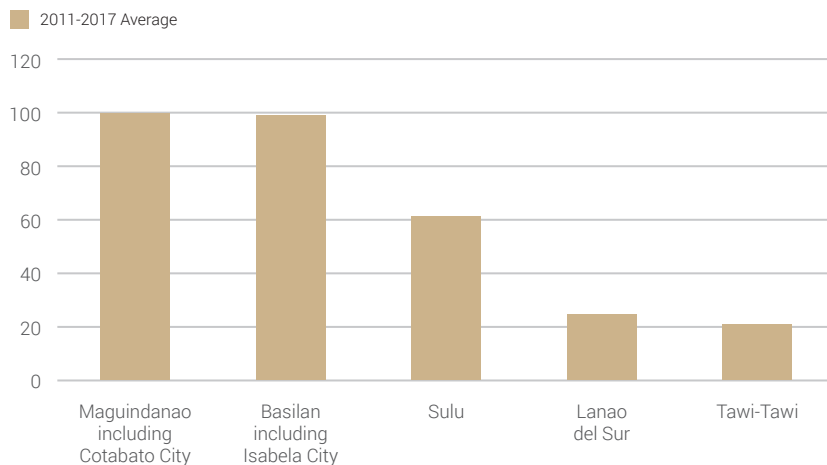
Conflict per capita and per kilometer slid in 2017 compared to 2016, except in Lanao del Sur.

BOX 2

Counting the cost of the Marawi war

Regine Margaret Ong

The five-month long armed conflict in Marawi waged by the Maute Group and Abu Sayyaf against Philippine security forces led to thousands killed and injured and the massive destruction of the city's commercial center. Measuring the costs of the war is essential to reconstruction and rehabilitation but leads to many difficulties because it involves social reparations that are not easily quantifiable. To get a sense of the extent of the costs, we shall divide them into direct and indirect costs.

Direct costs are those immediately induced by the conflict, such as military expenditure and the value of physical assets destroyed. Indirect costs, meanwhile, are those arising from the consequences of conflict, like foregone income. However, many indirect effects are intangible or are not directly measurable, though they influence productivity and morale. Among the intangible costs are pain, fear, and lack of confidence in institutions. Thus, the measurement will be a conservative estimate of the true economic costs (Ramos, 2016).

Applying the method suggested by Ramos guides our attempt to quantify the costs incurred from the Marawi conflict and to explain the additional costs from indirect damage.

Direct costs
Violent conflicts are a major impediment to the country's future development. Their effects could affect the economy long after they have ended.

The human cost of the Marawi conflict was approximately 1,100 deaths and 1,700 injuries.[12] Many Maranaos believe these numbers are conservative since they do not account for missing and sickly persons, which could increase human costs (Mueller, 2013).[13] These factors affect the economic channel of long-term capital accumulation and will therefore squeeze the city's labor productivity.

Damaged infrastructure caused by the fighting between extremist groups and the Philippine military includes residential buildings, business establishments, mosques, schools, hospitals, transport hubs, and utilities. According to government data, the estimated cost of both public and private infrastructure was P11 billion (TFBM, 2018).

At its height, the fighting displaced more than 350,000 Marawi residents, essentially emptying the city center. While many of the displaced stayed with their relatives, others went to evacuation centers. Altogether, expenses on resettling and caring for affected individuals, such as the construction of evacuation centers and relief programs, reached more than PhP4 billion, according to government data.[14]

A large fraction of economic costs was military expenditure by both the government and extremist groups. As of November 2017, the military had spent at least PhP6 billion in the war against pro-Islamic State terrorists.[15]

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[12] Kathleen de Villa, "Cost of war", Inquirer.net, October 21, 2017, http://business.inquirer.net/238985/cost-of-war

[13] "Philippines: Year after Marawi siege, families search for missing relatives", BenarNews, May 22, 2018, https://www.benarnews.org/english/news/philippine/marawi-anniversary-05222018131109.html

[14] Sofia Tomacruz, "How government has allocated funds for Marawi rehabilitation", Rappler, June 29, 2018, https://www.rappler.com/nation/205927-fund-allocations-marawi-rehabilitation-duterte-second-year

[15] Jee Y. Geronimo, "Gov't spent over P6 billion for Marawi crisis—DND", November 17, 2017, www.rappler.com/nation/188733-government-spent-6-billion-marawi-crisis

Although no number is available, it is believed that the extremist groups had utilized money from the shadow economies, including drug trafficking and kidnap-for-ransom, to fund their expenses.

Indirect costs

Violent conflict can engender many externalities that stall economic growth for the affected areas. The siege, seen at a macro-perspective, increased military expenses, which can crowd out investments and increase the national debt (Heo et al, 2016). At a micro-level, it results in foregone income due to lost jobs, poor health, and stalled education. For instance, a person exposed to violence as a child suffers a total permanent loss of income between 1.2% and 3.4% for each year exposed to violence (Mueller, 2013). Further, a person of school age exposed to violence is less likely to continue his or her education, yielding opportunity costs. This person could have earned more income if he or she finished high school rather than just elementary school (León, 2012; Sauler et al, 2017).

Meanwhile, Marawi's business people have incurred huge losses, which have led to other negative externalities. The conflict also affected those employed by Marawi businesses, slowing down investment and increasing the unemployment rate.

Violence also leads to spillovers in communities hosting the internally displaced persons (IDPs). While IDPs represent new resources, especially for the labor market, they might also constrict existing markets.

Ultimately, the direct costs add to more than PhP20 billion, which provides an indication of the minimum economic cost of the siege. But these costs escalate when we account for the indirect costs of conflict, such as crowding out and foregone income. Addressing both direct and indirect costs can expedite rehabilitation and prevent future conflict. The government, along with peacebuilding and development organizations, are initially focusing on alleviating the short-term costs within the conflict area. However, the true developmental consequences of conflict are best captured by concentrating on long-term solutions beyond the areas of conflict.

The typology of costs in the table below could have practical use in terms of determining a rehabilitation agenda for measuring the costs of conflict.

TABLE A. Typology of costs

Direct Cost	Short Term	Long Term	Most Affected Area	Beyond the Most Affected Area	Indirect Cost
Military expenditure	×		×	×	Crowding out of other investments from the government
Value of physical assets destroyed due to conflict	×	×	×		Disruption of education and health systems due to lack of formal institutions and fear for security
Human cost of conflict in terms of death and injury		×	×	×	Lost future streams of return from assets, such as forgone income and postponement of investments Further intensification of violence from resultant retaliatory actions by affected families
All resources expended on resettling and caring for individuals affected by the conflict	×	×	×	×	Costs of displacement for host communities Competition over natural resources such as water and land, including employment opportunities.

Human cost

The unprecedented rise in conflict deaths

Despite the decrease in the number of conflict incidents in Muslim Mindanao in 2017, the number of conflict deaths increased. The year 2017 stood out for the record number of conflict deaths and the highest year-on-year rate of increase in deaths since the Conflict Alert database was established. **(See Figure 10)**. A total of 2,260 persons were killed in violent conflict in 2017, 82% higher than the 1,241 in the previous year. Over half of the conflict deaths in 2017 occurred in Lanao del Sur, which saw a four-fold spike in the number of fatalities. Maguindanao and Sulu also saw more conflict deaths but nowhere near the scale seen in Lanao del Sur. **(See Figure 11)**.

F I G U R E   1 0 : **Conflict incidents and deaths in ARMM**
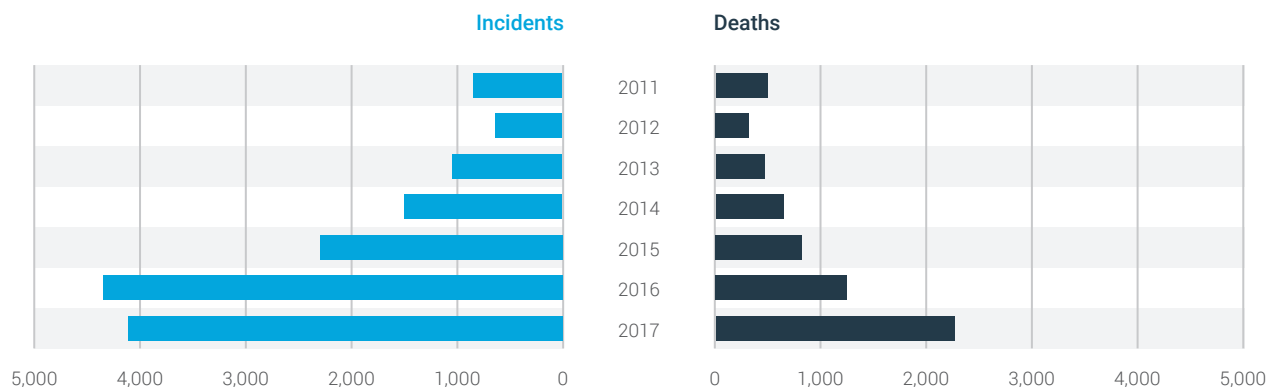
F I G U R E   1 1 : **Conflict deaths by province**
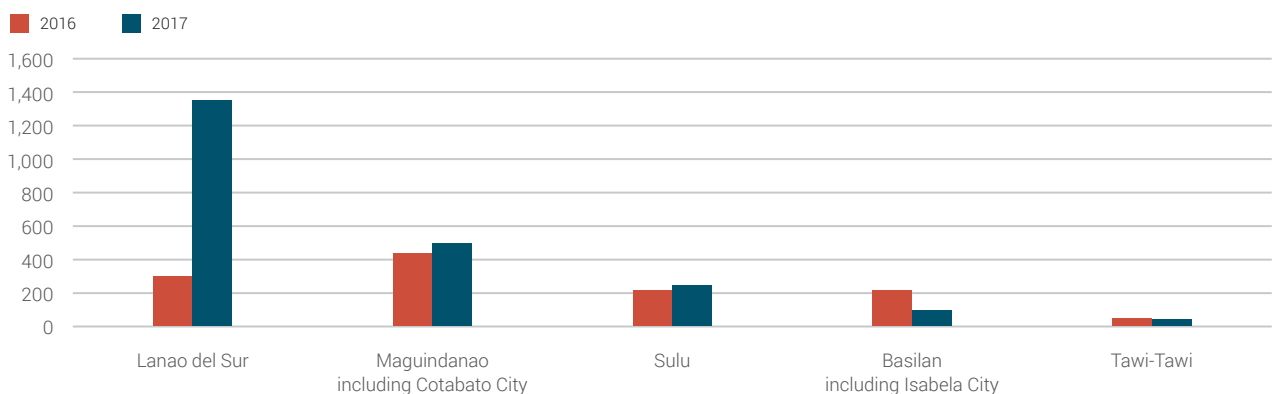
Total deaths in 2017 represented 36% of the total number of 6,320 conflict fatalities from 2011-2017. Over two-thirds of these fatalities were recorded in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur. **(See Figure 12)**.

F I G U R E 1 2 : **Conflict deaths by province, 2011-2017**
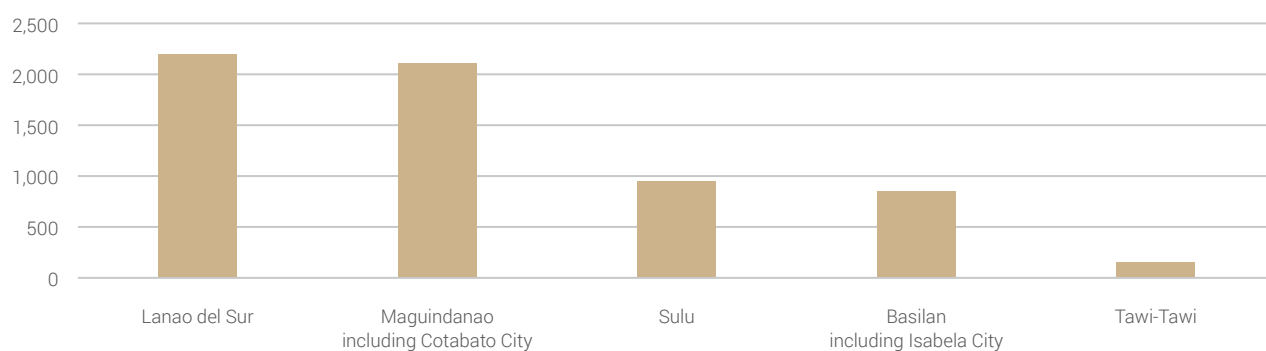
*Members of rescue teams arrange body bags containing the remains of people killed during the Marawi siege. Photo by **Ferdinandh Cabrera***

When comparing conflict incidents and deaths per province, we see in **Figure 13** that in 2017 Lanao del Sur had more than double the number of deaths than Maguindanao, though Maguindanao had more conflict incidents.

Conflict incidents and deaths by province, 2017

Incidents · Deaths
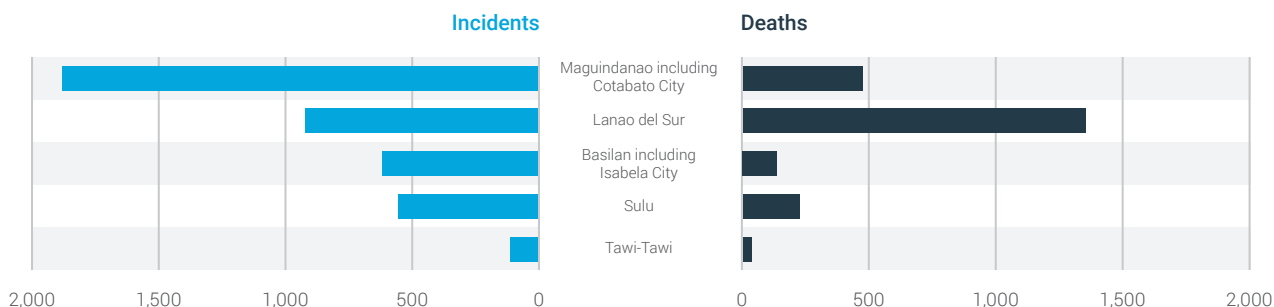
In terms of conflict deaths per capita, Lanao del Sur also posted a higher count compared to the year before.[16] There were 123 conflict deaths per 100,000 persons in 2017, shooting up from 29 in 2016. Maguindanao also saw an increase—to 32 from 29. As for Sulu, the 26 conflict deaths it recorded was unchanged from 2016. On the other hand, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi posted lower numbers: 28 from 47 and 9 from 11, respectively. **(See Figure 14)**.

F I G U R E   1 4 : **Conflict deaths per 100,000 persons**
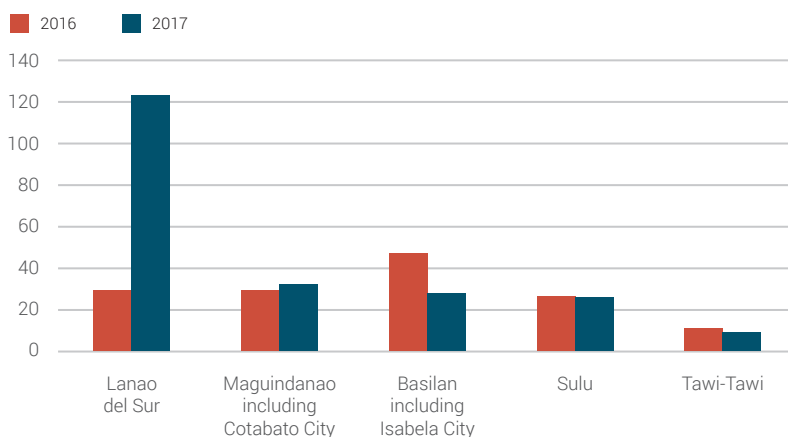
Conflict deaths per kilometer in Lanao del Sur surged to 90 in 2017 from 21 in 2016. Sulu and Maguindanao also saw increases: to 51 from 49 for the former and to 49 from 44 for the latter. Meanwhile, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi recorded lower conflict deaths per kilometer counts in 2017: to 37 from 60 for Basilan and 10 from 13 for Tawi-Tawi. **(See Figure 15)**.

F I G U R E   1 5 : **Conflict deaths per 1,000 sq. km.**

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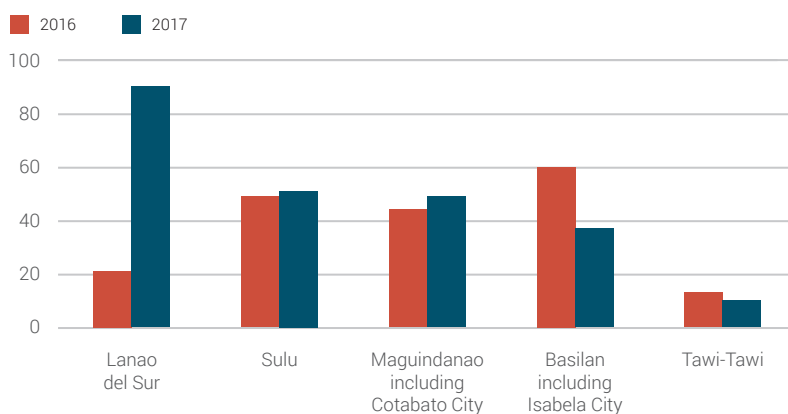
[16] Conflict deaths per capita refers to the number of deaths per 100,000 population. Conflict deaths per kilometer refers to the number of deaths per 1,000 square kilometers.

When it came to conflict deaths per capita from 2011 to 2017, Lanao del Sur's average of 29 was the highest compared to the other provinces. **(See Figure 16)**. Basilan led in deaths per kilometer with 33. **(See Figure 17)**.

FIGURE 16: **Conflict deaths per 100,000 persons**

2011-2017 Average
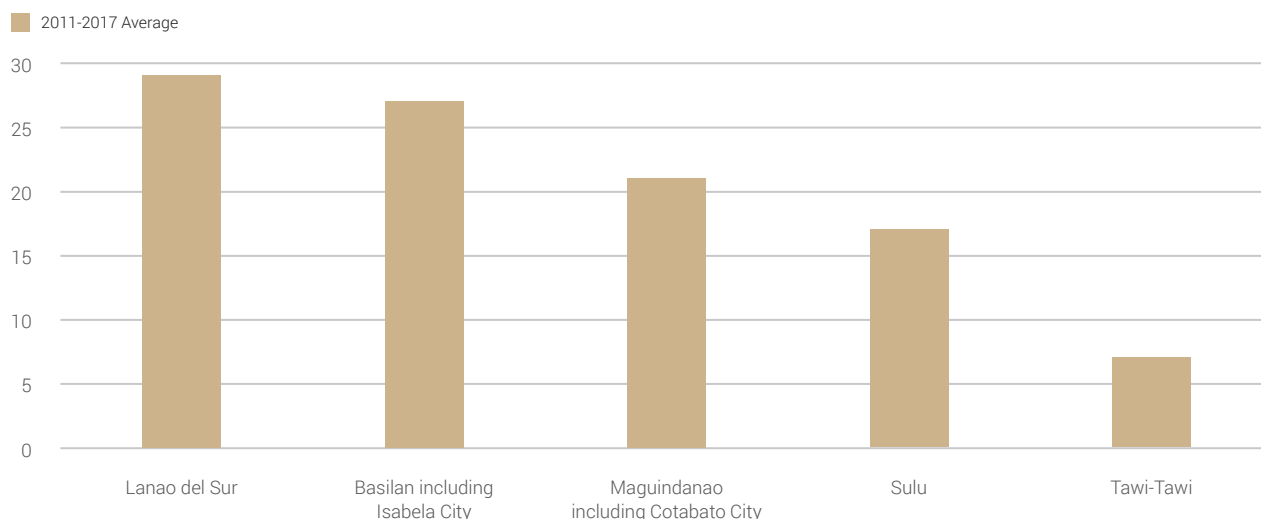
FIGURE 17: **Conflict deaths per 1,000 sq. km.**
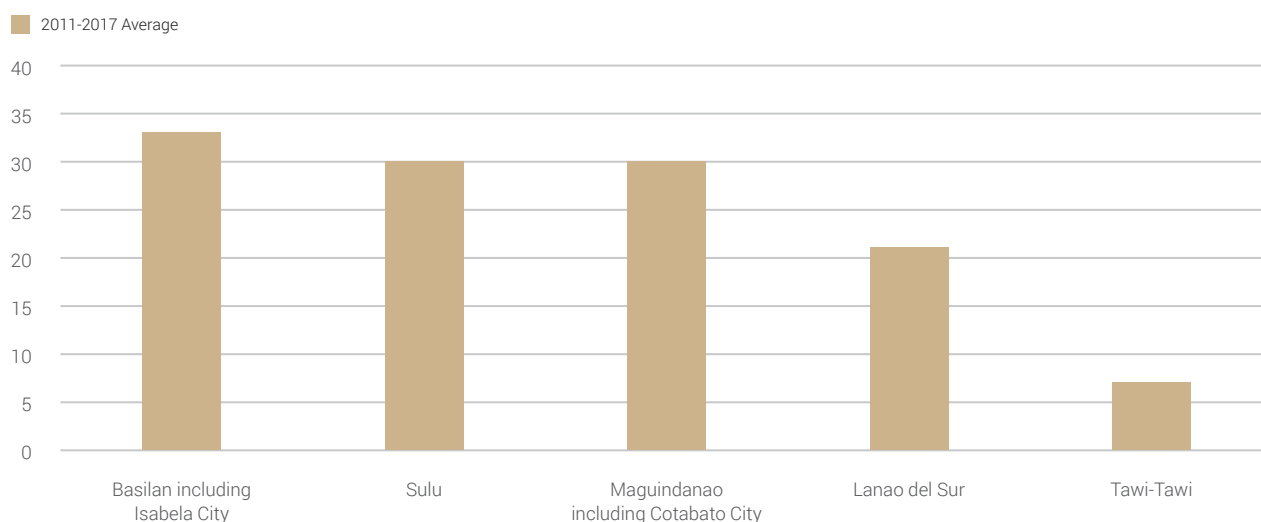
2011-2017 Average

"

The year 2017 stood out for the record number of conflict deaths and the highest year-on-year rate of increase in deaths since the Conflict Alert database was established.

BOX 3

Conflict magnitude explained

Angelo Casalan

What were the reasons behind the dramatic rise in the magnitude of conflict in 2017? Evidence from the Conflict Alert database pointed to at least three important factors. One, there was a marked increase in group attacks versus individual attacks. Two, there was an upsurge in the use of explosive devices. Three, armed groups demonstrated a remarkable facility at clustering in specific areas and an ability to quickly concentrate or disperse as the need arose.

Use of explosives in fatal conflict incidents rose in 2017

Guns remained the most commonly used weapon in all forms of deadly conflict in 2017, even though there was a 3% decline in their use in 2017 in contrast to 2016. However, the use of explosives rose by 45%. The phenomenon was not limited to the emergence of the Maute group and the war in Marawi. Removing this outlier still showed a similar trend in the use of explosives. **(See Tables B and C)**.

TABLE B. Number of deadly incidents by class of weapons used, ARMM, 2016-2017

	2016	2017	Year-on-year difference
Guns	634	614	-3%
Bladed weapons	32	34	6%
Explosives	20	29	45%
Others	10	14	40%

TABLE C. Number of deadly incidents by class of weapons used, ARMM (without Maute), 2016-2017

	2016	2017	Year-on-year difference
Guns	619	582	-6%
Bladed weapons	32	33	3%
Explosives	20	22	10%
Others	10	9	-10%

The 0.358 caliber gun was the most commonly used type of weapon in 2017, even though a 72% year-on-year decline was observed. The .30 rimfire/centerfire displayed the biggest rise in usage with a 12-fold increase. The same direction of growth rates and similar results were observed when the Maute was removed from the analysis. **(See Tables D and E)**.

T A B L E   D . **Number and type of guns used in deadly incidents, ARMM, 2016-2017**

Type of Gun	2016	2017	Year-on-year difference
0.358	4,005	1,109	-72%
.22 rimfire/centerfire	179	185	3%
.38 rimfire/centerfire	74	166	124%
0.6	6	28	367%
7mm	37	17	-54%
8mm	-	13	-
.30 rimfire/centerfire	1	12	1100%
6mm	11	5	-55%
0.357	3	4	33%
0.4	1	4	300%
0.5	3	3	0%
.17 rimfire/centerfire	10	0	-100%

T A B L E   E . **Number and type of guns used in deadly incidents, ARMM (without Maute), 2016-2017**

Type of Gun	2016	2017	Year-on-year difference
0.358	1,712	1,094	-36%
.22 rimfire/centerfire	177	184	4%
.38 rimfire/centerfire	74	146	97%
0.6	37	17	-54%
7mm	6	14	133%
8mm	1	12	1100%
.30 rimfire/centerfire	0	8	-
6mm	11	5	-55%
0.357	3	4	33%
0.4	1	3	200%
0.5	3	3	0%
.17 rimfire/centerfire	10	0	-100%

Shift to group from individual involvement in fatal conflict

It is logical to expect that fatal incidents arising from group actors or group attacks would outnumber individual actors and individual attacks. However, the year-on-year growth rate showed a staggering disparity that outclassed the level of group or individual violence in previous years. Group actors and attacks saw a five-fold increase, in contrast to individual actors and attacks that increased by only a fifth from the previous year. **(See Table F)**.

If we zero in on the deadly attacks perpetrated by violent extremists, we find the same trend. Group attacks rose almost five-fold. **(See Table G)**. It is important to note that the data does not distinguish between perpetrators and victims. Nonetheless it reflects the deadly outcomes from violent extremists that attack as a group, raising the fatalities in the process.

T A B L E F . Number of actors involved in all fatal conflict incidents, ARMM, 2016-2017

	2016	2017	2016-2017 difference
As individual	1,657	1,985	20%
As group	46,058	222,149	382%

T A B L E G . Number of actors involved in all fatal extremist violence incidents, ARMM, 2016-2017

	2016	2017	Year-on-year difference
As individual	169	404	139%
As group	44,961	221,815	393%

Civilian involvement in fatal incidents as a group displayed a five-fold spike from 2016 to 2017 compared to the almost negligible increase among individuals. Take note that this data does not classify whether the involved was the perpetrator or victim. The huge spike in civilian group actors may be explained by the outlier event and are in fact attributed to those affected by the Marawi siege. **(See Table H)**.

T A B L E H . Number of civilians involved in conflict incidents, ARMM, 2016-2017

	2016	2017	Year-on-year difference
As individual	998	1,006	1%
As group	40,812	220,313	440%

Maps

In 2017, Abu Sayyaf militants were slain in clashes in Piagapo, Lanao de Sur, an area identified with the Maute group, indicating a 'clustering' of extremist threat groups. The coalition between violent extremists activated a sharing of boundaries by groups engaged in collective violence.

AFFILIATION

🔴 Maute

🔵 ASG

⚫ BIFF

NUMBER OF ACTORS

◯ 200 or more

◯ 100-199

◯ 50-99

◯ Below 50

M A P   1 . **Threat groups involved in fatal incidents, mainland ARMM, 2016**
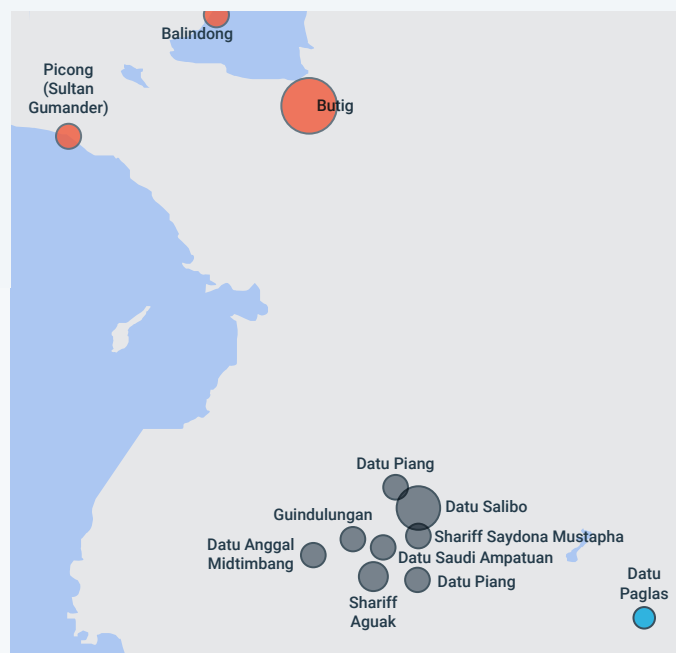
M A P   2 . **Threat groups involved in fatal incidents, mainland ARMM, 2017**
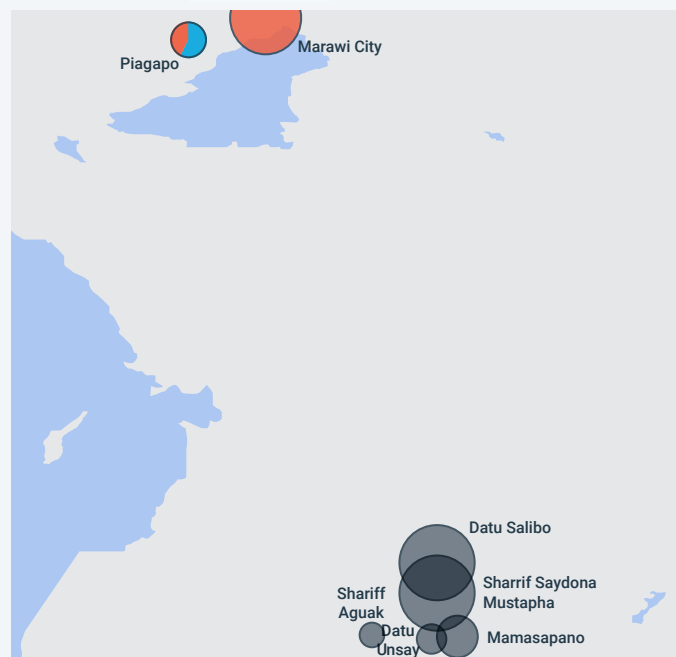
MAP 3. **Threat groups involved in fatal incidents, Basilan, 2016**

BASILAN

Hadji Mohammad Ajul
Tipo-Tipo
Ungkaya Pukan
Sumisip

Jolo
Patikul
Indanan
Talipao
SULU

TAWI-TAWI
Tandubas
Sitangkai

MAP 4. **Threat groups involved in fatal incidents, Basilan, 2017**

BASILAN

Maluso
Sumisip

Patikul
Indanan
Talipao
Old Panamao
Omar
SULU
Kalinganan Caluang

TAWI-TAWI

*A once-bustling commercial area of Marawi City lies in ruins. Photo by **Mark Navales***

Shift to urban from rural
The four-fold increase in deaths in urban areas was shaped by the urban nature and characteristics of the Marawi siege. The increase in human costs in urban area was accompanied by a 3.79% year-on-year decline in rural deaths, looking at all conflict causes. **(See Table I)**.

TABLE I. Number of deaths in rural and urban areas, ARMM, 2016-2017

	2016	2017	Year-on-year difference
Rural	924	889	-3.79%
Urban	317	1,371	332.49%

When zeroing in on extremist violence, both fatalities in rural and urban areas displayed year-on-year increases. This was a direct result of the surge in the number of deaths that were more pronounced (28-fold increase) in urban areas with respect to the Marawi siege. **(See Table J)**.

TABLE J. Number of deaths in extremist violence incidents in rural and urban areas, ARMM, 2016-2017

	2016	2017	Year-on-year difference
Rural	378	454	20%
Urban	39	1,109	2,744%

Conflict causes

Political and identity-related violence soars

The soaring numbers of multi-causal violence associated with identity and political conflicts far outweigh the consistently high numbers of shadow economy-related violence. Identity and political issues were the second and fourth top causes of conflicts, respectively, in 2017. **(See Figure 18 on page 26)**. Identity issues rose by 71% and political issues by nearly three-folds from 2016, surpassing the 3% increase in shadow economy issues. 'Religious conflict', an identity issue, and 'extremist violence', a political issue, were important components of the surge in multi-causal incidents in 2017.

Violent extremism would include violent actions emanating from the Maute Group, the Abu Sayyaf Group, and the BIFF. Religious-based conflict was negligible in the Conflict Alert database from 2011-2015, except for some actions linked to Al Qaeda. It emerged when local armed groups began identifying themselves as Daesh combatants and became involved in brutal acts targeting those who did not hold the same beliefs, whether Christian, Jew, or Muslim, etc.

The Marawi war was a clear case in point. The Maute Group and the former Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon spoke of their desire to establish a 'wilayat' or a province of ISIL, yet their actions were less about seizing territory and more about controlling a community or target population. Acts of violence ascribed to Ansar Al Khalifa, the Maute Group, and the Abu Sayyaf would increase in 2016 and further in 2017. As the number of incidents ascribed to this newly emerging inter- and intra-religious conflict rose, the number of rebellion-related incidents fell.

*ISIS flag recovered from the Mindanao State University campus in Marawi City after the siege. Photo by **Ferdinandh Cabrera***

BOX 4

Defining violent extremism

*Smoke rises from the ruins of a residential district in Marawi, shortly after the ISIS-affiliated Maute and Abu Sayyaf groups took over the city. Photo by **Ferdinandh Cabrera***

There is no common international definition of violent extremism (VE). In the VE literature the terms radicalization, terrorism, and violent extremism are often used interchangeably. USAID (2011), for example, broadly defines VE as **"advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic, or political objectives."** This definition is problematic and has often been criticized because the definition captures the characteristics and qualities of just about any rebel or insurgent group in conflict-stricken countries. The MNLF, MILF, and the CPP-NPA would all fall within this category.

Some definitions highlight certain ideologically-motivated acts of violence and its organizational links to the Middle East and North Africa. Hence, it is limited to violence coming from Islamists and especially to those who have pledged allegiance to Daesh. Other definitions underscore what VE is not, such as it is not a subnational or national rebellion, and it is less about seizing or controlling territory and more about controlling people's beliefs and practices.

International Alert Philippines defines VE in this report as an ideology that advocates, harnesses, and weaponizes religious and other cultural identities as instruments to justify and further violence against the 'other', in coordination or in alliance with such other organizations. In short, violent extremism is identity-based violence on steroids.

The type of violence produced by VE is referred to in this report as **'extremist violence,'** and includes other violent identity groups persecuting and excluding minority religious or identity-based organizations from larger society, such as the *MaBaTha* in Myanmar.

Akin to the theorizing on 'new-type' wars and conflicts propounded by Kaldor (1998), Alert agrees that violent extremism and its agents are more interested in controlling people rather than territory and would target and attack individuals and communities who do not hold or adhere to their beliefs and ideology, even if these targets come from the same religious background. Few subscribe to any subnational or separatist agenda or platform.

Conflict causes

The continuing resilience of shadow-economy violence

Conflicts within Muslim Mindanao's shadow economies caused over a third of the violence in 2017. These were primarily the trade and use of illicit weapons and drugs. Illicit weapons figured prominently in crime incidents or in conflicts between clans and individuals. Meanwhile, the Duterte government's campaign against illegal drugs remained unrelenting despite a short respite in January 2017 and October 2017. Buy-bust operations and the arrest of suspected drug peddlers and users continued, leading to the confiscation of drugs and drug paraphernalia as well as guns. **(See Figure 18)**.

FIGURE 18: **Conflict incidence by main cause**
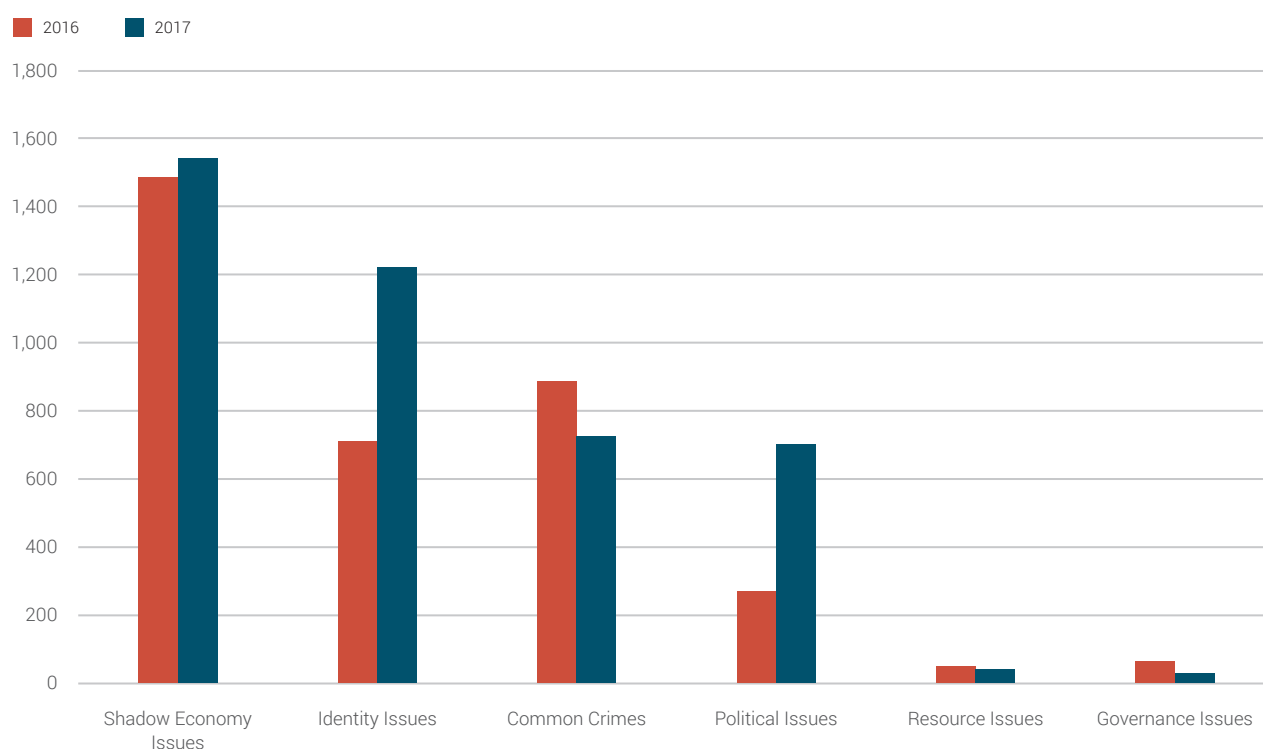
Conflict causes

Identity issues and other causes of violence

On top of the increase in extremist violence, violence attributed to gender, clan feuding, and conflicts due to grudges all contributed to the growing importance of identity-based violence as a major cause of conflict in Muslim Mindanao. Gender-based violence pertains mainly to domestic violence, while clan feuding is often rooted in land issues and political competition. Meanwhile, deaths from grudges often stem from intermittent misunderstandings and disputes between or among individuals and families that explode into violence.

While the number of incidents ascribed to shadow economy, identity issues, and political issues increased in 2017 from the previous year, those that were attributed to common crimes and to resource and governance issues fell.

There were less robberies in such hotspots such as Cotabato City. The number of land conflicts rose, but there were less conflicts emanating from other resource issues. There were also less conflicts caused by government decisions and policies.

Data from 2011 to 2017 confirmed the prevalence of shadow economy issues as causes of violent conflicts in Muslim Mindanao. In around two-fifths of incidents, they were the main causes. Identity issues were second, and common crimes were third, going ahead of political issues at fourth. **(See Figure 19)**. The assumption of the Duterte administration had set off violence related to its anti-illegal drug and weapons clampdowns. Data showed that conflicts due to shadow activities numbered

FIGURE 19: **Conflict incidence by main cause, 2011-2017**
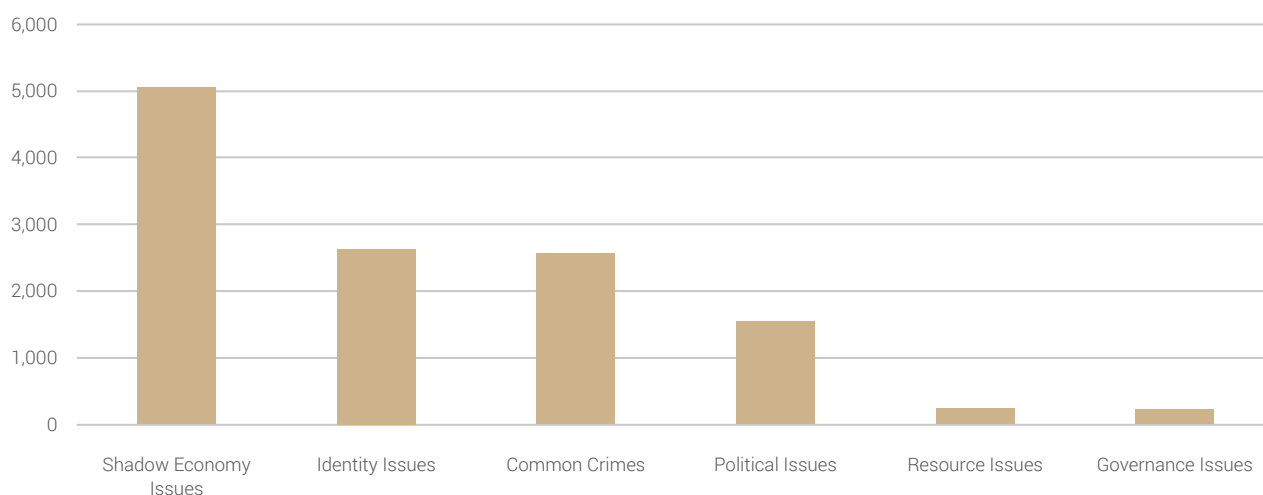
around 1,500 a year in the 2016-2017 period, a drastic change from around 400 a year in the previous five-year span.

Identity issues caused conflicts in over a fifth of the conflict incidents in the 2011-2017 period. However, the last two years showed how widespread gender-based violence was, particularly in the cities, while raising questions on whether or not traditional means to resolve such types of conflicts have shrouded their prevalence in the rural areas. Inter- and intra-religious conflicts, closely related to extremist violence, contributed to the upsurge in identity-based conflicts in the 2016-2017 period.

Common crimes were the source of violence in 21% of conflicts in the 2011-2017 period. These encompassed robberies, damage to properties, and conflicts precipitated by drunkenness.

Political issues caused just 13% of the violent conflicts in the 2011-2017 period but the mix of competition over elective positions, rebellion, and the dyad of religious conflict-extremist violence has created a deadly brew that has exacted a very high human cost among Muslim Mindanao's residents. **(See Figure 20)**.

Except for 2012, when the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro was signed between the government and the MILF, yearly tallies of politically-motivated conflicts have shown a trend of rising violence, with marked increases recorded during election years and in 2017, when extremist violence exploded in Marawi.

F I G U R E   2 0 : **Conflict deaths by main cause, 2011-2017**
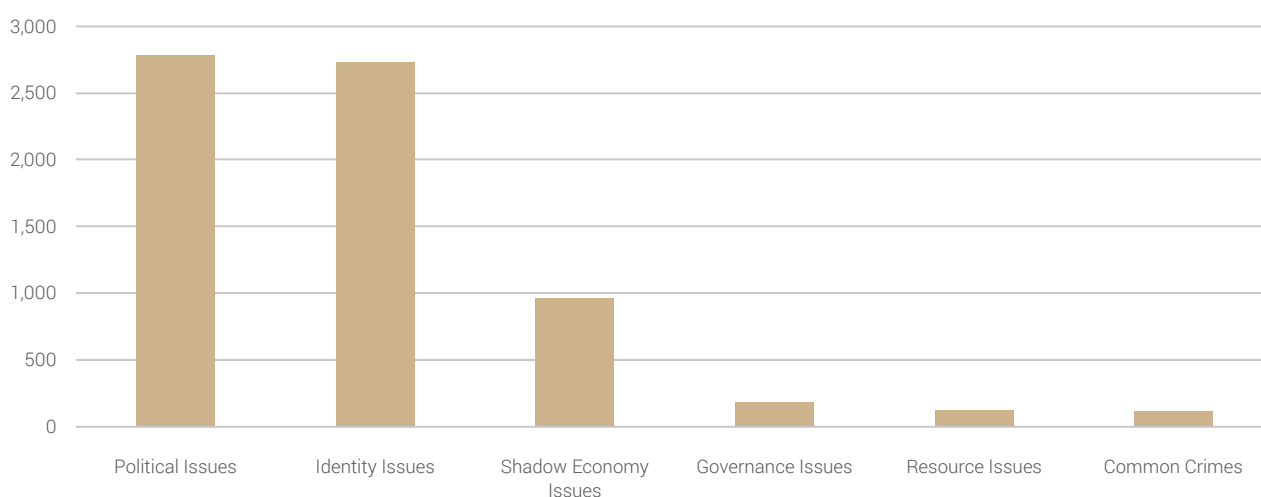
Conflict causes and conflict deaths

The divergence between conflict causes and conflict deaths in the following sideways graph dampens the importance of shadow economies and in turn places political and identity-based violence in the forefront of peacebuilding concerns. This is in stark contrast to 2016, though 2017 underlines the earlier finding that deaths due to illicit drug-related violence remained low in contrast to other parts of the Philippines. **(See Figure 21)**.

"

Deaths due to illicit drug-related violence remained low in contrast to the other parts of the Philippines.

FIGURE 21: **Conflict incidents and deaths by main cause**

2016   2017
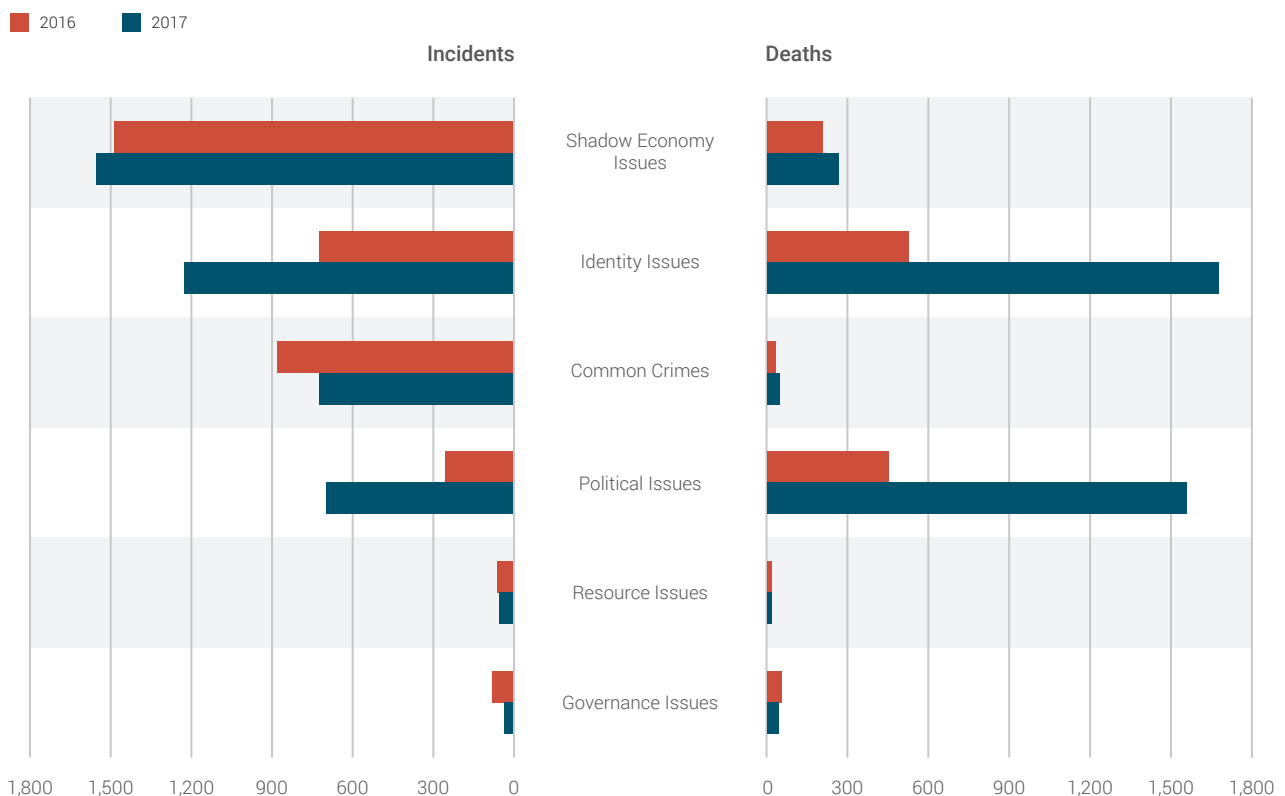
BOX 5

Multi-causal conflicts and conflict deaths

Nikki Philline C. de la Rosa and Judy T. Gulane

Evidence from Conflict Alert panel data has surfaced an important dimension of the causal dynamics of violent conflicts in Muslim Mindanao—that conflicts are increasingly multi-causal in nature, having a combination of two or more causes, rather than a singular cause.[17] This was amplified in 2017 when conflict incidents and deaths ascribed to the causal combination of political-identity violence surged, as extremist groups launched more attacks against government and civilian targets.

A total of 1,171 multi-causal conflicts claimed 1,704 lives in 2017, a sharp increase from 620 incidents and 550 fatalities in the previous year. **(See Figure B)**. Fifty-four percent (54%) of multi-causal incidents and 86% of conflict deaths in 2017 were due to identity-political causes—

specifically religious conflict-extremist violence—the kind perpetrated by armed groups such as the Maute Group, Abu Sayyaf Group, and the BIFF.

Incidents involving these groups nearly quintupled to 632 in 2017 from 134 in 2016, while the number of deaths nearly quadrupled to 1,466 from 377. The Maute Group and Abu Sayyaf Group battled with government forces in attempting to establish an ISIS province in Lanao del Sur, while the BIFF clashed with government forces and the MILF in Maguindanao.

Other incidents involving these groups were due to a combination of political, identity and shadow economy-related causes, providing evidence of the collusion of extremist groups

with those involved in illegal drugs, illicit weapons, kidnap-for-ransom, extortion, and carjacking, among others. Conflicts were also driven by contestation over resources, in particular, land, rents from implementation of government projects, and income streams from shadow activities.

Extremist groups were drawn into clan feuds in the scrum for resources, but evidence also shows that membership in these groups was prompted by pre-existing clan feuds. Belonging to an armed group accorded firepower and protection against other clans. Extremist groups, as in the case of Maute, instrumentalized identity-based conflicts to forge alliances that strengthened their base and widened their reach.

FIGURE B. **Number of multi-causal and single-cause conflicts and number of deaths from these incidents**

Legend:
- Multi-causal incidents
- Single-cause incidents
- Killed in multi-causal incidents
- Killed in single-cause incidents
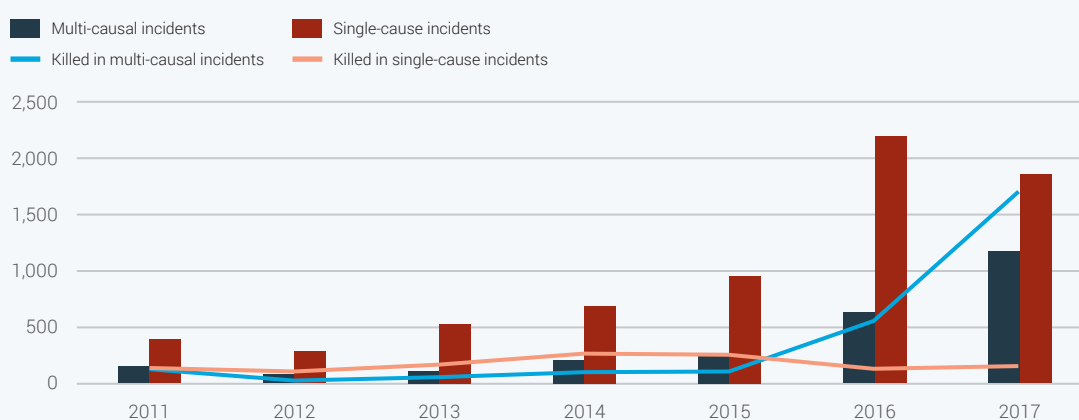
[17] Excluded are incidents under the same main cause. Examples are incidents tagged as sub-causes within a main category, e.g., illicit weapons and illegal drugs incidents under the shadow economy main cause. Incidents such as these are treated as single-cause incidents.

Other conflicts resulting in a high number of fatalities stemmed from a combination of identity-shadow economy causes. Feuds between individuals and clans, who had high-powered firearms at their disposal, resulted in a higher death toll in 2017 compared to the previous year. **(See Figure C)**.

While we can demarcate the magnitude of causal combinations to show that identity-political is highest, while identity-shadow economy is second, followed by governance-shadow economy, analysis indicates that the dangerous combination of all these multiple causes of violence enabled and strengthened Maute-ASG to stage their operations that led to the devastating war in Marawi.

F I G U R E   C . Top multi-causal combinations and number of deaths from these incidents

■ 2016   ■ 2017
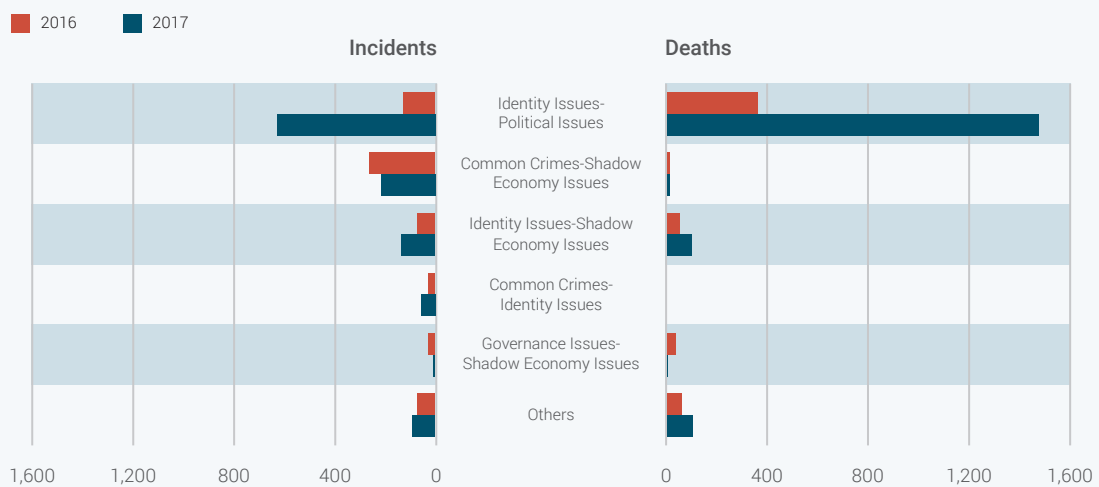
*Rebels walk along a dirt road in a community in Central Mindanao. Photo by **Keith Bacongco***

Weapons used and group actors in fatal identity-political issues

Fatal incidents driven by identity-political issues affected more people in 2017, as more explosives were used. There was a five-fold increase in the number of group actors—or those numbering five or more—and a two-fold rise in the number of individual actors. **(See Figure D)**. These were actors involved in the incidents, whether as suspected perpetrators or as victims.

Meanwhile, the use of explosives rose five-folds, as the number of guns and bladed weapons fell by 71 and 25%, respectively. Still, guns remained the most commonly used weapon in fatal identity-political incidents, counting 979 in 2017, albeit down from 3,390 in 2016. The five-month Marawi conflict, defined by the heavy use of bombs, and the clashes near the Liguasan Marsh in Maguindanao not only resulted in a massive death toll but also in the displacement of thousands of people.

FIGURE D. **Year-on-year change in the number of actors in fatal identity-political incidents, 2016-2017**
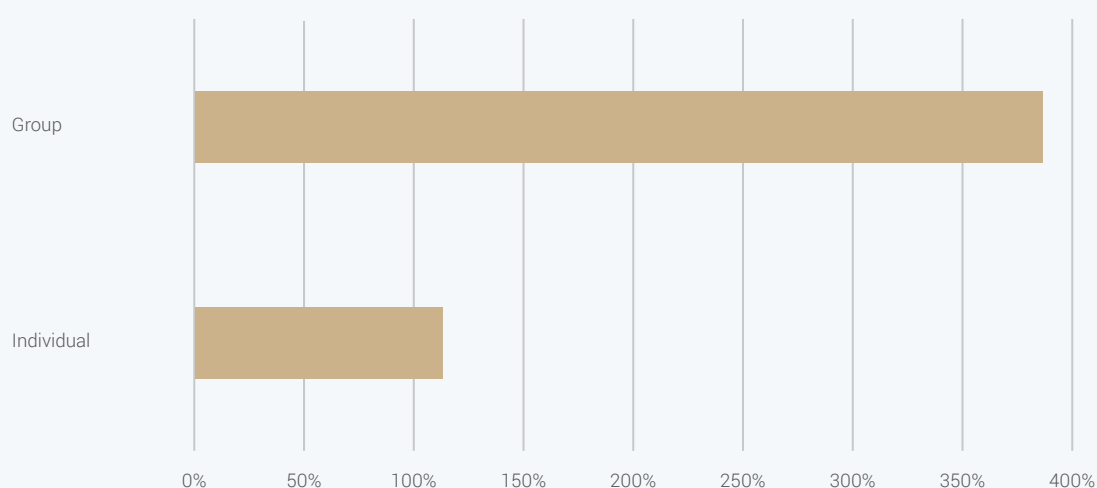
FIGURE E. **Year-on-year change in the number of weapons used in fatal identity-political incidents, 2016-2017**
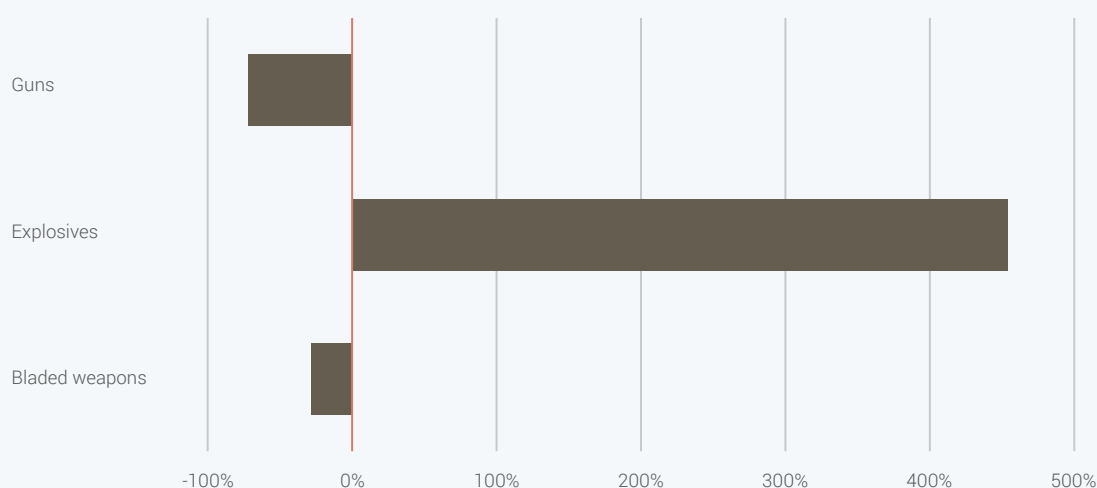
Are new vertical conflicts tagged to extremism merely semantics?

Shifts in the nature and character of vertical political conflict, also referred to as rebellion-related violence, started in 2016 with the emergence of violent extremist groups. These shifts exploded in the public consciousness in 2017 due to the war in Marawi. As armed groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group, Maute Group, and BIFF allied themselves with ISIL, the number of violent incidents ascribed to these groups dramatically increased, while the number of rebellion-related incidents fell. **(See Figure 22)**.

Is this merely a question of semantics? The 2017 data from Conflict Alert proves otherwise. There are distinct movements and actors that can be differentiated between rebels and extremist groups.

Conflict Alert distinguishes between 'rebellion' and 'extremist violence'. The first are conflicts between the state and armed groups intent on seizing national political power or those with subnational separatist or secessionist agendas. These groups include the NPA, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the MILF and the MNLF. Violent extremism is a second subset of vertical political violence but is separate and distinct from previous rebellions due to its nature and characteristics. **(See Box 4)**.

Extremist violence was highlighted in the 2016 Conflict Alert report but has now been ringfenced to demonstrate its growing influence and power. Actors here include factions of the Abu Sayyaf Group, the composite Dawlah Islamiya that includes the Maute Group and its remnants, and the BIFF.

The emergence of these groups and the transformation of some of their combatants from being

FIGURE 22: Rebellion and extremist violence incidents

Rebellion   Extremist Violence
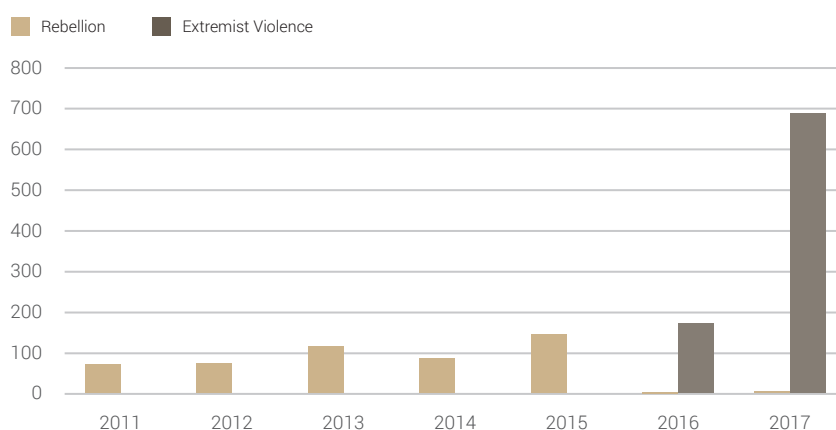
*MILF fighters patrol inside their operational territory in Central Mindanao. Photograph by **Keith Bacongco***

rebels or criminals to being extremists was swift. Their public image has swelled as well due to their fixation with set-piece positional battles that often entail a long siege and the slow but magnified use of terror.

The incidents captured in the Conflict Alert database portrayed more and fiercer battles between extremists and government security forces. Clashes zoomed to 688 in 2017, from 168 in 2016.

The deadliest among the groups was the Maute Group that was involved in 16 incidents in 2016. Four of these took place in Marawi City, and eight in Butig, Lanao del Sur, where the group was initially based. Bombings to regain control of Butig, where the Maute Group had occupied the old municipal hall, began in November 2016 and lasted until January 2017. Further clashes took place in Poona Bayabao in March, followed by Piagapo in April. By May, the violence had transferred to Marawi. Violent incidents attributed to the Maute Group/ Dawlah Islamiya in 2017 totaled 459, which is higher than all the actions taken in whole by other violent extremist groups in Mindanao.

The same is true for the BIFF and its widening reach and influence in the Bangsamoro mainland. From 75 incidents in 2016 the numbers rose to 136 in 2017, or an 81% increase. Certain periods in 2017 showed peaks of BIFF activity. There were 88 incidents in total from May to October, or when the Marawi siege was happening, and 21 incidents in December. **(See Figure 23)**.

F I G U R E 2 3 : **Incidents of violent extremism by group, province, and month**

Legend:
MG/DI - Lanao del Sur
BIFF - Maguindanao
MILF - Maguindanao
ASG - Sulu
ASG - Basilan
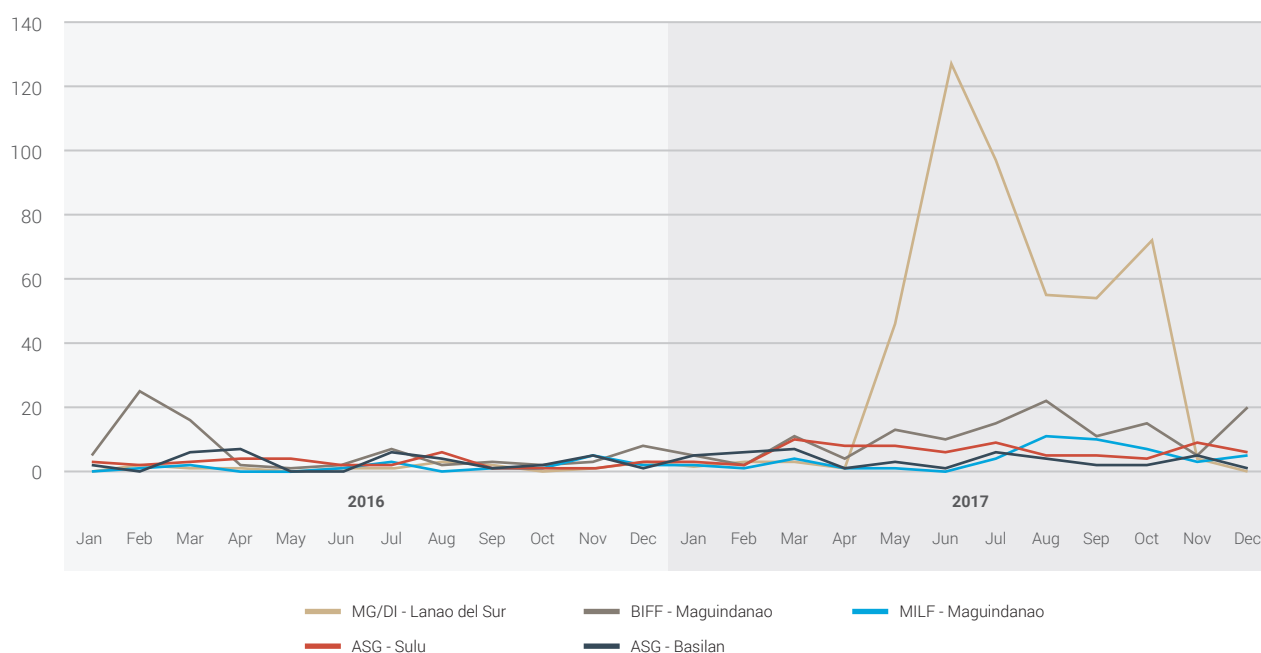
The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) faction in Basilan was involved in a total of 190 incidents from 2011 to 2017, while the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu tallied 222 incidents over a seven-year period. The ASG in Tawi-Tawi undertook more operations, growing from an average of two incidents per year from 2014 to 2016, to 10 incidents in 2017.

The big increase in Abu Sayyaf activities in the islands happened between 2016 to 2017. **(See Figure 23)**. Clashes between ASG and the military became more frequent, particularly in

Patikul, Indanan, and Talipao towns in Sulu. In Basilan, fighting was mostly focused in Sumisip municipality. Meanwhile, the increasing number of incidents involving the ASG in Tawi-Tawi was traced by members of Conflict Alert's MSVG to the displacement of the Sama tribe from land they had long occupied by Tausug groups in Sulu.

In contrast, there were only eight rebellion incidents in total in 2016 and 2017, one of which involved the MNLF, while five involved the MILF. The kinship ties that bound clan members

BOX 6

What's in the SPMS Box?

Judy T. Gulane

In 2017, eight municipalities in Maguindanao located beside the Liguasan Marsh saw more clashes between groups that had sworn allegiance to ISIS on the one hand and government forces or the MILF on the other. Collectively called the 'SPMS Box', the eight municipalities of Shariff Aguak, Datu Unsay, Datu Saudi-Ampatuan, Datu Salibo, Shariff Saydona Mustapha, Datu Piang, Rajah Buayan, and Mamasapano have become sites of unending violence.

The number of conflicts climbed by 11% to 273 in 2017 from 246 in 2016. Close to two-thirds were caused by political and identity issues, as three factions of the BIFF, brandishing the black flag of ISIS, clashed with government forces and with the MILF. Many of the clashes took place from May to October, at the same time when government forces tried to quell the threat of the combined Maute Group-Abu Sayyaf Group in Marawi City.

The 'SPMS Box' was a name coined by the ARMM government to ringfence the poor and conflict-affected communities in central Mindanao that are targeted in its peace and development programs, especially after the Mamasapano incident in January 2015. The SPMS Box was later used by the military to refer to the areas where they often conducted operations against the BIFF and other groups (NDU, 2017).

Gerrymandering in this part of Maguindanao was undertaken to capture more internal revenue

MAP 5. **SPMS Box**

N

Northern Kabuntalan

Kabuntalan

Datu Piang

Datu Odin Sinsuat

Talitay

Datu Salibo

Upi

Guindulungan

Datu Saudi-Ampatuan

Datu Unsay

Talayan

South Upi

Shariff Aguak

Datu Hoffer Ampatuan

Ampatuan
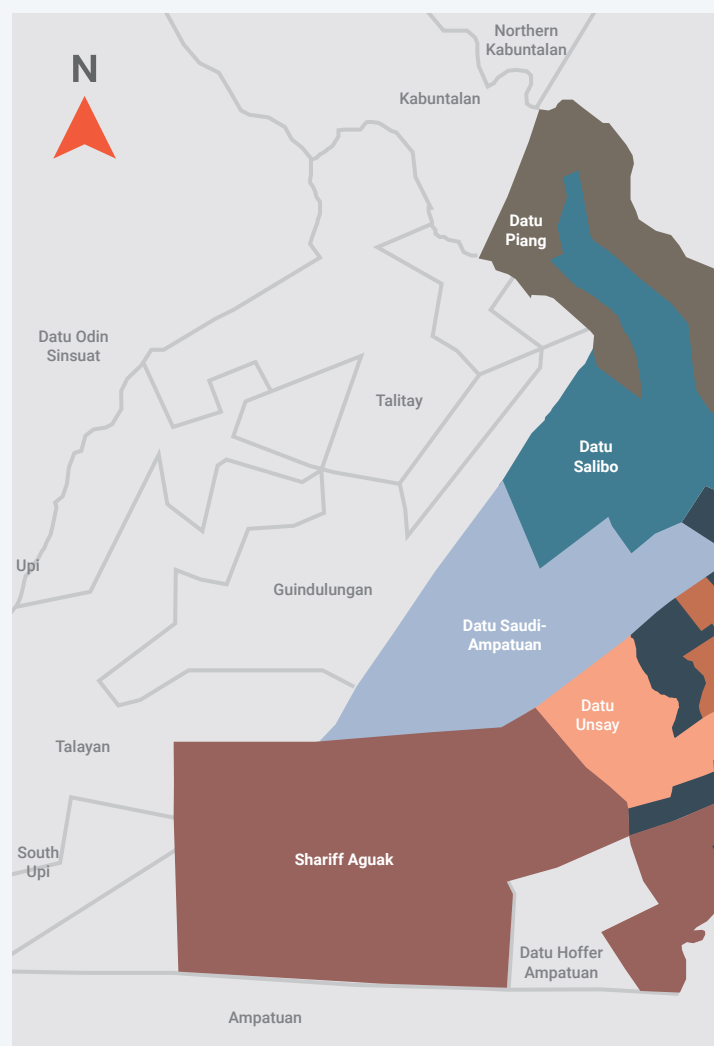
saw the shifting loyalties of combatants from one armed group to another. In one instance, MILF combatants based in the SPMS Box in Maguindanao joined their relatives in the BIFF in fighting government forces. (For more about the SPMS Box, see **Box 6**). In another, they clashed with government troops who had entered their territory in pursuit of the BIFF.

In 2017, soldiers on patrol clashed with the MILF in Al-Barka, Basilan, while in Lumbatan, Lanao del Sur, government forces engaged in a gun battle

with former MNLF combatants that retaliated for the dismantling of their camp. Tensions are also growing between clans and local communities because some MILF commanders such as Bravo in Lanao del Sur have tried to impose a different system of justice in the places where they operate. Police incident reports in 2017 revealed instances when Bravo's group made an 'arrest' and an 'abduction' of various so-called offenders of Islamic Law.

MAGUINDANAO

Midsayap

Pikit

Shariff
Saydona
Mustapha

Mamasapano

Rajah Buayan

Pagalungan

Sultan sa Barongis

Datu
Abdullah
Sangki

Lambayong

Scale 1:150,000

300   0   300   600   900   1,200   1,500 m
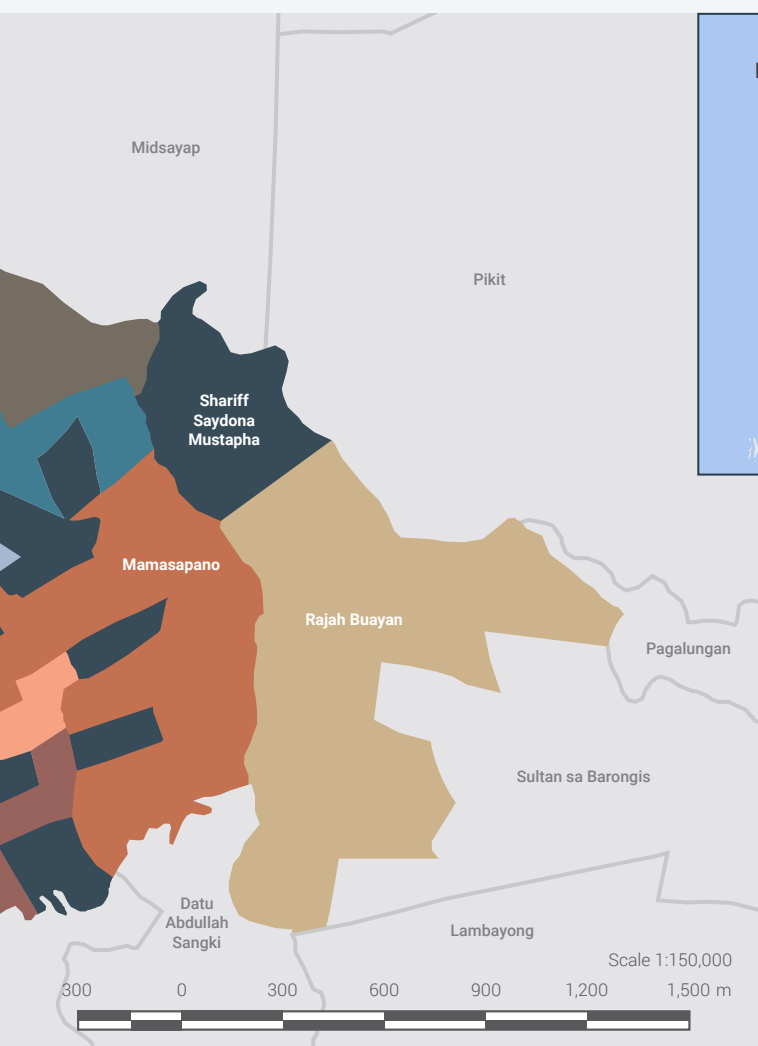
allotments from the central state, as well as to head off potential clan feuding between rivals who occupied adjacent territories. It has resulted in an odd patchwork of new towns emerging from the previous municipalities of Shariff Aguak and Datu Piang municipalities. Laws passed by the Regional Legislative Assembly of the ARMM carved out Datu Unsay and Mamasapano from Shariff Aguak; Datu Saudi-Ampatuan from Datu Piang; Datu Salibo from Datu Saudi-Ampatuan and Datu Piang; and Shariff Saydona Mustapha from Shariff Aguak, Mamasapano, and Datu Unsay. At the eastern periphery of the SPMS Box, Rajah Buayan was carved out from Sultan sa Barongis. To the east lies the conflict-prone communities surrounding the Liguasan Marsh,

more recently a known haven of the BIFF and private armed groups (PAGs).

The Box hosts the 105 and 118 Base Commands of the MILF as well as the BIFF, founded by Umbra Kato, former commander of the 105 Base Command, who broke away from the MILF in 2010. After Kato's death, the BIFF broke into three factions headed by commanders Bungos, Karialan, and Abu Toraife, who have pledged allegiance to ISIS. PAGs, such as that headed by an Ampatuan scion, are also present in the SPMS Box.

BIFF attacks increased dramatically in 2017, totaling 136 incidents that took place mostly in Datu Salibo, Shariff Aguak, and Datu Unsay. Targets of these attacks included police and military detachments. Civilians were inevitably affected, either caught in the crossfire, hit by improvised explosives, or forced to flee in the midst of aerial bombings.

Horizontal conflicts are also rampant in the SPMS Box. Clashes between MILF commanders or between MILF and BIFF commanders have been triggered by conflicts over land and control over informal economies, which either reinforce or escalate the violence from existing feuds or produce new cases of 'rido' or clan feuding.

Illicit weapons and illegal drugs are another cause of conflict. An active market in illegal guns exists in many areas within the SPMS box such as Mamasapano. A makeshift gun shop in Pagatin, a barangay that straddles the towns of Datu Salibo and Shariff Saydona Mustapha, produced and repaired firearms before it was overran by the military. A culture that conveys power and prestige to gun owners also persists (NDU, 2017).

The gun trade is also linked to the shadow economy in illegal drugs through a mutually reinforcing relationship lubricated by cash. Drugs find their way to the SPMS Box through the town of Datu Saudi-Ampatuan, which is adjacent to Talitay, a town known for being a transshipment point for illicit substances in Maguindanao.

The towns comprising the SPMS Box are understandably very poor given the conflict situation, with few opportunities for employment.

FIGURE F. **Shadow economies in drugs and weapons in the SPMS Box**
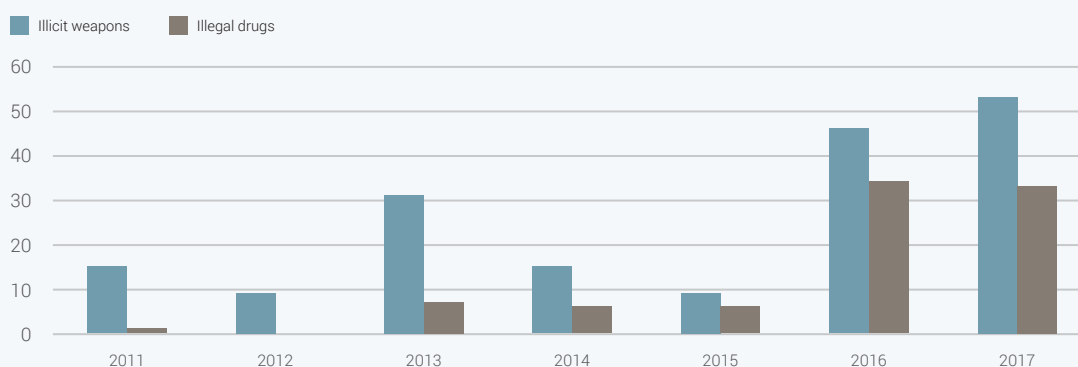
The Philippine Statistics Authority's (PSA) municipal-level poverty incidence estimates for 2012 reported that poverty incidence was lowest at 66% in Shariff Saydona Mustapha, and highest at 83% in Datu Saudi-Ampatuan (PSA, 2014). There is little comfort in these figures as they expose one of the worst levels of poverty incidence in the country.

Revenue produced by the local government units is low and inadequate in providing services to residents. Two municipalities created by the ARMM Regional Legislative Assembly have not been getting their internal revenue allotment from the national government because of failure to meet the criteria for creating municipalities set by Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991. These are Datu Salibo and Shariff Saydona Mustapha (ARMM, 2014).

The violence from shadow economies

Shadow economies continued to dominate the recorded causes of violent incidents in Muslim Mindanao as the Duterte government marked its second year in office in 2017. A crackdown on illicit drugs and guns continued, while a new campaign against illegal gambling was also launched.

Conflicts attributed to the trade and use of illegal drugs fell by 15% to 643 in 2017 from 759 in 2016, but still outnumbered those linked to other shadow activities. There were less incidents in the cities of Isabela and Cotabato as the campaign against illegal drugs plus the stringent security measures put in place during the martial law period discouraged this and other crimes. Cases of illicit drug-related violence declined both in Marawi and Sulu.

> "
> Conflicts attributed to the trade and use of illegal drugs fell by 15% in 2017 but still outnumbered those linked to other shadow activities.

FIGURE 24: **Top shadow economy issues**
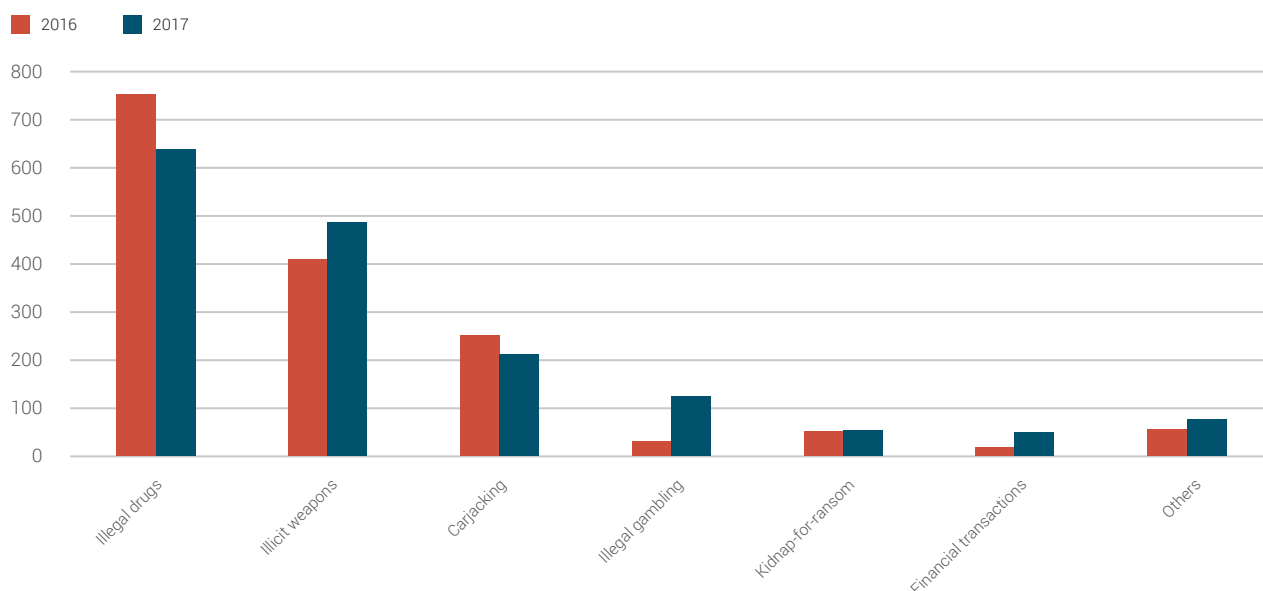
*The shadow economy in weapons is strongly linked to other shadow activities such as the illegal drug trade. Photograph by **Ferdinandh Cabrera***

The number of incidents attributed to illicit weapons use—guns and explosives—rose by around 19% to 489 in 2017 from 411 in 2016. More illicit weapons-related incidents were recorded in 2017 as the police (as well as the military) embarked on a program to confiscate illegal guns. Targeted were loose firearms in the possession of gun owners who failed to register their weapons but did not surrender them either. The increase was also due to the strong links between the shadow economy in weapons and other shadow economies such as illegal drugs, to clan and family feuding, and to violence between individuals due to

grudges. It was also used as instrument in criminal activities.

The forcible seizure of cars and motorcycles, herein lumped together under the term 'carjacking', also slid to 212 cases in 2017, a 16% reduction from the previous 252. There were less incidents in Cotabato City, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi, in contrast to the increases recorded in the rest of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, and Basilan, particularly Isabela City. However, the latest data remains significant because it showed the continued uptrend in carjacking cases from 2015 when 133 incidents were recorded. Carjacking ranked

third among the top shadow economy issues in both urban and rural areas.

"

Illegal gambling incidents increased by 328% in 2017 in the ARMM after a new state–led campaign was launched.

The war on illegal gambling

Ricardo Roy A. Lopez

Violent conflict linked to illegal gambling activities surged in 2017 as the Duterte government intensified its anti-illegal gambling campaign in the ARMM. Conducted alongside the drive against illegal drugs and weapons, the anti-illegal gambling campaign saw spikes of violence in several areas targeted by the PNP as key sites in the illegal game industry.

FIGURE G. Illegal gambling incidents in ARMM

From only 32 incidents in 2016, illegal gambling incidents climbed to 137 incidents in 2017. **(See Figure G)**. The crackdown on illegal gambling resulted in 197 arrests, up from 34 in 2016, and the confiscation of bets and gambling paraphernalia. Nearly three-fourths of those detained were from Maguindanao and Sulu.
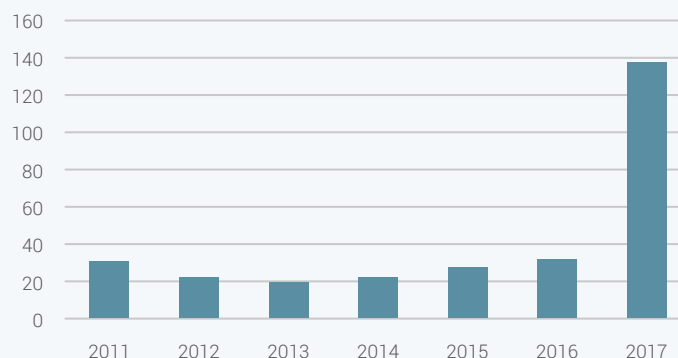
The war against illicit games was launched on the basis of Executive Order (EO) No. 13, Series of 2017, titled "Strengthening the Fight Against Illegal Gambling and Clarifying the Jurisdiction and Authority of Concerned Agencies in the Regulation and Licensing of Gambling and Online Gaming Facilities, and for Other Purposes." It was published on February 10, 2017.

EO 13 focused on gambling activities "not authorized or licensed by the government agency duly empowered by law or its charter to license or authorize the conduct of such games or conducted in a manner that violates the terms and conditions duly prescribed by said government agency."

President Rodrigo R. Duterte instructed the PNP and other law enforcement agencies to wage a similar campaign against illegal gambling as was being conducted against illegal drugs. The EO noted that gambling had become a "...widespread social menace and source of corruption, as it has become an influential factor in an individual's disregard for the value of dignified work, perseverance and thrift..." The EO did not state a deadline for the campaign.

The EO did not remove the regulatory functions assigned to the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO). PAGCOR is tasked to regulate casinos, electronic games, e-bingo, sports betting, poker games, and offshore games. PCSO supervises the daily lottery, including the 'Suertres Lotto' that was originally established to counter illegal numbers games in the Visayas and Mindanao and was initially exclusive to these areas.

Several freeport zones that were sites of online gambling operations such as the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority, Aurora Pacific Economic Zone Authority, and the Authority of the Freeport of Bataan were tasked to submit a consolidated progress report within six months of the EO's implementation and every six months after.

The months of February, August, and October 2017 saw significant spikes in violence attributed to the anti-illegal gambling campaign. **(See Figure H)**. Manifestations of violence included resistance to arrest and

FIGURE H. Illegal gambling incidents by month, 2017

the conduct of raids aimed at ferreting out illicit games, their players, and operators. The anti-illegal gambling drive decelerated in the March-May period, and by the end of July, then PNP Chief Ronald de la Rosa gave an August 15 deadline to regional police directors to finally stamp out illegal gambling activities and told them to dismiss police officials who performed poorly.[18] The numbers would increase in August and October, before gradually declining in the succeeding months.

The increase in violent incidents may be described as self-inflicted, or a product of the government's campaign, instead of turf wars among operators. The number of operations/incidents and arrests peaked in February when the EO was issued and again increased in August due to the imposed deadline.

It is also apparent that the anti-illegal gambling campaign was not sustained by a police force that had been overstretched from fighting the shadow economies in drugs and weapons. However, as in other campaigns against such illicit economies, the net effect was a disruption in survival or coping livelihoods without providing alternatives to those who depend on it.

Illegal gambling in the ARMM varies from illegal numbers games, to unlicensed slot machines, to illegal cockfighting. Illegal numbers games are popular in Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Cotabato City, and Isabela City. They are usually based on lotto games and on televised basketball games. The 'last two' game picks the winners based on the player's correct guess of the last two numbers of the winning lotto number combination or the final score of a basketball game. The 'last three' or 'suertres' works the same way, except that it utilizes the last three numbers instead of two.

In Sulu and the rest of Basilan, slot machines called 'bar-bar' are found on street corners. Featuring pictures of fruits, they entertain the children, who are their most avid customers, according to Conflict Alert's MSVG.[19] For this reason, the 'bar-bar' is hardly regarded as a form of illegal gambling, the MSVG members said. Also in Sulu, 'coin toss' has seen people place bets on which side of the coin will show after a toss.

In Maguindanao, 'video karera' and cockfighting are popular. Video karera is a digital form of horse betting that is often rigged as the computer is programmed to lessen the chances of the horse with a bet of winning. Illegal cockfighting is held in residential or vacant areas, its operators flouting Presidential Decree (PD) No. 449 that limits the conduct of such activities to licensed cockpits or in derbies on Sundays, legal holidays, and other special occasions. PD 449 was amended by PD 1310, which specified that only one cockpit per municipality or city is allowed. Two cockpits may be allowed provided the population of the city/municipality is more than 100,000.

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[18] Amita Legaspi, "PNP chief tells regional directors to end illegal gambling in 15 days", July 31, 2017, http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/620059/pnp-chief-tells-regional-directors-to-end-illegal-gambling-in-15-days/story/

[19] Multi-Stakeholder Validation Group, June 30, 2018.

Violence against women and children

*A mother and her female relatives weep for a dead teenage boy, who was hit in the head by a stray bullet while praying inside a mosque during the Marawi siege. Photo by **Ferdinandh Cabrera***

Gender-based conflicts continued to be among the leading sources of violence in Muslim Mindanao despite their number sliding to 305 in 2017 from 336 in the previous year. These encompassed forms of violence against women such as spousal or partner abuse, assault, and rape. Meanwhile, instances of child abuse in the form of physical and sexual abuse tallied 166 in 2017 from 110 in 2016. The two were largely urban-based, with most incidents reported from Isabela and Cotabato, the biggest cities in Muslim Mindanao, and in ARMM's more populated municipalities. **(See Figure 25)**.

FIGURE 25: **Incidents of violence against women and children**

■ 2016 ■ 2017
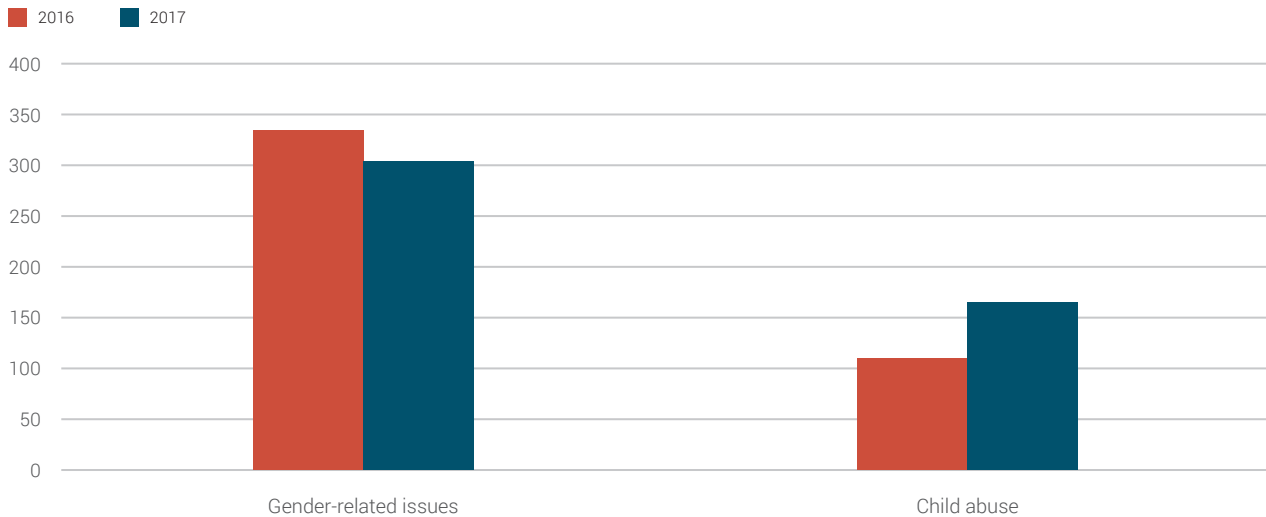
Isabela and Cotabato cities tagged a total of 152 gender-based violent incidents in 2017, a big drop from 232 in the previous year, and about as many as the number of incidents tallied elsewhere in the ARMM. In Lanao del Sur, there were 40 gender-based conflicts, up from 23 in the previous year, with 80% recorded in Wao municipality. In Maguindanao, there were 74 incidents, rising from 49, with 72% committed in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Parang, and Upi towns. In Sulu, the number of incidents climbed to 23, more

than double from 11, with 83% happening in Jolo.

Most of the abuses against children were reported in the cities of Isabela and Cotabato. There were 39 incidents in Isabela in 2017, more than double from the year before, while 68 were recorded in Cotabato, down from 86 in 2016. In Lanao, there were 22 incidents in 2017, all occurring in Wao. In Maguindanao, there were 29 cases, a five-fold increase, of which a total of 19 were recorded in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Parang, and Upi municipalities.

The police attributed the reduction in the number of gender-related cases in Isabela and Cotabato cities to the general reduction in crime resulting from the imposition of martial law. The police officers engaged in the women's and children's desks also conducted several meetings and consultations in communities on women's and children's rights.

Conflict Alert 2018 continues to improve the gathering of data on gender and child-related violence, while respecting the provision in Republic Act No. 9262, or Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004, on the confidentiality of records on such cases, including those reported to the barangay. The data may not be complete, but it can provide an approximation of the extent of the problem in Muslim Mindanao and, therefore, serve as guide for the crafting of appropriate responses.

"

Violence against women encompass spousal or partner abuse, assault, and rape. Child abuse cases take the form of physical and sexual abuse.

Urban conflicts

The Philippine Statistics Authority classifies a barangay as urban when it has a population of 5,000 or more; or there is at least one establishment with a minimum of 100 employees; or there are five or more establishments with a minimum of 10 employees and a minimum of five facilities within a two-kilometer radius from the barangay hall.

One recognizes at the outset that the classification of an urban barangay is dependent on the presence of micro and small enterprises, without any criteria referring to geographical location to a municipality or city, nor to a center of transport and trade. In more conventional terms, urban areas are often described as those areas surrounding cities, with jobs and occupations having graduated from agricultural to non-agricultural, and with a certain density in human structures.

The list of urban and rural barangays on the PSA website is based on the 2010 Census of Population and Housing (PSA, 2018). The same document gives the population per barangay based on the 2015 Census of Population and Housing, providing a way to update the list based on the 2010 census.

Barangays in the municipalities and cities in Maguindanao, Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, including Cotabato and Isabela cities, were classified as rural or urban using the PSA lists. If they were classified as rural as of 2010 but their population had reached 5,000 by 2015, then they were treated as urban.

ARMM's 2,447 rural barangays far outnumber the 125 urban barangays in the region. The shift in violent conflict incidence from rural to urban occurred in 2016. From 2011 to 2015, there were more rural conflicts, but by 2016, urban conflicts had exceeded rural conflicts by 8%. The trend was sustained in 2017 largely because of the war in Marawi. **(See Figure 26)**. The trend underscores the inexorable urbanizing nature of conflict and the importance of crafting conflict mitigation or resolution measures suited to urban areas and populations.

FIGURE 26: Violent conflicts in rural and urban areas
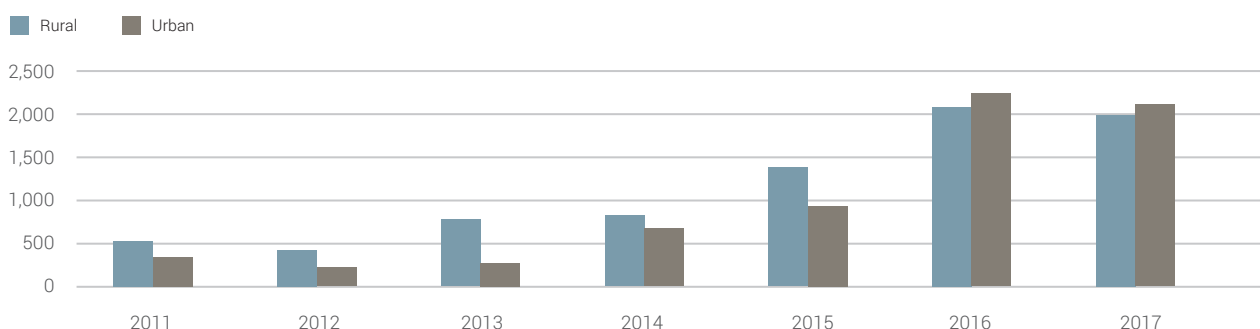
Many urban areas were besieged by common crimes and gender-related violence. There were more robberies, damage to properties, and child abuse cases. There were also more gender-related issues—domestic abuse, rape, and sexual harassment of women and girls.

Temporal nature of conflict

The month of May and the July to September period are distinguished by dramatic increases in conflict incidents. The month of May precedes the June school opening for elementary and high school students, and some colleges and universities. Cash expenditures increase in June due to tuition and school-related payments.

Periods with spikes in violence coincide with the holy month of Ramadan which, in the past five years, occurred either in May, June or July. The next increase in violence is seen in the August to September lean months prior to the main rice harvest season in October. Conflicts also tend to rise during the end of the year. These temporal characteristics were reinforced by the war in Marawi which began in May and ended in October 2017. **(See Figure 27)**.

The Marawi war resulted in a slight change in temporal trends according to the main causes of conflict. Whereas identity and political conflicts used to dip in June before rising the next month, they now tread a path of increasing violence beginning in May before decelerating by September. **(See Figure 28)**.

F I G U R E   2 7 :   **Conflict incidents by month, 2011-2017, aggregated**
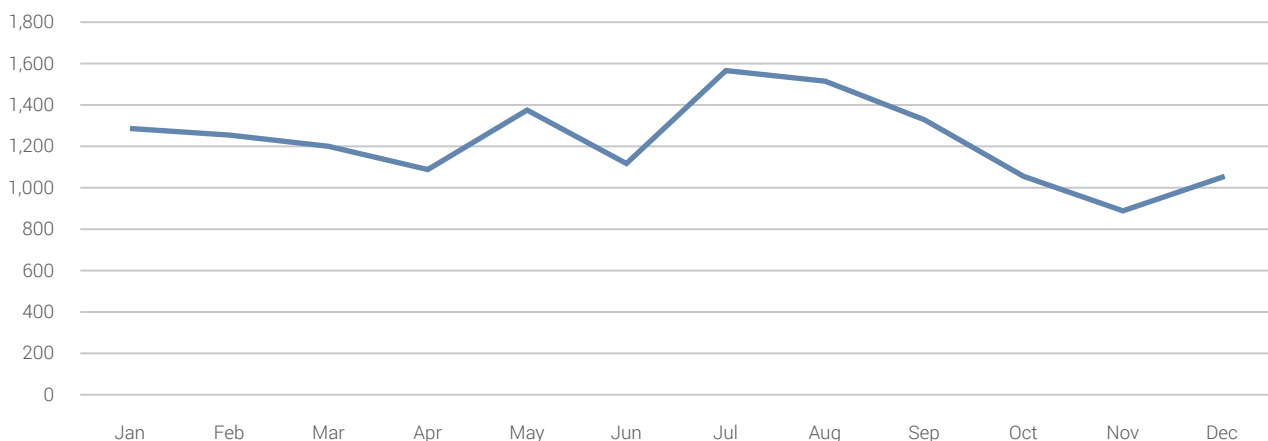
*Muslim students walk along the highway as they head to a nearby madrasah. Photograph by **Keith Bacongco***

FIGURE 28: Conflict incidents by main cause and month, 2011-2017, aggregated

Legend:
- Shadow Economy Issues
- Identity Issues
- Common Crimes
- Political Issues
- Resource Issues
- Governance Issues
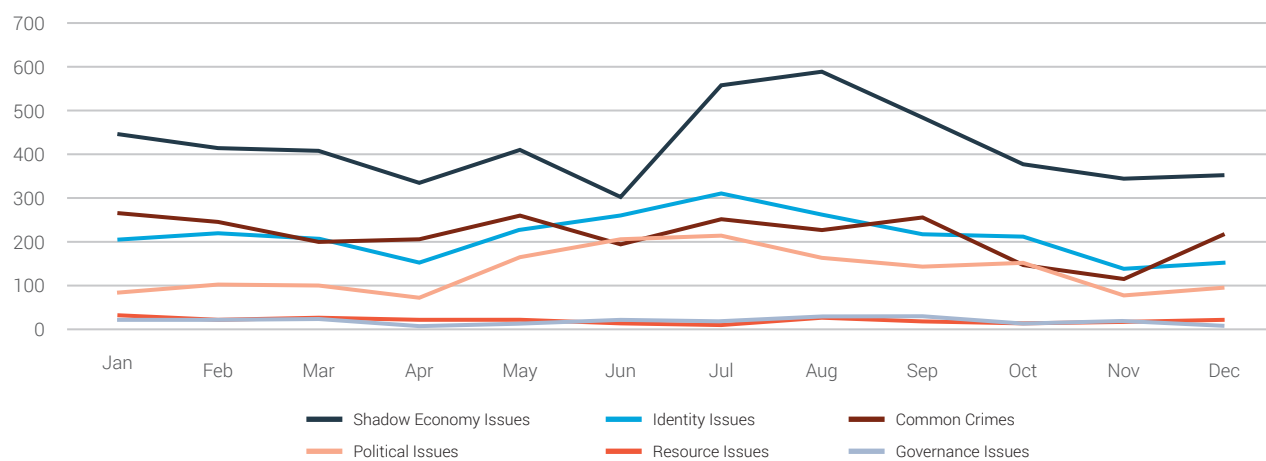
Twenty-four barangays in Marawi City were reduced to rubble during the fighting between the ISIS-affiliated Maute-Abu Sayyaf groups and government forces in 2017.
*Photo by **Ferdinandh Cabrera***

Violence intensity ranking: Lanao del Sur most violent in 2017

Judy T. Gulane

The Violence Intensity Index (VII) was developed by International Alert Philippines to measure the intensity of violent conflict in a locality within a given period. VII aggregates two dimensions of conflict: frequency and magnitude. Frequency refers to the number of violent conflicts while magnitude refers to the human cost of violent conflicts or the number of people killed, injured, and displaced.[20] The VII can help policy makers, planners, and peacebuilders gauge the exposure of an area to violent conflict and provides a guide for the targeting of interventions.

Based on the latest ranking of ARMM provinces according to the VII, Lanao del Sur was the most violent province in 2017 while Tawi-Tawi continued to be the least violent.

Lanao del Sur's score leapt to 4.75 in 2017 from 3.25 in 2016 as the Marawi war unleashed violence that resulted in the death and injury of over 1,000 individuals and the displacement of nearly 354,000 persons.[21] **(See Figure I)**. Clashes between the government's security forces and the alliance of the Maute Group and Abu Sayyaf Group also affected other parts of the province.

F I G U R E   I . Violence intensity index with displacement by province
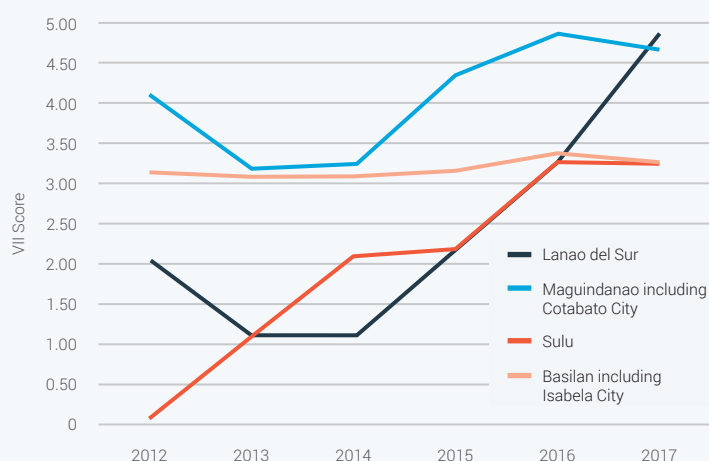
[20] Displacement data by year and province were sourced from UNHCR Philippines and Protection Cluster Philippines.

[21] Provinces' scores for 2016 and prior years were adjusted with the addition of 2017 data. The rankings were not affected.

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The 1.5-point year-on-year increase in Lanao del Sur's score was the highest posted by any province. Significant sources of violence in the province included extremist violence, bloody clan feuds, illicit drugs, and loose firearms.

The 1.5-point year-on-year increase in Lanao del Sur's score was the highest posted by any province since the VII rankings were issued and capped three years of increases that began in 2015. It pushed Lanao to first from third place in 2016. Extremist violence, bloody clan feuds, illicit drugs and loose firearms were significant sources of violence in the province.

For the first time, Maguindanao slid to second place. Its score of 4.64 reflected the lower number of violent conflicts and of people displaced and wounded by these conflicts that year. However, there were more conflict deaths due to more encounters between the government and BIFF. The province had a score of 4.75 in 2016.

At third was Sulu, scoring 3.23, while Basilan was fourth with 3.22. Sulu had ranked fourth in 2016

with 3.24 while Basilan was second with 3.36. The number of violent conflicts had dropped in the two provinces in 2017. Conflicts resulted in less wounded and displaced individuals in Sulu, although the number of fatalities rose amid more clashes between the government and Abu Sayyaf Group. In Basilan, deaths, injuries, and displacement all fell.

Tawi-Tawi scored 0.03 in 2017, down from 0.04 in 2016. The island province continued to post the lowest number of violent conflict incidents, deaths, and injuries among the five ARMM provinces, and had not experienced any displacement due to violent conflict from 2012 to 2017.

The five provinces occupied the same rankings when the VII was measured without displacement data. **(See Figure J)**.

FIGURE J. Violence intensity index without displacement by province

Legend:
- Lanao del Sur
- Maguindanao including Cotabato City
- Sulu
- Basilan including Isabela City
- Tawi-Tawi

Y-axis: VII Score (0, 0.10, 0.20, 0.30, 0.40, 0.50, 0.60, 0.70, 0.80)
X-axis: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017
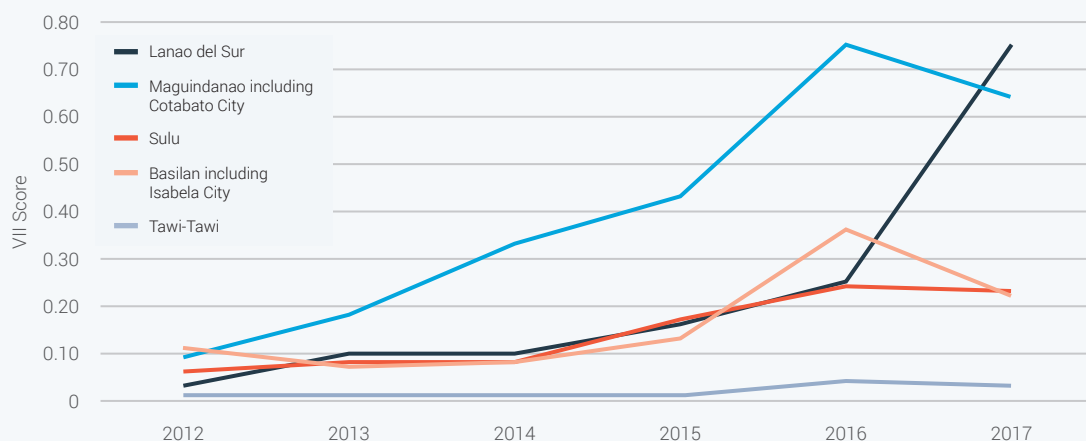
Most violent months

The year 2017 displayed new trends in terms of violence intensity by month. **(See Figure K)**. Conflicts and human costs in terms of deaths and injuries increased in March to May and further in June to August. These were longer periods with higher levels of violence than in 2016. Violence also intensified in October before falling in the next two months, unlike the previous year when it dipped in October and rose after. These periods coincided with more attacks by violent extremists in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao and more incidents related to the crackdown on the shadow economies in illegal drugs, weapons, and gambling.

The VII results demonstrate the impact of extremist violence, combined with the State's campaigns against illicit shadow economies, on ARMM's conflict landscape. Conflict has intensified in the ARMM, with longer periods of violence and higher human costs in terms of deaths and injuries. Displacement of people has become a protracted or recurring problem, particularly in towns affected by fighting between government troops and extremist groups.

The ARMM provinces need close monitoring. The Marawi war may be over, but Lanao del Sur remains under threat from remnants of the Dawlah Islamiya. So is Maguindanao, base of BIFF. The island provinces of Sulu and Basilan, even Tawi-Tawi, face the menace of the Abu Sayyaf. It is important that any interventions for these provinces are rooted in a keen understanding of what drives violence so it can be reduced. Interventions should also target the communities caught in the conflict.

F I G U R E K . **Violence intensity index without displacement, by month**
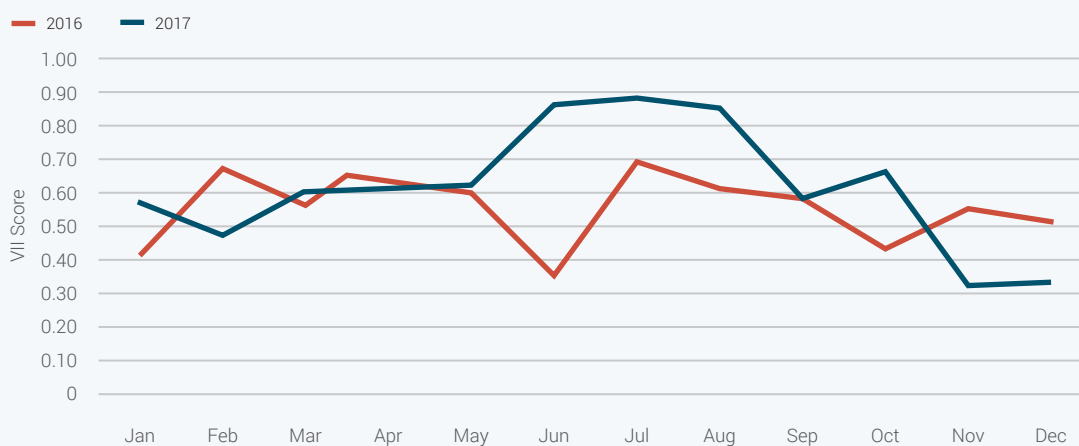
> The entire country witnessed the explosion of violence in Marawi at heights unseen in Mindanao's contemporary history. Is this the new normal and will there be spillovers in other places in Mindanao and beyond?

Conclusions and implications

"Great big wars in little places"[22]

The previous year was deadlier for peacebuilders and development workers alike. Resurgent conflict pushed back many of the peacebuilding initiatives and investments made by government and aid agencies for many years in places like Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao.[23]

Worse, more people were getting killed per incident of violence than at any time in the past. Rebellion-related violence associated with nationalist or sub-nationalist political projects continued to decline, as extremist violence increased. The ferocity of multi-causal conflict was laid bare, exposing the conflict strings that made violence endure beyond their due date.

It is easy to say that "it's going to get worse before it gets better," and to use this as a catch-phrase to explain what is happening in Mindanao. Yet the situation approximates what Nassim Nicholas Taleb (2007) called "black swans," or events with considerable impact that are least expected and which we often tend to simplify.

Indeed, we can frame the violence in 2017 as simply the necessary outcome of the political settlement and transition process in the Bangsamoro, which started long before the war in Marawi and the tragedy in Mamasapano. We may even find reasons in the delay to enact a Bangsamoro basic law, and the consequent deflation of the hopes and aspirations of the youth, both men and women, who expect genuine change. In many places in Mindanao, we see the recruitment and mobilization of the youth for extremist violence alongside opposite efforts to turn them away from violent conflict, though sadly, the former seems to be winning.

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[22] The phrase is borrowed from "Used To Be," a 1976 song by Stevie Wonder and Charlene.

[23] The city of Marawi in particular, including the SPMS Box in Maguindanao.

This prognosis will not please the government and neither will it satisfy those who worked tirelessly for the passage of a basic law to secure a durable peace, including International Alert. A victory has been won in Marawi and in the halls of Congress, yet the Bangsamoro people continue to feel uncertain and worried about their security and protection. The transition has done little to allay those fears.

This fragility was underlined by the events of the previous year. The entire country witnessed the explosion of violence at heights unseen in Mindanao's contemporary history. The death and destruction we witnessed in Marawi has turned it into our own 9-11, with nearly one and a half thousand souls lost in a short period of time in Marawi alone. Is this the new normal and will there be spillovers in other places in Mindanao and beyond?

There are at least four main conclusions that can be derived from the 2017 data that highlights the many challenges we face.

First, the intensity of violence turns our attention to the new actors and their resources. The ability of violent extremists to mount armed offensives over several months and their capacity to evade capture or death point to their access to funds from many sources, including shadow economies such as illicit drugs and weapons in the country as well as abroad. Their organizational skills suggest some longevity to their actions.

The survival and resilience of violent extremists in the harsh combat conditions they now face in the borders of Lanao del Sur or in the areas surrounding the Liguasan Marsh also reinforce the belief that the kinship ties and networks that were crucial in strengthening clan authority and dynamics have been utilized by the violent extremist themselves, enabling them to avoid capture and expand their resources.

Second, the Conflict Alert panel data on violent conflict validates our conclusion that the war in Marawi had less to do with the entry of foreign fighters and resources, nor their adherence to violent extremism of the type seen in MENA. Unlike these places, the precursor violence to extremism in Mindanao is not located in inter- or intra-religious polarization, but instead finds its origins in clan feuds over political resources, governance issues, and control over land. Religious polarization or inter- and intra-religious conflict was the product, rather than the origin, of violent extremism.

Third, the instrumentalization of identity in violent conflicts, or the use of identities to further

violence against the 'other', is becoming a key feature of political and social manipulation in Mindanao and beyond. An intensification in racist and discriminatory attitudes and actions is occurring in the heterogenous cities and municipalities of Mindanao, as well as in the Muslim enclaves of Metro Manila.

Fourth, we now realize that the conflict strings lens offers the best approach in understanding the reasons behind the sequential and parallel eruptions of violence that intermingled before and after the war in Marawi. Our conclusions are verified by the increase in multi-causal conflicts with identity-based violence at their core. This phenomenon is clearly expressed in the conflict strings that eventually led to an eruption in

extremist violence. The effects of contagion were not as significant as the epic strings of violence from illegal drugs, pyramiding scams, or the political infighting before and after the 2016 elections, in anticipating the emergence of violent extremism.

These conditions require the dismantling of previous strategies and the development of new ones that appeal to the newly emerging situation. Part of the recasting requires shifting the institutional frameworks, both formal and informal, that could bring development and reduce violent conflict, such as the use of traditional and hybrid rule systems that have worked to settle violent conflict at the local level.

*Residents take a breather amid remnants of their building inside a portion of Marawi City that was heavily damaged in the five-month conflict. Photo by **Manman Dejeto***

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The precursor violence to extremism in Mindanao is not located in inter- or intra-religious polarization, but instead finds its origins in clan feuds.

Time is running out. Experience shows that ignoring these issues means that people will not feel free to vote for their real choices during the upcoming plebiscite on the Bangsamoro Organic Law in January 2019 and the May 2019 mid-term elections, and will more likely, as in the past, follow the endorsements of their clans or the various rebel fronts. Martial law may provide some of the respite from violence that people desire, like it did in Maguindanao in 2009, or in Marawi in 2017, but it can also easily turn into a magnet for new and more violent flashpoints.

The implications are five-fold.

One, there is evidence that violent strings can be managed before they lead to extremism. Cutting

conflict strings requires focusing on multi-causal incidents of violence, which produce more conflict deaths than any other type of political violence. Sensitivity to how conflict strings unravel is necessary to avoid looking only at the single and sequential strings of violence that arise from years of clan feuding, for example, and examine too the parallel strings of violence that endure long after the main cause of conflict has expired, such as in the Coco Rasuman pyramiding scam in 2012.

Two, urban violence will continue to rise and in its worst forms, motivated by both ideological and criminal reasons. Putzel and Di John (2012) have argued that urban violence can be explained by a combination of socioeconomic factors and variations in political institutional arrangements. Add to these the porous and heterogenous nature of urban areas that have created positive conditions for the religious and ethnic fragmentation that is happening in urban areas such as Metro Manila, and the increased access to social media that can intensify ethnic cleavages triggered by events far away, whether in Mindanao or outside the country. Working on issues of discrimination in urban centers within and beyond Mindanao, such as in the many Muslim enclaves in the country, will be strategic in the long term.

Three, the shifting roles of non-state actors in relation to the central state create new dilemmas

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The transition to the new Bangsamoro will still require the full support and assistance of clans and local strongmen to ensure a peaceful transition.

that may render the youth and other groups vulnerable to extremist propaganda, especially when they see Muslim combatants running after their fellow Muslims. Youth participants in many MSVG meetings have expressed their dismay over these joint operations.

Indeed, the political settlement between the government and the MILF has led to some sharing of information and some coordination in the fight against Daesh. However, the MILF claims that the reports about joint operations between the MILF and the Philippine military in the fight against extremist violence are untrue and misplaced. Nevertheless, the implications from such cooperation are clear. It changes the type of violence ascribed to non-state actors such as the MILF as vertical, due to its cooperation or alliance with the State, and will result in the classification of armed clashes between the MILF and other armed groups as vertical conflict.

Four, current strategies are not shaped by a deeper analysis of the sources of violent extremism and remain dominated by a singular military approach to the problem. A 'one-size-fits-all' type of analysis that focuses on a security-oriented approach also distorts the targets and actors involved. The multi-causal violence that precedes and follows extremist violence requires focusing not only on the breakdown in social cohesion and resilience within Muslim communities, but also on the extremist, exclusionary, and discriminatory attitudes within Christian communities.

Fighting discrimination is a critical area of engagement particularly for the youth, and especially among young women who cannot

hide their religion and are often on the receiving end of the worst kinds of exclusionary and discriminatory behavior in urban areas, such as their schools or workplaces. It underscores the need to persuade and harness the youth in the fight against extremism and reassert their role in peacebuilding.

Five, the capacities of many stakeholders engaged in fulfilling the new Bangsamoro vision of peace and development are clearly wanting. The imminent dismantling of the ARMM makes the future status of thousands of ARMM employees unclear, including those who monitor violent conflict within the ARMM, despite their critical role in securing a smooth and peaceful transition. The instability this brings may produce new strings of governance-related violence.

The transition authority needs to hit the ground running, but it is important to run in the right direction. Local and international peacebuilders and development workers, including the bilateral and multilateral agencies involved in Muslim Mindanao, are already planning their interventions and seem to be bent on building a technocracy and instituting 'good governance' rules and systems to weaken strongman rule in the Bangsamoro as soon as possible.

Be careful what you wish for. Good governance through an inclusive, professional, egalitarian, and merit-based system is fine, but the transition to the new Bangsamoro will still require the full support and assistance of clans and local strongmen to ensure a peaceful transition. Building alliances and negotiating bargains with them are necessary, and politicians will be as important as technocrats in preventing another black swan.

Annex A

Data Tables

TABLE 1: Number of conflict incidents by province, 2011-2017	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Maguindanao including Cotabato City	326	202	401	847	1,114	2,358	1,885	7,133
Lanao del Sur	137	78	285	306	420	514	942	2,682
Basilan including Isabela City	203	184	174	185	380	796	630	2,552
Sulu	147	118	150	107	332	558	552	1,964
Tawi-Tawi	53	61	49	55	60	135	129	542
Total	**866**	**643**	**1,059**	**1,500**	**2,306**	**4,361**	**4,138**	**14,873**

TABLE 2: Number of conflict deaths by province, 2011-2017	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Lanao del Sur	90	48	108	106	184	310	1,358	2,204
Maguindanao including Cotabato City	202	92	177	342	364	444	497	2,118
Sulu	86	71	115	96	142	221	231	962
Basilan including Isabela City	111	108	70	99	115	220	137	860
Tawi-Tawi	18	11	21	21	22	46	37	176
Total	**507**	**330**	**491**	**664**	**827**	**1,241**	**2,260**	**6,320**

TABLE 3: Estimated number of conflict incidents and deaths in Marawi City, 2016-2017	Conflict Incidents		Conflict Deaths	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
January	7	22	5	4
Febuary	11	10	4	7
March	10	15	3	2
April	7	14	4	7
May	11	54	7	121
June	9	130	6	319
July	20	98	6	241
August	25	55	4	139
September	11	56	2	135
October	15	73	2	183
November	23	6	10	11
December	15	0	7	0
Total	**164**	**533**	**60**	**1,169**

TABLE 4: Conflict incidence per 100,000 persons, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2011-2017 Average
Basilan including Isabela City	50	44	40	41	83	168	130	79
Maguindanao including Cotabato City	25	15	29	59	76	156	121	69
Lanao del Sur	15	8	29	30	40	48	85	36
Sulu	20	16	19	13	40	66	63	34
Tawi-Tawi	15	17	13	14	15	34	31	20

TABLE 5: Conflict deaths per 100,000 persons, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2011-2017 Average
Lanao del Sur	10	5	11	10	18	29	123	29
Maguindanao including Cotabato City	15	7	13	24	25	29	32	21
Basilan including Isabela City	27	26	16	22	25	47	28	27
Sulu	12	9	15	12	17	26	26	17
Tawi-Tawi	5	3	6	6	6	11	9	7

TABLE 6: Conflict incidence per 1,000 sq. km., 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2011-2017 Average
Maguindanao including Cotabato City	32	20	40	83	110	232	186	100
Basilan including Isabela City	55	50	47	50	103	216	171	99
Sulu	32	26	33	24	73	123	121	62
Lanao del Sur	9	5	19	20	28	34	63	25
Tawi-Tawi	15	17	14	15	17	37	36	21

TABLE 7: Conflict deaths per 1,000 sq. km., 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2011-2017 Average
Lanao del Sur	6	3	7	7	12	21	90	21
Sulu	19	16	25	21	31	49	51	30
Maguindanao including Cotabato City	20	9	17	34	36	44	49	30
Basilan including Isabela City	30	29	19	27	31	60	37	33
Tawi-Tawi	5	3	6	6	6	13	10	7

TABLE 8: Conflict incidence by main cause, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Shadow Economy Issues	349	202	373	497	573	1,497	1,549
Identity Issues	128	69	94	198	207	717	1,224
Common Crimes	88	56	94	271	479	890	719
Political Issues	92	96	169	101	160	260	703
Resource Issues	29	17	15	27	36	63	55
Governance Issues	31	8	18	29	33	75	29

TABLE 9: Conflict deaths by main cause, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Identity Issues	122	35	74	91	104	524	1,693
Political Issues	120	84	118	203	223	448	1,564
Shadow Economy Issues	133	49	76	108	101	215	290
Governance Issues	12	6	11	15	31	61	41
Common Crimes	19	11	13	22	24	22	32
Resource Issues	47	18	19	20	14	11	19

TABLE 10: Conflict incidence per 100,000 persons by main cause, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2011-2017 Average
Shadow Economy Issues	10	6	10	14	15	38	39	19
Identity Issues	4	2	3	5	5	18	31	10
Common Crimes	3	2	3	7	13	23	18	10
Political Issues	3	3	5	3	4	7	18	6
Resource Issues	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	1
Governance Issues	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	1

TABLE 11: Conflict deaths per 100,000 persons by main cause, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2011-2017 Average
Identity Issues	4	1	2	2	3	13	42	10
Political Issues	4	2	3	6	6	12	39	10
Shadow Economy Issues	4	1	2	3	3	6	7	4
Governance Issues	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1
Common Crimes	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Resource Issues	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1

TABLE 12: Conflict incidence per 1,000 sq. km. by main cause, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2011-2017 Average
Shadow Economy Issues	10	6	10	14	16	41	42	20
Identity Issues	3	2	3	5	6	20	33	10
Common Crimes	2	2	3	7	13	24	20	10
Political Issues	3	3	5	3	4	7	19	6
Resource Issues	1	0	0	1	1	2	2	1
Governance Issues	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	1

TABLE 13: **Conflict deaths per 1,000 sq. km. by main cause, 2011-2017**							
	2011	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2011-2017 Average**
Identity Issues	3	1	2	2	3	14	46	10
Political Issues	3	2	3	6	6	12	43	11
Shadow Economy Issues	4	1	2	3	3	6	8	4
Governance Issues	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1
Common Crimes	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Resource Issues	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1

TABLE 14: **Number of multi-causal and single-cause conflicts and number of deaths from these incidents**							
	2011	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Multi-causal incidents	153	76	116	219	252	620	1,171
Single-cause incidents	398	292	520	675	975	2,198	1,857
Killed in multi-causal incidents	130	44	63	94	107	550	1,704
Killed in single-cause incidents	145	108	160	260	257	114	121

TABLE 15: **Top multi-causal combinations and number of deaths from these incidents**							
Incidents							
	2011	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Identity Issues-Political Issues	3	2	4	0	1	134	632
Common Crimes-Shadow Economy Issues	28	20	32	96	139	265	222
Identity Issues-Shadow Economy Issues	89	39	52	86	69	82	142
Common Crimes-Identity Issues	0	1	1	3	4	27	73
Governance Issues-Shadow Economy Issues	10	3	4	7	4	32	4
Others	23	11	23	27	35	80	98

Deaths							
	2011	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Identity Issues-Political Issues	2	1	4	0	0	377	1,466
Common Crimes-Shadow Economy Issues	0	2	3	4	3	9	8
Identity Issues-Shadow Economy Issues	86	25	33	64	66	59	112
Common Crimes-Identity Issues	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Governance Issues-Shadow Economy Issues	4	3	2	2	1	39	3
Others	38	13	21	24	37	65	114

TABLE 16: **Top 10 specific causes of conflict, 2011-2017**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Religious conflict	0	0	0	0	0	168	688
Extremist violence	0	0	0	0	0	168	688
Illegal drugs	48	27	67	105	130	759	643
Illicit weapons	179	80	198	232	206	411	489
Robbery	69	46	65	204	336	495	386
Gender-related issues	14	17	14	85	121	336	305
Carjacking	24	19	24	89	133	252	212
Child abuse	1	1	1	18	13	110	166
Illegal gambling	30	22	19	22	28	32	137
Personal grudge	48	21	24	48	31	62	119

TABLE 17: **Number of extremist violence and rebellion incidents, 2011-2017**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Extremist violence	0	0	0	0	0	168	688
Rebellion	70	73	116	86	144	2	6

TABLE 18: **Incidents of violent extremism by group, province, and month, 2016-2017**

2016

	MG/DI - Lanao del Sur	BIFF - Maguindanao	MILF - Maguindanao	ASG - Sulu	ASG - Basilan
January	0	5	0	3	2
February	2	25	1	2	0
March	1	15	2	3	6
April	1	2	0	4	7
May	0	1	0	4	0
June	1	2	1	2	0
July	1	7	3	2	6
August	3	2	0	6	4
September	2	3	1	1	1
October	0	2	1	1	2
November	1	3	5	1	5
December	3	8	2	3	1

2017

	MG/DI - Lanao del Sur	BIFF - Maguindanao	MILF - Maguindanao	ASG - Sulu	ASG - Basilan
January	1	5	2	3	5
February	2	2	1	2	6
March	2	11	4	10	7
April	1	4	1	8	1
May	46	13	1	8	3
June	127	10	0	6	1
July	96	15	4	9	6
August	55	22	11	5	4
September	54	12	10	5	2
October	72	16	7	4	2
November	4	5	3	9	5
December	0	20	5	6	1

TABLE 19: Top shadow economy issues, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Illegal drugs	48	27	67	105	130	759	643
Illicit weapons	179	80	198	232	206	411	489
Carjacking	24	19	24	89	133	252	212
Illegal gambling	30	22	19	22	28	32	137
Kidnap-for-ransom	36	25	56	45	53	52	53
Financial transactions	5	4	16	5	13	20	51
Others	33	30	20	27	41	57	77

TABLE 20: Number of gender-related incidents by province, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cotabato City	0	0	0	53	7	136	92
Isabela City	1	2	0	0	0	96	60
Sub-Total	**1**	**2**	**0**	**53**	**7**	**232**	**152**
Maguindanao	7	6	6	11	70	49	74
Lanao del Sur	0	2	3	12	18	23	40
Sulu	1	2	2	0	7	11	23
Basilan	4	3	1	6	11	9	8
Tawi-Tawi	1	2	2	3	8	12	8
Sub-Total	**13**	**15**	**14**	**32**	**114**	**104**	**153**
Total	**14**	**17**	**14**	**85**	**121**	**336**	**305**

TABLE 21: Number of child abuse incidents by province, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cotabato City	1	0	0	16	2	86	68
Isabela City	0	0	0	0	0	16	39
Sub-Total	**1**	**0**	**0**	**16**	**2**	**102**	**107**
Maguindanao	0	1	1	2	11	6	29
Lanao del Sur	0	0	0	0	0	0	22
Sulu	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Basilan	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Tawi-Tawi	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Sub-Total	**0**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**11**	**8**	**59**
Total	**1**	**1**	**1**	**18**	**13**	**110**	**166**

TABLE 22: Number of incidents in rural and urban areas, 2011-2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Rural	520	424	781	824	1,375	2,094	1,999
Urban	346	219	278	676	931	2,267	2,139
Total	**866**	**643**	**1,059**	**1,500**	**2,306**	**4,361**	**4,138**

TABLE 23: **Number of illegal gambling incidents by province, 2011-2017**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Maguindanao including Cotabato City	17	4	5	15	10	19	81
Sulu	5	9	1	1	1	2	32
Basilan including Isabela City	6	3	4	2	9	2	16
Lanao del Sur	1	2	8	3	8	7	7
Tawi-Tawi	1	4	1	1	0	2	1
Total	**30**	**22**	**19**	**22**	**28**	**32**	**137**

TABLE 24: **Number of incidents in the SPMS Box, 2011-2017**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Shariff Aguak	19	24	32	42	69	74	76
Datu Salibo		1	5	3	8	50	49
Datu Saudi-Ampatuan	7	3	16	12	26	49	39
Datu Piang	4	7	20	21	19	32	30
Datu Unsay	4	13	15	9	11	7	25
Shariff Saydona Mustapha	1	1	5	12	5	11	19
Mamasapano	4	2	2	6	11	15	18
Rajah Buayan	5	2	5	3	7	8	17
Total	**44**	**53**	**100**	**108**	**156**	**246**	**273**

TABLE 25: **Violence intensity index, with displacement, by province, 2012-2017**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Lanao del Sur	2.03	1.10	1.10	2.16	3.25	4.75
Maguindanao including Cotabato City	4.09	3.18	3.33	4.43	4.75	4.64
Sulu	0.06	1.08	2.08	2.17	3.24	3.23
Basilan including Isabela City	3.11	3.07	3.08	3.13	3.36	3.22

TABLE 26: **Violence intensity index, without displacement, by province, 2012-2017**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Lanao del Sur	0.03	0.10	0.10	0.16	0.25	0.75
Maguindanao including Cotabato City	0.09	0.18	0.33	0.43	0.75	0.64
Sulu	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.17	0.24	0.23
Basilan including Isabela City	0.11	0.07	0.08	0.13	0.36	0.22
Tawi-Tawi	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.04	0.03

TABLE 27: **Violence intensity index, without displacement, by month, 2011-2017**							
	2011	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
January	0.15	0.15	0.08	0.26	0.40	0.41	0.55
February	0.09	0.11	0.12	0.23	0.47	0.67	0.47
March	0.12	0.12	0.08	0.17	0.30	0.56	0.60
April	0.09	0.07	0.08	0.31	0.31	0.65	0.61
May	0.13	0.09	0.19	0.17	0.38	0.60	0.62
June	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.23	0.18	0.35	0.86
July	0.13	0.15	0.23	0.17	0.40	0.69	0.88
August	0.21	0.20	0.16	0.22	0.28	0.61	0.84
September	0.21	0.11	0.16	0.22	0.29	0.49	0.59
October	0.16	0.07	0.23	0.12	0.13	0.43	0.65
November	0.12	0.05	0.11	0.19	0.12	0.55	0.32
December	0.08	0.02	0.23	0.10	0.35	0.51	0.33

Annex B

Methodology

Conflict Alert studies violent conflict or an incident where force or physical violence, or the threat to use force or physical violence, was made.

Data Sources. Key sources of data are the incident reports from the PNP and news reports from 14 local and national newspapers. MSVGs, composed of local people with knowledge of local conflicts, also add incidents to the database. MSVG members' backgrounds range from security provision, crime prevention, conflict research, and crime monitoring, to peacebuilding, local governance, policy formulation, journalism, and grassroots knowledge.

The multiple data sources—police, media, and the community— make Conflict Alert the largest repository of data on subnational conflict in the Philippines.

From collection, the data undergo a strict process of evaluation, validation, and analysis before they are shared with the public.

Data Gathering. Incident reports are collected from the regional, provincial, and city offices of the PNP. Reports from 14 national and local newspapers are gathered.

Data Sorting. Incidents are classified into violent and non-violent. Only the violent conflict incidents are encoded and subjected to analysis.

Data Encoding. At the first stage, encoders record all details of the incidents using an online encoding form. They then check for links between newly encoded incidents and previously recorded incidents, or for conflict strings. They geotag the incidents. Duplicate entries are voided using a search facility. At the next stage, data reviewers check the details of the incidents. At the third stage, a second reviewer makes random checks to further ensure data quality.

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The multiple data sources—police, media and the community—make Conflict Alert the largest repository of data on subnational conflict in the Philippines.

Data Validation. MSVGs validate the list of violent conflict incidents. They also add details, such as the cause or causes of the conflict, when these are not provided by police and newspaper reports. Members also add incidents they know of that they did not find on the list. They meet quarterly to discuss conflict trends to enhance the analysis of the data.

Data Analysis. Data are tabulated and analyzed according to incidence, density, causes, strings, and trends of violent conflict. Additionally, the severity (frequency) and magnitude (or cost in terms of people injured, killed, and displaced) of violence are examined using Alert's Violence Intensity Index to help pinpoint priorities and interventions in the conflict-affected areas.

Data Visualization. The findings are presented using visual tools such as charts, graphs, and tables. Incidents are also mapped, providing locational context to the incidents. Users of the Conflict Alert website may generate their own charts, graphs, tables, and maps using its charting and mapping tools.

Data Dissemination. Results are presented to key stakeholders such as government agencies, local government units, civil society groups, academic institutions, private institutions, and the security sector. The whole dataset is also stored in a comma-separated values or CSV file and written up in reports that are uploaded to the Conflict Alert website and made available to the public for free.

Marawi City:
Estimating the number of war-related clashes and deaths

Conflict Alert combined data from newspapers and the Philippine military to come up with a monthly tally of war-related clashes in Marawi in 2017. There were few police incident reports as the Marawi City Police Station was burned down on the first day of the five-month siege. A stepwise process was undertaken to extrapolate the number of incidents. First, the military summaries were broken down and compared with media data. Next, the military data on deaths and the media data on incidents and deaths that took place from May 23 to October 31 were used to extrapolate the number of clashes during this period. Military data served as source for war-related deaths during the conflict.

Annex C

Definition of Terms

Violent conflict. An incident where two or more parties use violence to settle misunderstandings and grievances and/or defend or expand their individual or collective interests. Violence entails the use of force or physical violence, or the threat to use force or physical violence.

Vertical conflict. These are separatist or non-separatist armed struggles against the State, including terrorist actions that destabilize a State. Rebellions, insurgencies, and extremist violence fall under vertical conflict.

Horizontal conflict. These are conflicts between individuals, families, clans, ethnic groups, rival insurgent factions, political parties, private armed groups, among others.

Causal categories. Conflicts are categorized according to their main cause and specific cause. The main causes of conflict are shadow economy issues, common crimes, political issues, identity issues, resource issues, and governance issues. Under each main cause are specific causes. Conflict Alert presently has 59 specific causes of conflict.

Shadow economies. These pertain to the informal or underground sectors of the economy that tend to fuel violent conflict. In Mindanao, these include the illegal drug and illicit firearm trades, kidnap-for-ransom, cattle rustling, smuggling, illegal gambling, carjacking, and human trafficking.

Common crimes. These are cases of robbery, damage to properties, and violent conflict triggered by alcohol intoxication, among others.

Political issues. These include vertical conflict such as rebellion and extremist violence, and horizontal conflict caused by electoral competition, abuse of power and authority or political repression, and violent struggles between rival insurgent groups for politico-military control.

Identity issues. These include clashes between families and clans, violence arising from personal grudges between individuals, and gender-based violence. Religious conflict, an identity issue, is closely linked to extremist violence, a political issue, and manifests as brutal acts targeting individuals or groups holding different beliefs.

Resource issues. These are conflicts over ownership, use, and control of land, water and other natural resources.

Governance issues. These are violent struggles for government resources and rents, including conflicts due to bidding processes, violent responses to lawful actions and processes, and other government-related transactions and/or development projects.

Annex D

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