

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2025, Vol. 6, No. 5, 2158 – 2163

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.06.05.02>

Research Article

Assessing Government Support and Sustainability among Marawi Siege Survivors: Insights from Barangay Boganga

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Article history:

Submission 02 April 2025

Revised 30 April 2025

Accepted 23 May 2025

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the relationship between government support and sustainability among 266 Marawi siege survivors in Barangay Boganga. Using a descriptive-correlational design and Likert-based questionnaires, the study found that economic and social support were perceived as Neutral to Much Supportive. A statistically significant positive relationship was found between government support and sustainability ($r = .35$, $p = .002$). Findings suggest continued investment in social and economic programs is essential for long-term recovery.

Keywords: Government support, Sustainability, Survivor

Introduction

The Marawi Siege, a five-month conflict in Marawi City, Philippines, serves as a stark example of war's far-reaching effects. Known as the only Islamic city in the country, Marawi had been a peaceful cultural and educational hub in Mindanao. However, on May 23, 2017, an operation to capture Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon escalated into a full-blown siege when ISIS-aligned militants sought to establish an Islamic State. The conflict displaced nearly 400,000 residents, destroyed much of the city, and claimed over 1,000 lives.

To address the massive needs of displaced families, the Philippine government implemented comprehensive recovery, rehabilitation, and rebuilding programs. These initiatives aimed to ensure both immediate relief and long-term sustainability for survivors. Among

the key efforts were Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM): Formed under Executive Order No. 3 (2017), TFBM coordinated inter-agency efforts to restore essential services, rebuild infrastructure, and create economic opportunities. Marawi Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Program (MCRRP): This blueprint prioritized sustainable development, including housing reconstruction, livelihood programs, and utility restoration. Kambalingan Program: Focused on the safe return of displaced residents, ensuring basic utilities, and providing temporary shelters where necessary. Livelihood Assistance Programs: Agencies such as DTI and TESDA offered skills training and entrepreneurship development to help residents rebuild their economic independence. Social Welfare Assistance: The DSWD provided relief supplies, cash grants, and psychosocial support

How to cite:

Fuentes-Marquez, M. R. (2025). Assessing Government Support and Sustainability among Marawi Siege Survivors: Insights from Barangay Boganga. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 6(5), 2158 – 2163. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.06.05.02

to address trauma. Peace and Security Initiatives: Collaboration with BARMM ensured peace-building and reconciliation efforts to prevent the resurgence of violence. Education and Health Services: Reconstruction of schools and hospitals, coupled with free education and trauma counseling, addressed critical social needs. Bangon Marawi Housing Projects: The NHA constructed permanent housing and transitory shelters for displaced families.

In addition, the government extended support across various sectors. Partnerships with international humanitarian organizations helped provide further assistance. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), the government prioritized economic development, job creation, and social cohesion in the recovery process. However, the effectiveness and sustainability of these measures remain critical areas for evaluation.

This study aims to assess the success of the government interventions by focusing on the survivors in Barangay Boganga, a relocation site established for those displaced by the siege. It evaluates the economic and social sustainability of government support efforts, including livelihood assistance, financial support, housing, and employment programs. Through this evaluation, the study seeks to understand the long-term impacts on the survivors, highlighting both successes and areas for improvement in the government's approach to post-conflict recovery.

Methods

This study utilized the quantitative research method, employing a descriptive-correlational research design (Creswell & Creswell,

2017). This study focused specifically on survivors originally from Barangay Banggolo and Barangay Raya Madaya, two barangays that were among the most severely affected areas in ground zero. These residents were relocated to Barangay Boganga, a designated relocation site established as part of the government's post-siege rehabilitation program. A structured, non-disguised questionnaire consisting of Likert scale questions for measuring perceptions and multiple-choice questions for the demographic profile was used as the main tool for data gathering (Nelson, Kielhofner, & Taylor, 2017). To ensure that respondents fully understood the questions, the questionnaire was translated into the local dialect, which was the Maranao language.

To validate the instruments, a pre-test was conducted, and revisions were made to the questionnaire as necessary. A small representative sample from the target population was selected for the pre-test phase. This preliminary group engaged with the survey questions, allowing for an assessment of their clarity, relevance, and appropriateness.

In adherence to practical research ethics, the researchers sent a letter of intent to the head of the community, whether it be the Barangay Captain or the Sultan, requesting approval to conduct the study in the relocation shelter of Barangay Boganga. Furthermore, the researcher engaged in face-to-face interactions at the site to enhance transparency and build confidence in the significance of the research outcomes. This approach ensured a thorough and ethical data collection process. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and correlational statistical methods to assess the perceived government support and its impact on the sustainability of Marawi Siege survivors.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. Government Support to Marawi Siege Victims in terms of Economic Support

Indicators	Average	Weighted Mean	Description
Livelihood programs	3.18		Neutral
Employment Opportunities	3.01		Neutral
Financial aid and subsidies	3.78		Much Supportive
Access to microfinance and loan	3.62		Much Supportive
Tax relief and incentives	3.03		Neutral

Indicators	Average	Weighted Mean	Description
Reconstruction of infrastructures	4.01		Much Supportive
Mean	3.44		Much Supportive

The respondents' consensus regarding the economic assistance they received from the government as victims of the Marawi Siege is shown in Table 1. The findings paint a diverse picture of the Marawi Siege victims' views on government support. Long-term economic rehabilitation policies like livelihood initiatives, job chances, and tax reductions are viewed neutrally. The government's efforts are widely

praised, particularly in the more visible and immediate areas of infrastructure repair, financial assistance, and microfinance access. This disparity has major implications for the overall success of rehabilitation efforts. The government's neutrality in these areas for long-term recovery suggests potential gaps or areas where its assistance strategy needs to be strengthened and better conveyed.

Table 2. Government Support to Marawi Siege Victims in terms of Social Support

Indicators	Average	Weighted Mean	Description
Water, sanitation and hygiene	3.53		Much Supportive
Shelter	3.92		Much Supportive
Health	3.18		Neutral
Psychosocial support	3.19		Neutral
Education	3.40		Neutral
Strengthen local governance	3.17		Neutral
Mean	3.40		Neutral

Table 2 summarizes respondents' perceptions of the government's social assistance to Marawi Siege victims, with an overall mean score of 3.40, interpreted as Neutral. This neutrality suggests a general sense of ambivalence—neither strong approval nor dissatisfaction—which may reflect inconsistencies in service delivery or unmet expectations over time. Notably, higher ratings for shelter reconstruction (3.92) and restoration of essential utilities such as water, sanitation, and hygiene (3.53) suggest that these were perceived as the most visible or effective interventions.

These findings resonate with the objectives of the 2017 Bangon Marawi Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan, implying that while key infrastructure priorities were

addressed, other areas of social support may have lacked sufficient follow-through, leading to a tempered public response. Meanwhile, Marawi Siege survivors were not strongly positive or negative about certain social indicators such as health, psychosocial support, education and local governance. This could be due to various reasons such as mixed experience of positive and negative interaction with government assistance; slow response or inadequate aid may have led to skepticism; complicated application process may also discourage people from engaging to the support system or maybe self-reliance wherein they prioritize their recovery without claiming support from the government.

Table 3. Marawi Siege Victims on Sustainability in terms of Economic

Indicators	Average	Weighted Mean	Description
Livelihood programs	4.29		Much Sustainable
Employment Opportunities	4.15		Much Sustainable
Financial aid and subsidies	4.18		Much Sustainable
Access to microfinance and loan	3.98		Much Sustainable
Tax relief and incentives	3.92		Much Sustainable

Indicators	Average	Weighted Mean	Description
Reconstruction of infrastructures	4.01	4.07	Much Sustainable
Mean	4.07	4.07	Much Sustainable

Table 3 shows that Marawi Siege survivors generally perceive government economic support as sustainable, with an overall mean of 4.07, reflecting recognition of its long-term value in recovery. Livelihood programs (4.19) and employment opportunities (4.18) received the highest ratings, emphasizing the role of practical income sources and stable jobs in fostering economic resilience, particularly in the post-pandemic context described by Cabaron (2023). In contrast, indicators rated as neutral

may reflect shortcomings in relevance or accessibility, suggesting areas where implementation or ongoing support needs improvement.

Raniga (2018) emphasized that one-time cash relief is insufficient to resolve financial struggles, while Wang, Li, and Qi (2022) highlighted the potential of employment programs in fostering economic resilience. These findings reinforce the need to strengthen and sustain economic support initiatives to ensure lasting stability for Marawi Siege survivors.

Table 4. Marawi Siege Victims on Sustainability in terms of Social

Indicators	Average	Weighted Mean	Description
Water, sanitation and hygiene	4.20	4.20	Much Sustainable
Shelter	4.13	4.13	Much Sustainable
Health	4.09	4.09	Much Sustainable
Psychosocial support	4.10	4.10	Much Sustainable
Education	4.15	4.15	Much Sustainable
Strengthen local governance	4.12	4.12	Much Sustainable
Mean	4.13	4.13	Much Sustainable

Table 4 illustrates the views of the respondents on the sustainability of support received by the Marawi Siege survivors focusing on the social services. The overall mean score of 4.13, classified as Much Sustainable, indicates that respondents perceive government support as beneficial and lasting. All indicators received a Much Sustainable rating, reflecting a consistently positive view of the assistance provided. The result implies that respondents believe social assistance programs run by the government are much sustainable (4.13).

Among the indicators, more people agreed that the government's efforts in improving water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities have greatly enhance their health and living conditions as Marawi Siege survivor (4.20). This result is understandable because water and hygiene are essential necessities. The result also highlights how respondents view government's education programs to have significantly contributed to their long-term development and empowerment as survivor in Marawi Siege (4.15). One reason could be the notion

that higher educational attainment will guarantee reliable source of income or employment opportunities.

Government Support and Sustainability to Marawi Siege Victims

Table 5 presents the relationship between government support and the sustainability of Marawi siege victims. The weighted mean of government support (3.42) suggests a moderate level of perceived assistance, while the weighted mean for sustainability (4.10) indicates that survivors generally find their recovery process more sustainable. The correlation coefficient ($r = .35$) suggests a moderate positive relationship between government support and sustainability, meaning that as government support improves, the sustainability of Marawi siege victims also tends to increase. The p -value (.002) confirms that this relationship is statistically significant, indicating that government assistance plays a crucial role in enhancing survivors' long-term resilience.

These results are consistent with studies that highlight the role of state-led recovery initiatives in post-conflict sustainability, wherein community reintegration initiatives, housing assistance, and financial help all improve the stability of survivors (Galea et al., 2020).

Additionally, research shows that targeted government interventions and social welfare policies have a major impact on the psychological and economic health of displaced people (Betancourt et al., 2015).

Table 5. Significant Relationship Between Government Support and Sustainability Victims of Marawi Siege

Indicators	r-value	p-value	Description
Government Support	-	-	
Sustainability	.35	.002	Significant

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that government sustainability support for Marawi Siege survivors has had a meaningful impact, particularly in social support programs, which are perceived as the most effective interventions.

In addition, social support programs have significantly contributed to community resilience by fostering emotional well-being, strengthening social ties, and promoting a sense of stability among survivors. These programs align with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, as they ensure access to safe and stable housing for displaced individuals.

It is recommended that the government may focus on strengthening economic support programs by providing more long-term financial assistance, expanding livelihood opportunities, and enhancing skills development programs to promote economic independence among survivors. Continuing investment in social services is crucial to ensure holistic recovery. Additionally, fostering partnerships with private sectors can create employment opportunities tailored to survivors' skills and needs.

Limitations of the Study

This study has significant limitations. The extensive spatial constraint, which focuses exclusively on specific barangays, limits the findings' generalizability to the larger population of Marawi siege survivors. Furthermore, using a structured, non-disguised questionnaire that relies on self-reported data increases the danger of self-report bias since participants may

have responded based on subjective views rather than objective experiences. Furthermore, the study's lack of longitudinal tracking precludes it from capturing the long-term healing, adaptation, and changing circumstances of displaced people over time, which are crucial to understanding the full effects of the siege and the effectiveness of rehabilitation efforts.

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