

## **PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION TO MARAWI, PHILIPPINES**

### **Demonstrating EMDR Approaches in a Setting of Violent Extremism**

On 23 May 2017, affiliated militants of the Islamic State (IS)—including the Maute and Abu Sayyaf Salafi jihadist groups—launched an attack on the Philippine government security forces in the city of Marawi, Mindanao, occupying several buildings and taking control of key areas. Three months later the conflict is still ongoing, with an estimated toll of casualties reaching more than 75 government troops and at least 44 civilians.

At the suggestion of colleagues at the World Bank, a needs assessment mission is fielded (as soon as conditions allow) to take stock of the impact of the terrorist and military activities in Marawi on the civilian and military population, with special attention to its psychological impact on individuals, families, and local communities.

The purpose of the mission is two-fold: first, to gauge the emergency needs and identify immediate opportunities to provide stress and trauma care for those in greatest need, including IDPs and humanitarian workers with primary or vicarious trauma; and second, to explore the feasibility, appropriateness and acceptability of developing a specific project that would address these needs.

The intention is to undertake a project that would use Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). Though less known than the widely applied Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), EMDR has some inherent advantages in humanitarian field settings and violent conflict contexts. As such, this project is also intended to serve as a demonstration of the effectiveness of EMDR.

GIST-T is coordinating the fielding of this mission, in dialogue with several other actors, including the World Bank, Nonviolent Peaceforce Philippines, EMDR Philippines and, possibly, the Philippines Psychiatric Association. Mission funding has been secured and some funding of emergency phase activities is in hand.