

Laying the Groundwork for a Better Normal



**A Compendium of Case Studies
on Lessons, Practices, and
Innovations amid the Covid-19
Pandemic Response**

Laying the Groundwork for a Better Normal

**A Compendium of Case Studies
on Lessons, Practices, and
Innovations amid the Covid-19
Pandemic Response**

Laying the Groundwork for a Better Normal: A Compendium of Case Studies on Lessons, Practices, and Innovations amid the Covid-19 Pandemic Response © 2021

Any part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, even without permission of the publisher as long as it will be properly cited.

Funding for this publication was provided by
Give2Asia

Editorial Director:	<i>Michael Vincent Mercado</i>
Editor:	<i>Elyse Rafaela Conde</i>
Associate Editor:	<i>Alexandru Costea</i>
Lay-out and design by:	<i>Michael Vincent Mercado</i>

Published by Center for Disaster Preparedness Foundation, Inc. B31 L19 A Bonifacio St., New Capitol Estates I, Batasan Hills, Quezon City, Philippines. Copyright © 2021.

For more information, contact inquire@cdp.org.ph or visit <https://cdp.org.ph>.

Foreword

The DRR-CoP's Compendium of Case Studies on Lessons, Practices and Innovations Amid the COVID-19 Response is a very timely knowledge product. CoP members can make use of it, including other civil society network members for inspiration and motivation to promote and replicate relevant, meaningful practices in different parts of the country. This Community of Practice has been a worthwhile and meaningful engagement and encounters of like-minded practitioners of disaster risk reduction (DRR), humanitarian, climate change adaptation and mitigation, environment, and resilience development. It has grown not necessarily in number but in depth and breadth of conversations, collaboration, and networking from amongst practitioners wherever they are with their efforts. The wealth of experience and praxis of active practitioners has made it achieve its purpose and target for the period.

Give2Asia and Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP) had embarked on a collaborative partnership to consolidate and sustain the momentum of the Community of Practice (CoP) in the Philippines as Give2Asia's initiative way back before 2019. The partnership has engaged the CoP members for purposes of nurturing and strengthening the growth of CoP in the country; keeping the passion and spirit alive in their hearts and minds while helping one another; sharing good and best practices with one another; and making breakthroughs in new knowledge and practices in the context of the extraordinary situation of the pandemic.

It became an apt and fitting journey for CDP, as it grappled with the challenge of sustaining the work of partnering and collaborating with fellow civil society organizations, community-based and people's organizations in partner-communities and with donor-partners including government organizations to promote the rights of the communities and the affected people for safe, resilient, and sustainable future in the new normal. CDP appreciates Give2Asia's putting premium and great value to local knowledge to be able to reinforce and fortify the work of local organizations.

"Civil society organizations, despite the difficult situation, are not remiss in their role and responsibility to the most marginalized and vulnerable sections of the population at the grassroots level in most far-flung areas."

This compendium serves as an evidence from both CoP and co-collaborators in various networks on how they continued to find ways and means to make a difference and impact in the lives of the affected population and communities. Civil society organizations despite the difficult situation are not remiss in their role and responsibility to the most marginalized and vulnerable sections of the population at the grassroots level in most far-flung areas.

Some of the case studies in this compendium have very interesting yet varied thematic concerns and focal agenda. One case study has showcased a contribution to the pandemic response directed at food insecurity in urban poor communities demonstrating the private sector's role in community engagement. A different case study featured country level dialogues as a contribution in moving forward localization in the country. Another case study explored the changing practices and culture that provided the challenges, constraints and at the same time opportunities for the network to adapt to continue their DRRM work. Going to the southern part of the country in Mindanao, a case study has highlighted the Marawi internally displaced persons' experience of obvious patterns of discriminations in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic.

One case study went back to the survivors of Typhoon Sendong (international name: Washi) to check on how they are in the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic. Another unique case study is how the different communities of Muslims and Christians

alike together with the different sectors of men, women and youth have been adapting in the context of the pandemic. Plus, a case study on persons with disabilities that has documented their good practices in response to COVID-19. And there are other more important case studies featured in the compendium about the different experiences in conducting the mental health-psychosocial support services amidst the pandemic which became significant for the wellbeing and recovery of frontliners and other affected members of the community. These are wisdom, lessons and good practices that could be shared to humanitarian and DRR actors and practitioners.

The CoP members have grown and strengthened and are vigorously fostering and nurturing conversations and encounters both virtual and face-to-face for a meaningful and sustainable community of practice in an institutionalized manner. It radiated in key major islands of the country where community members are present, igniting learning and innovation among fellow practitioners.

The CoP has proven to establish a common ground that provided the inspiration and the space to learn and discover greater meaning in their actions. The framework of a community has fostered a more natural interaction and willingness to articulate and share ideas. It created a social fabric for enabling learning among one another. For the practitioners, the shared learnings of collective knowledge are the takeaways of the community members that they take back to their very own practice.

Loreine B. dela Cruz

Executive Director,
Center for Disaster Preparedness

Contents

Foreword

i

Acronyms

v

The Organizations

1

CENTER FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOUNDATION, INC. / CDP	2
CENTER FOR EMERGENCY AID, REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT, INC. / CONCERN, INC.	4
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION NETWORK PHILIPPINES / DRRNETPHILS	6
ECOSYSTEMS WORK FOR ESSENTIAL BENEFITS, INC. / ECOWEB	7
LANAO AQUATIC AND MARINE FISHERIES CENTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, INC. / LAFCCOD	11
PHILIPPINE DISASTER RESILIENCE FOUNDATION / PDRF	12
RANAW DISASTER RESPONSE AND REHABILITATION CENTER / RDRRAC	13

Overview

14

The Case studies

17

*Ang Tanglaw na Hatid ng
Damayan at Kumustahan: Coping
and Dealing with the COVID-19
Pandemic through MHPSS*

18

Executive Summary	18
Background	19
Findings and Discussion	22
Conclusion and Recommendations	32

**A Case Study of Marawi IDPs
Experiences During
the Covid-19 Pandemic**

35

Executive Summary	35
Background	37
Methodology	38
Data Results/Findings	39
Data Analysis	44
Conclusions	52
Recommendations	53

DRRM Networking in the Midst of a Pandemic: The DRRNetPhils Experience

56

Executive Summary.....	56
Findings and Discussion	58
Conclusion and Recommendations	64
Ways Forward/Next Steps.....	66

Country-Level Dialogue: Moving Forward the Localization in the Philippines

76

Executive Summary.....	76
Background/Context.....	77
Initial Findings and Discussion	79
Conclusions and Recommendations	82
Ways Forward/Next Steps.....	82
Annexes	83

Sharing of Experiences, Learnings, and Innovation of Men, Women, and Youth from Muslim and Christian Communities in Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

85

Executive Summary.....	85
Background/ Context.....	86
Findings and Discussion	89
Conclusion and Recommendations	95
Ways Forward/ Next Steps.....	97

Project Ugnayan: A case study on PDRF's urban poor community response early in the COVID-19 lockdown

98

Abstract.....	98
Background	99
Findings and discussion	101
Summary and conclusion	109
Ways forward.....	111

The Forgotten Disaster Survivors and their Environment are Victims

121

Purpose of the study.....	121
Executive Summary.....	121
Methodology and Limitations.....	123
Findings/Results:	124
Conclusion and Recommendations	152
Ways Forward	152

Acronyms

3Ws - Who, What, Where / Wash your hands frequently, Watch your distance, Wear a mask

4Ps - Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program

A4EP - Alliance for Empowering Partnership

ADB - Asian Development Bank

ACCORD - Assistance and Cooperation for Community Resilience and Development

ALNAP - Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance

BAFFA - Bangaan Farmers and Fisherfolks Association

BARMM - Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

BIG - Bio-Intensive Garden

BLGU - Barangay Local Government Unit

CAMP - COVID-19 Adjustment Measure Program

CDP - Center for Disaster Preparedness

CDRC - Citizens' Disaster Response Center

CDRN - Citizens' Disaster Response Network

CDRRMC - City Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council

CDV - Community Development Volunteers

CHO - City Health Office

CONCERN - Center for Emergency Aid, Rehabilitation and Development, Inc.

CoP - Community of Practice

CopCE - Community of Practice on Community Engagement

COVID-19 - Coronavirus disease 2019

CSO - Civil Society Organization

CSWD - City Social Welfare Development

DLO - Dangolaan Ladies Organization

DRR - Disaster Risk Reduction

DRRM - Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

DRRNetPhils - Disaster Risk Reduction Network Philippines

DSWD - Department of Social Welfare and Development

EcoWeb - Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits, Incorporated

EPRI - Economic Policy Research Institution

FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization

FBO - Faith Based Organization

FGD - Focus Group Discussion

GB - Grand Bargain

GBV - Gender Based Violence

GC - Gift Checks/Certificates

GHRP - United Nations Global Humanitarian Response Plan

GK - Gawad Kalasag

GMA - Global Media Arts

GNDR - Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction

HCT - Humanitarian Council Team

HoR - House of Representatives

IATF - Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases

ICVA - International Council of Voluntary Agencies

IDPs - Internally Displaced Persons

INGO - International Non-Government Organization

ISCBDRM - Institutionalising Sustainable Community Based Disaster Risk Management

ISM - Iligan Survivors Movement

JICA - Japan International Cooperation Agency

KII - Key Informant Interview

LAFCCOD Inc. - Lanao Aquatic and Marine Fisheries Center for Community Development, Incorporated

LGBTQ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning

LGU - Local Government Unit

LSIs - Locally Stranded Individuals

MDRRMO - Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office

MHT - Mindanao Humanitarian Team

MECQ - Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine

NAPC-VDC - National Anti-Poverty Commission-Victims of Disasters and Calamities

NCR - National Capital Region

NDRRMC - National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council

NDRRMP - National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan

NFA - National Food Authority

NGA - National Government Agency

NGO - Non-Government Organization

NHA - National Housing Authority

OCD-CBTS - **Office of Civil Defense-Capacity Building and Training Service**

OCHA - United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OXFAM - Oxford Committee for Famine Relief

PDRF - Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation

PINGON - Philippine International Non-Government Organization Network

PMPI - Philippine Misereor Partnership Inc.

PO - People's Organization

PPE - Personal Protective Equipment

R.A. - Republic Act

RILHUB - Resilience and Innovation Learning Hub

RMM - Reclaiming Marawi Movement

RSD - Right to Self Determination

RT-PCR test - Real-Time Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction Test

SAFER - Shared Aid Fund for Emergency Response

SAP - Social Amelioration Program

SARANAY - Samahang Responsableng Anak ng Nayon

TAF - The Asia Foundation

TWG - Technical Working Group

UCT - Unconditional Cash Transfer

UN - United Nations

UNDRR - United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UN-HCT - United Nations Humanitarian Country Team

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

UPRI - University of the Philippines Resilience Institute

VAW - Violence Against Women

VSO Philippine - Voluntary Services Overseas Philippines

WHO - World Health Organization

ZEP2030 - Zero Extreme Poverty Philippines 2030

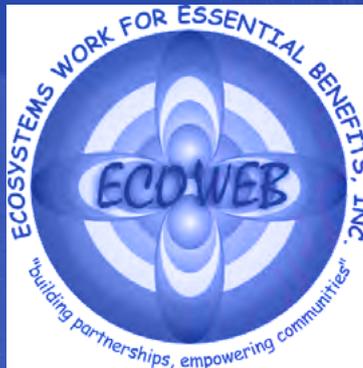
The Organizations



Concern, Inc.



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
NETWORK PHILIPPINES
(DRRNetPhils)



RDRRAC, Inc.



Center for *Disaster* Preparedness Foundation, Inc. / CDP

Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP) has evolved from being a disaster resource training center into a regional resource center based in the Philippines. In order to fulfill its vision of safe, resilient, and developed communities, CDP aims to capacitate duty-bearers and service providers to engage in and promote inclusive Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (CBDRRM) and provide synergy for different sectors' engagement. What is unique with CDP is its experience and expertise in the field of CBDRRM, including its advocacy on climate change adaptation and mitigation (CCAM).

With capability building as its core competency, CDP has contributed to the enabling of communities and service providers from the NGOs and government sector in various areas of CBDRRM. Through training, interactive fora, consultancies, research and publication, networking and advocacy, CDP has contributed to the mainstreaming of CBDRRM, specifically the proactive measures of preparedness, mitigation and prevention, in the agenda and operations of local and international groups.

CDP continues to commit itself to more sharing and learning in CBDRRM to achieve public safety, disaster resilience and equitable and sustainable community development. New areas in CBDRM which CDP will continue to engage in include urban disaster mitigation, children and youth participation, governance, gender, disability-inclusion, climate change, environmental management, and gender.

Community Services Program

Our program on community services handles the implementation of projects and activities in our partner communities. They focus on enabling vulnerable sectors to uphold their rights and implement DRRM endeavors in their communities and capacitating Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils (LDRRMCs) and Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Offices (LDRRMOs) that work with vulnerable sectors.

CDP endeavors to help communities have:

- ✓ Organized/Consolidated People's Organizations (POs)
- ✓ Organized/Re-activated LDRRMC
- ✓ Established LDRRMOs
- ✓ Local DRRM Trainers
- ✓ Relief Operations and Psychosocial Support Interventions

This program handles CDP's long-term community projects and conducts:

- Community-based researches
- Organizational development interventions for vulnerable groups
- DRRM capacity enhancement endeavors
- Visits, meetings, dialogues, mobilizations to promote advocacy concerns
- Damage, Needs, and Capacity Assessment (DNCA) and Resource Mobilization



Technical Assistance Program

This program is sanctioned mainly to enhance capacities of duty bearers and service providers to develop, mainstream, or implement development-oriented DRRM programs and services. Hence, it partners with government, non-government, church-related, educational, people's organizations, and private/business organizations to provide technical support and services such as the following:

Research and Knowledge Product Development:

- ▮ Scoping
- ▮ Risk Assessment
- ▮ Project/Program Evaluation
- ▮ Pilot-testing of DRRM Tools
- ▮ DRRM-Related Researches
- ▮ Production of DRRM Information, Education, and Campaign (IEC) materials
- ▮ DRRM Events Organizing
- ▮ Study Tours
- ▮ Learning Events
- ▮ DRRM Fora and Consultations

With our mission always in mind, we conduct courses, trainings, and workshops on:

- ▮ Family-Level Preparedness
- ▮ Risk Assessment (Hazard, Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment),
- ▮ Early Warning Systems including Development of Simulation Exercises and Drills
- ▮ DRRM Planning and Contingency Planning
- ▮ Rights-Based Humanitarian Action and Protection
- ▮ Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services

To replicate the good practices and promote a culture of safety and preparedness towards resiliency, CDP also engages in conducting study tour and other learning events relating to the aforesaid themes. Issues, practices, and newly evolving concepts related to disasters and development are also looked into by the organization through studies and researches. Findings are used to complement and improve service delivery to communities and partners, advocacy and public awareness activities, and production of C4D materials.



Center for Emergency Aid, Rehabilitation and Development, Inc. / **CONCERN, INC.**

About the Organization

Concern, Inc. was formed in 1986 by concerned individuals from the academe, the churches, people from various profession, and leaders of people's organizations, as their response to the devastation wreaked on communities by the storms that hit Central Luzon at a frequency of 5-7 times a year. It has broadened its membership since then to people who share its vision, mission and goal. Membership is by invitation, and the Board of Director approves application for membership.

Since 1988, its responses have ranged from disaster preparation, emergency relief delivery, early recovery, reconstruction/rehabilitation, and lately, development and innovation for climate change adaptation and helping/supporting Marawi victims' rights and efforts at rebuilding their lives in secure, climate change resilient communities towards a safer and more resilient communities.

Guiding Framework

People-Based; Development-Oriented (PBDO)

Disaster Intervention

- Relies principally on the organized effort of the most vulnerable sectors to determine and address the root causes of their vulnerabilities, and improve their capabilities;
- Seeks to comprehensively address the real needs and interest of the people at every phase of the disaster management cycle;
- Oriented towards changing the conditions that cause people's vulnerabilities and lack of capacity to deal with disasters.

Vision

Prosperous people, striving to develop the potential of man for living the life to the fullest; freed from poverty, disempowerment and depredation, hunger and disease that stalked the land for centuries; liberated from the agony and wretchedness that accompany disasters and instead taking control of their lives and nature.

A country whose natural resources are nurtured to sustain life for its inhabitants and the next generation by ensuring that its forest is thick, its air clean, its rivers and seas clear/unpolluted and its soil rich for production.

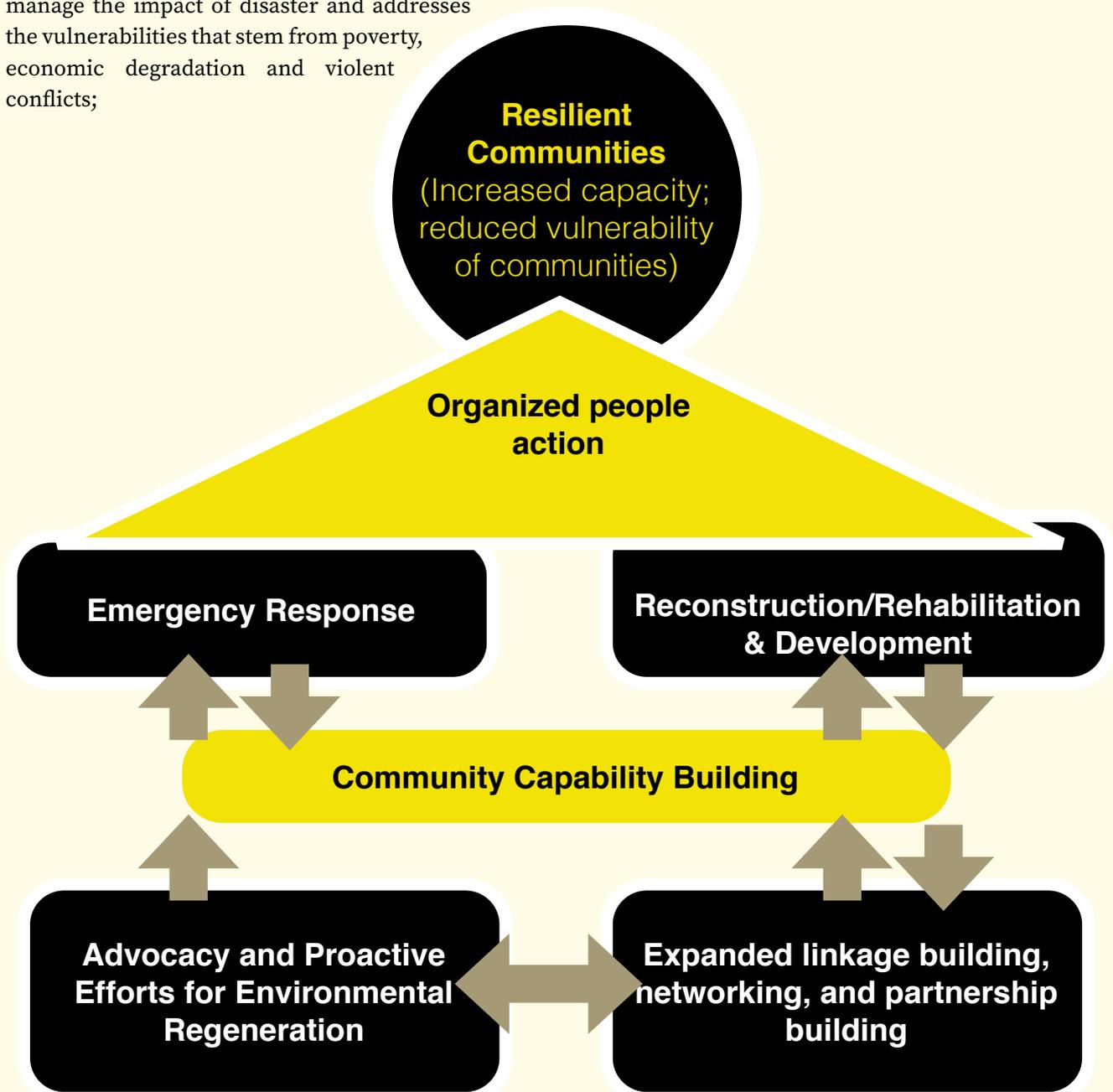
Mission

To organize communities capable of changing their lives, mastering their conditions and charting their future towards a vision of a better life and taking control over hazardous events and reducing vulnerabilities.

To form a national network of people's organizations committed to the PBDO principle with capacity to undertake the entire disaster response cycle and manage the impact of disaster and addresses the vulnerabilities that stem from poverty, economic degradation and violent conflicts;

a network that mobilizes resources and rallies its constituency to mitigate the effects of disaster on its victims until gradually, there shall emerge the Grassroots Disaster Response Machineries (GDRMs) organized nationally into a single network to pursue a setup where hazardous threats can no longer threaten nor shatter people's lives.

Programs





Disaster Risk Reduction Network Philippines / DRRNETPHILS

**DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
NETWORK PHILIPPINES
(DRRNetPhils)**



OUR VISION

Resilient communities contributing to sustainable development

OUR MISSION

DRRNetPhils develops and strengthens capacities of at-risk communities and stakeholders on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

**DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
NETWORK PHILIPPINES
(DRRNetPhils)**



OUR ADVOCACY

The network calls for the adoption, implementation, and institutionalization of inclusive and integrated DRRM and CCAM policies and programs at the national and local levels through:

- Greater participation of communities and CSOs in national and local DRRM
- Additional funding and greater accountability for DRRM programs
- More effective institutional mechanism for DRRM
- Enhanced planning and implementation on DRRM-CCAM
- Strengthening leadership in national and local humanitarian preparedness and response
- Establishing community of practice on DRRM and CCAM

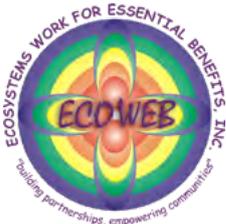
DRRNetPhils is a national network of DRRM practitioners and advocates with over 60 members throughout the Philippines. DRRNetPhils was formed in 2008 and celebrated its 10th year anniversary in 2018 (just over a year before the outbreak of COVID-19 was first reported in Wuhan, China).

DRRNetPhils is a member of Aksyon Klima (a network for climate change action), Balik Local (a movement formed after Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 to advocate for localization of humanitarian efforts), a National NGO representative to the United Nations Humanitarian Country Team (UN-HCT) and a member of the Global Network of CSO for Disaster Reduction (GNDR).

Recognized as one of the country's leading DRRM networks the DRRNetPhils has a seat on the National DRRM Council (NDRRMC) as one of the four CSO representatives as mandated by R.A. 10121 or

the Philippines DRRM Act of 2010. The network advocated for the passage of this law to provide the grassroots communities our members represent with an enabling policy environment to pursue and strengthen efforts for DRRM. The network was also involved in the localization of the law and its implementing rules and regulations together with gathering feedback and recommendations on the issues, challenges, and successes of implementation of the law.

DRRNetPhils works closely with government partners and other disaster risk reduction stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of R.A. 10121 to amplify the voices of vulnerable communities and citizens on the national stage.



Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits, Inc. / ECOWEB

Ecoweb, Inc. is a non-stock, non-profit corporation, and a national Non-Government Organization based in Iligan City, Lanao del Norte registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The ECOWEB acronym stands for “*Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits, Incorporated*”. The organization was founded on May 30, 2006.

Ecoweb’s Programs and projects are focused in addressing the inter-linking problems of poverty, conflict, environmental degradation, climate change impact, and poor governance that make communities vulnerable to disaster risks both natural and human-induced.

The Four Interlinking Problems



ECOWEB adopts an integrated approach in the implementation of its programs and projects that prioritize the most vulnerable groups and communities to include Internally Displaced Peoples (IDP) and affected of disasters both natural and human-made; Indigenous People and minorities;

conflict-affected communities; women; youth, children; elderly; persons with disability; small and marginal farmers, fisher folks and rural workers, informal settlers, among other vulnerable sectors.

ECOWEB envisions “A Peaceful and Progressive Society Living in a Safe Environment.”

ECOWEB commits to its mission: “Building Partnerships, Mobilizing Resources, Empowering Communities.”

ECOWEB hopes to achieve five (5) major goals:

1. Improved Social Relations
2. Safe environment and resilient communities
3. Sustainable livelihoods of communities
4. Inclusive governance
5. Sustainable local institutions

Under its 10-year Strategic Plan for 2017 to 2026, ECOWEB has adopted five (5) major program strategies which are being implemented in an integrated manner at the community level. These are:

1) Sustained Advocacy for Localizations and Inclusive Governance (SALIG)

ECOWEB works for the effective participation of the vulnerable and marginalized sectors in governance from local to national level. Capacity enhancement of community-based groups and local partners is being endeavored to effectively engage the government agencies through their designated representatives. ECOWEB facilitates effective people’s participation in development and land use planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of government programs.

Capacity building of the Indigenous People groups/ communities; Internally Displaced People; small farmers, fisher folks and the rural poor; persons with disability; informal sector and urban poor, among others for their effective engagement with the local and national governments is a concern of this program. The cooperation and collaboration



of women and men in a way that addresses power imbalance is being endeavored to have an effective lobby for making government policies and programs inclusive and responsive to the issues and concerns of the poor, marginalized and vulnerable.

Through this program, it is also aimed that local groups and institutions can be more capacitated to sustain their own development and peace initiatives while influencing policies, systems and structures at various level towards making governance more gender responsive, inclusive, peace-enabling, culture-sensitive, transparent, accountable and facilitative of sustainable development.

2) Peace Action and Conflict Transformation (PACT)

ECOWEB advocates for Peace at the different levels of society by employing creative strategies such as Cinema for Peace and Historical Journey, among others. At the grassroots level, Peace Actions focus on transforming resource-based and other forms of conflict by enabling people in conflict and local institutions to initiate actions towards conflict transformation and resolution. The program also advocates for mainstreaming peace-building and

conflict transformation concepts in local government development planning and programming and enables local actors to initiate policy advocacy for institutionalizing peace promoting programs. Peace-enabling actions also aim to address issues and prevent violent extremism.

3) Sustainable Livelihoods and Social Enterprises (SLiSE)

ECOWEB promotes sustainable resource (soil, water, forest) development and management technologies, endeavors for food security and productivity enhancements and develops community-based social enterprises following a value-chain approach as strategies for developing an inclusive sustainable local economy that would ensure benefits for the more vulnerable and marginalized. This is implemented integrating the concerns for the environment, gender and peacebuilding.

ECOWEB also initiates social enterprise strategies, facilitates access of services and support from the government and mobilizes responsible investments for ensuring sustainable livelihoods and enterprises of communities and for sustaining its ECOWEB development programs.



4) Resilience Improvement Capacity Enhancement (RESILIENCE)

ECOWEB works for localizing response to global concerns about climate change and the increasing vulnerability of communities to both natural and human-made hazards. This program promotes Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) and Integrated Risk Management (IRM) approaches in addressing disaster and climate risks and improving resilience of vulnerable sectors and communities.

Improving local capacity for preparedness; response to, recovery and rehabilitation of the impact of disasters; mitigation of and adaptation to climate and disaster risks shall be aimed at in the capacity enhancement of partner communities and local groups and agencies. ECOWEB works for risk-informed local government land use and development planning to reduce climate and disaster risks and for enabling local systems and programs to improve resilience of vulnerable communities. Prevention and reduction of environmental disaster risks shall be aimed at through promoting community-based biodiversity, soil and water conservation, sustainable resource management technologies, and rational utilization of natural resources.

5) Responses in settings of crisis Emergencies (RISE)

In times of crisis and disasters, ECOWEB initiates humanitarian and crisis responses promoting the Survivor and Community-led Response (SCLR) approach. The SCLR approach aims to enable the most vulnerable crisis affected population to help themselves survive and rise with dignity, uphold their rights and harness their capacity to address their emergency needs as well as the root causes of their vulnerability to crisis and disasters.

SCLR approach promotes the provision of multi-purpose cash grants for the most vulnerable and marginalized families and communities. SCLR approach ensures gender-responsive, inclusive, culture-sensitive, empowering, do-no-harm and peace-enabling humanitarian response processes. Complementation of efforts and assistance with other agencies is also being endeavored to better enable the crisis affected to address their emergency basic needs and for the recovery and rehabilitation of their damaged livelihood assets and community basic service infrastructures. Enabling the crisis affected to lead and manage their crisis response upholding dignity is also considered a psychosocial strengthening action especially for the more vulnerable affected population.

Through the approach, it is aimed that the crisis affected will be able to immediately bounce back and better manage its development efforts towards resilience. SCLR is an approach that ECOWEB promotes to link humanitarian, development and peace.



Lanao Aquatic and Marine Fisheries Center for Community Development, Inc. / **LAFCCOD**

Lanao Aquatic and Marine Fisheries Center for Community Development, Inc. (LAFCCOD, Inc.) is an NGO established in 1989 and registered with Securities and Exchange Commission bearing the registration number CNO93-000361. It implements Community-Based Coastal Resource Management for Peace and Development (CBCRM-PD) which aims to develop the capabilities and initiatives of the small fisher folks towards the restoration and conservation of coastal and marine resources and the achievement of self-reliance, genuine peace, and sustainable development in Illana and Panguil Bays. It has four major program components to facilitate the realization of the goal set by the project. These are the Capability-Building and Advocacy program (CBAP); Fisheries Resource Management and Development Program (FRMDP); Disaster Risk Reduction Program, and the Community Enterprise and Development Program (CEDP). Institutional Development and Networking are support component mechanisms deemed necessary to fully implement the four (4) major components. In all these components particularly in the education modules and information materials, peace, and gender mainstreaming are integrated.



Furthermore, LAFCCOD, Incorporated is a non-government organization (NGO) that serves the urban fisher folks, rural poor and other sectors spanning from women, youth, children and elderly on issues around community-based coastal resource management, fisheries resource management and development, capability building program, and community enterprise development program. The security of livelihood and tenure being one of the overarching objectives of the program is one of the focused programs of LAFCCOD in its efforts to address the threats and impacts of Climate Change and Natural Disasters. It has active and dynamic members of the Board of Trustees (BOT) who meet regularly. LAFCCOD is also equipped with committed and competent staff who execute its plans and activities. Currently, it has 10 regular staff and numbers of volunteers carrying out its projects and services.



Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation / PDRF



Established in 2010, the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) is the country's major private sector coordinator for disaster resilience. As an alliance of businesses dedicated to building the disaster risk management capabilities of the private sector in the country, PDRF aims to contribute to the sustainable development and general welfare of the Filipino people.

Composed of over 60 member companies, PDRF is co-chaired by PLDT-Smart Communications Chairman Manuel Pangilinan, Ayala Corporation Chairman and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, and Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle.

PDRF's programs and initiatives cover all four pillars of disaster risk reduction and management. By continuously working with the business sector, the humanitarian sector, international organizations, non-government entities, and government agencies, PDRF strengthens the disaster resilience of communities and businesses across the country.



Ranaw Disaster Response and Rehabilitation Center / RDRRAC

On March 16, 2000, armed clashes erupted between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) insurgents in Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte. The rebels occupied the municipality centers of Kauswagan, Munai and Talayan for days. As a result of this armed conflict, certain areas in Central Mindanao suffered extensive damage to properties and resulted to the dislocation and suffering of civilians. The armed clashes spilled over to other provinces such as Maguindanao, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Lanao del Norte, and Lanao del Sur. Since then, more thousand displaced families filled the evacuation centers set up at nearby town centers and cities.

On the second day, March 17, NGOs and POs in Iligan City immediately met and discussed how to help the families who were staying at evacuation centers in the City. That day, the Task Force Civilian Protection (TFCP) in Lanao was formed. Members of the Task Force were later expanded to NGOs and POs in Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, and Marawi City.

TFCP was organized primarily to respond to the immediate needs of the civilians affected by natural calamities and human-made disasters such as the ongoing armed conflict in Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur. However, most of the evacuees express the need for them to undertake productive activities because they could not just depend on dole-out assistance forever. A result of the Fact Finding Mission conducted in the month of May 2000 showed that most of the evacuees suffered emotional disturbances due to severe fear, hunger, and shock as to what they had witnessed during the height of the armed confrontation in their communities.

Recognizing the importance of a service program that will comprehensively respond to any form of disaster and address the relief and rehabilitation needs of victims, TFCP members decided to establish the Ranaw Disaster Response and Rehabilitation Center (RDRRAC), Inc. and registered it with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on August 2000.

TFCP remains to be the implementing machinery of RDRRAC in any emergency response, relief and medical missions to be conducted and also in launching fact-finding missions.

Programs and Services of the Institution

- Disaster Preparedness & Emergency Response Program
- Comprehensive Rehabilitation Program
- Human Rights Promotions & Para-legal Services
- Research & Advocacy Program
- Institutional Development Program

Overview

Center for Disaster Preparedness

The SFDRR Priority Action 4 emphasizes enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to Build Back Better, which includes MHPSS. In this study, CDP draws from experience in undertaking MHPSS activities since the onslaught of the pandemic to highlight the critical need of ensuring that DRRM efforts such as MHPSS are institutionalized by incorporating them in the policy, plans, and programs involving all thematic areas.

CONCERN

This study is all about the Marawi IDPs experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic. It aims to study discriminatory practices in which the IDPs are subjected to under conditions of COVID-19 pandemic and to provide opportunity for collective sharing of insights and experiences of IDPs during the pandemic and to document the lessons, challenges and insights of pursuing IDPs meaningful participation in addressing discrimination in governments response to Covid-19.

DRRNetPhils

This case study aims to explore the continuing work of the network to achieve its vision, mission and advocacy actions in the midst of a pandemic – how the changing practices and culture have provided challenges, constraints and opportunities the network readily adapted to in order to continue its work in DRRM.



ECOWEB

The objective for this case study is to promote and institutionalize the implementation of Grand Bargain commitments on localization and participation revolution at the country level. Moreover, this initiative aims to assist in creating a greater sense of momentum and provide the space to explore synergies and linkages with existing humanitarian coordination mechanisms and all stakeholders involved.



LAFCCOD

The case study is a product of a series of Consultations, FGDs and Learning sessions together with men, women, youth, and elderly who are coming from both Moslem and Christian communities where LAFCCOD, Inc. embarked its mission. It shows the effect, the learning, wisdom and some innovation as people in the community struggle to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.



PDRF

In response to the pandemic, Project Ugnayan, a multi-sectoral, collaborative effort spearheaded by the Ayala Group of companies with the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), the private sector, local government units, and Caritas Manila, was organized. The project provided unconditional emergency cash assistance to economically vulnerable families in the Greater Manila Area to address food security needs of those affected by the first ECQ last 16 March to 16 June, 2020. The project's key feature lies in its decision to use gift certificates as the medium of assistance and the selection of Caritas Manila as the distributing arm of the project. This study contributes to the body of literature on pandemic response directed at food insecurity in urban poor communities and showcases the role of the private sector in community engagement.



RDRRAC

The study aims to revisit the situation of disaster survivors of December 17, 2011 and to establish collaboration in order to alleviate and strengthen the united IDPs as a vehicle of continuous oversight for the benefits of their ranks.



The Case studies

Ang Tanglaw na Hatid ng Damayan at Kumustahan:

Coping and Dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic through MHPSS



Executive Summary

The past year saw an unprecedented global disaster as the COVID-19 pandemic affected the world and impacted every aspect of life and society as we know it. As is invariable in any disaster, the marginalized and vulnerable were disproportionately affected by this, not only making them more susceptible to getting the virus but also exacerbating the risks and vulnerabilities they face. The most at-risk and vulnerable sectors usually bear the brunt of disasters since most of them do not have adequate resources and lack access to basic social services such as nutrition and healthcare.

Amid this disaster, it is the unfaltering sense of solidarity and support across different sectors, particularly at the community level, that has helped affected sectors cope and deal with the strenuous and painful effects of the current health and socioeconomic crises.

Throughout the past year, duty-bearers and stakeholders have gotten a better grasp on the significance of providing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services for their respective staff and constituencies, realizing that it is a crucial part of realizing community resilience and social protection. Under SFDRR Priority Action 4, much emphasis has been given in enhancing

disaster preparedness for effective response and to Build Back Better, which includes MHPSS.

As one of the staunch advocates of MHPSS especially in CBDRRM, CDP undertook the conduct of MHPSS activities and sessions since the onslaught of the pandemic in April 2020, responding to the urgent need for support by its own staff as well as DRR responders and frontliners on the ground. In partnership and consultation with InTouch, a group of psychologists and MHPSS experts, CDP was able to initiate and carry out MHPSS response efforts in its focus areas and partner communities in Cavite, Northern Samar, Benguet, Camarines Norte, Isabela, Pasig City, and Quezon City, among many other partners.

Through the discussion and analysis, the study brought to light four interconnected themes surrounding the experiences of the most affected sectors:

- ▀ Disproportionate impacts on the affected and vulnerable were underscored
- ▀ Increase in the level of personal understanding and appreciation of MHPSS
- ▀ Lessening of stigma surrounding MHPSS
- ▀ Impact on institutional appreciation and understanding of MHPSS

It was uncovered that MHPSS is a vital part of disaster response and thus should be mainstreamed and integrated not only under the pillar of disaster response but in the whole DRRM system. Through the experiences recounted and shared by the respondents, the study results further draw attention to the critical need to ensure that DRRM efforts such as MHPSS are institutionalized by incorporating them in the policy, plans, and programs involving all thematic areas: Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Disaster Preparedness, Disaster Response and Immediate Recovery, and Disaster Recovery and Rehabilitation.

To support this, more basic technical guidance and literature needs to be generated and made accessible to policymakers and duty-bearers, particularly at the local level to aid LGUs in undertaking MHPSS in their respective localities.

While it is awe-inspiring and encouraging to witness our collective care and spirit of Bayanihan (Solidarity) at work, the only way to ensure the permanence and institutionalization of valuable DRRM efforts is to make sure that they will remain integrated into policy and planning well beyond the scope of the administration or projects/movements that facilitated their implementation.

To achieve a genuine whole-of-society approach to resilience and development, MHPSS should not be viewed in a vacuum; it should be taken as the very core element of resilience and sustainable development, in which the inequities and vulnerabilities encumbering the wellbeing and development of the people – particularly the most vulnerable sectors – are addressed, as we are only as resilient as our frailest sectors.

Background

The past year saw an unprecedented global disaster as the COVID-19 pandemic affected the world and impacted every aspect of life and society as we know it. As is invariable in any disaster, the marginalized and vulnerable were disproportionately affected by this, not only making them more susceptible to getting the virus but also exacerbating the risks and vulnerabilities they face. The most at-risk and vulnerable sectors usually bear the brunt of disasters since most of them do not have adequate resources and lack access to basic social services such as nutrition and healthcare.

Amid this disaster, it is the unfaltering sense of solidarity and support across different sectors, particularly at the community level, that has helped affected sectors cope and deal with the strenuous and painful effects of the current health and socioeconomic crises. Among many initiatives that were organized by myriad organizations and movements to help alleviate the burden and distress vulnerable sectors were confronted with, the setting up of community kitchens, community pantries, and relief drives proved how civic action and community solidarity are not only alive and well amid these trying times, but also serve as crucial lifelines that keep us afloat in the middle of this overwhelming crisis.



Time and again, our collective concern for one another has helped us get through these challenging times, as it also empowers us to unite and take critical action for our own safety, protection, and wellbeing. If there's one thing that has remained apparent in this protracted disaster, it is the huge role community care has played in our coping and survival.

When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out last year, many CSOs and humanitarian aid organizations undertook response efforts that not only helped complement and augment the response efforts of the government but also facilitated further multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder partnership and collaboration, which helped the latter gain a better perspective and more profound understanding on the importance of mental health and psychosocial support. Throughout the past year, duty-bearers and stakeholders have gotten a better grasp on the significance of providing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services for their respective staff and constituencies, realizing that it is a crucial part of realizing community resilience and social protection. Under SFDRR Priority Action 4, much emphasis has been given in enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to Build Back Better in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. MHPSS has been highlighted as one of the most critical primacies under this priority action, since *“mental health and wellbeing are explicitly addressed in the Sendai Framework Priority for Action Area 4 and further examination of Sendai priorities and indicators suggests that MHPSS services may be relevant to all four Sendai priorities and for indicators A2, A3, B2, D2, and D7 (Gray, Hanna, and Reifels; 2020).”*

As one of the staunch advocates of MHPSS especially in the field of Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (CBDRRM), CDP undertook the conduct of MHPSS activities and sessions since the onslaught of the pandemic in April 2020, responding to the urgent need for support by its own staff as well as DRR responders and frontliners on the ground. In partnership and consultation with InTouch, a group of psychologists and MHPSS experts, CDP was able to initiate and carry out MHPSS response efforts in its focus areas and partner communities in Cavite, Northern Samar, Benguet, Camarines Norte, Isabela, Pasig City, and Quezon City, among many other partners.

Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was enacted in March 2020, CDP strived to cater to frontliners and responders who necessitated MHPSS, delivering vital support and comfort to myriad DRRM personnel from different partner localities and communities. Many were unaware about the importance of safeguarding their mental and emotional wellbeing, making them pleasantly surprised after the session. Many conveyed a sense of relief and comfort, saying, *“Sarap naman sa feeling na kinukumusta (It feels nice to be asked how we are doing amid all this),”* and *“I realized na hindi lang po ako nag-iisa sa mga problema na nararanasan ko. May mga tao na makakaintindi sa akin bilang isang kabataan (I realized that I wasn't alone and there are other people who can relate to and understand what I'm going through).”* The program served as an avenue for me to share what I have been through during these trying times amidst the pandemic.

The conduct of MHPSS sessions has since afforded opportune venues for DRR frontliners and responders alike to confront and deal with issues and concerns they might have overlooked or repressed due to the greater urgency of their duties and responsibilities. Through the conversations facilitated by these MHPSS sessions, they were able to grasp how important it is to prioritize their psychosocial wellbeing, facilitating better coping mechanisms and strategies at the individual level that have, in turn, better strengthened their capacities and existing support systems both in the household and workplace settings.

In the context of disasters in the Philippines, mental health and wellbeing have often been overlooked, since common mental health problems (e.g. non-clinical depression, chronic lethargy and sadness, fatigue, anxiety) are seldom recognized as serious health issues that need to be addressed. Usually, the issue of mental health is fraught with stigma and also confusion, as people with mental health problems or PMHP have either been dismissed and written off as mere jokes and/or anecdotes (because of the perceived normalcy of a person's appearance and demeanor) or deemed incapable of recovery and functioning (because of the severity of their condition) (Tanaka, C., Tuliao, M.T.R., Tanaka, E. et al).

These observations and experiences have reinforced the importance of MHPSS, particularly at the local level. For more than two decades now, CDP has been advocating for MHPSS especially across various levels of engagement, underscoring the significance of palliative care for disaster-affected sectors and frontliners alike.

By the same token, CDP acknowledges that MHPSS serves vital to the wellbeing and recovery of communities as it not only promotes and facilitates healthy ways of dealing with grueling and disastrous situations, but also aids in processing collective trauma which, in turn, helps in promoting and safeguarding the people's collective memory of the disaster, so that they can better assert their rights and demand accountability from the duty-bearers and institutions accountable for ensuring their recovery and resilience.

It is against this backdrop that a case study underlining the primacy of MHPSS services is conducted, given that there is also scarce literature surrounding the issue of mental health and MHPSS in the landscape of DRRM. Through this preliminary endeavor to map out the local context and situation of MHPSS in DRRM, the case study is aimed at initially gathering and documenting the wisdom, lessons, practices, and innovations obtained and fostered by partner duty-bearers, stakeholders, and communities in MHPSS. The initial locales that were involved in this undertaking were Itogon in Benguet (Luzon), Laoang and Catubig in Northern Samar (Visayas), and partners from the Salug Valley region in Zamboanga Peninsula (Mindanao).

Through a series of focus group discussions conducted via video teleconferencing app Zoom, local duty-bearers and stakeholders who had primarily served as frontliners and responders at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic last year were asked to recount the experiences and lessons they gained since responding to the disaster and ensuing crises, sharing and imparting both good practices and challenges they obtained and encountered amid the whirlwind that transpired when the COVID-19 pandemic first broke out. To maintain discretion, respondents' identities were not expressly identified in this case study to ensure their privacy and retain the confidential nature of any sensitive concerns and views they shared during the conduct of the MHPSS activities.

Parallel to the main objective of the CoP, this endeavor facilitated opportunities for participatory and collaborative knowledge sharing, especially among duty-bearers and stakeholders at the local and community levels. It is the greater aim of this undertaking to ensure that the results of this study as well as the overall compendium in which this case study will be published will be conveyed and shared to the latter, acknowledging that the at-risk and affected sectors on the ground serve to learn from and benefit the most from the said knowledge output.

Findings and Discussion

Through the discussion and analysis, the study brought to light four interconnected themes surrounding the experiences of the most affected and vulnerable sectors who underwent MHPSS activities:

FIGURE 1. LIST OF INTERCONNECTED THEMES SURROUNDING THE EXPERIENCES OF THE MOST AFFECTED AND VULNERABLE SECTORS WHO UNDERWENT MHPSS ACTIVITIES

1

Disproportionate impacts on the affected and vulnerable underscored

2

Increase in the level of personal understanding and appreciation of MHPSS

3

Lessening of stigma surrounding MHPSS

4

Impact on institutional appreciation and understanding of MHPSS

DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS ON THE AFFECTED AND VULNERABLE UNDERSCORED

The conduct of the MHPSS sessions further gave emphasis to the disproportionate impacts and effects of disasters on the most affected and vulnerable sectors, as it revealed that the current response mechanisms and services were inadequate for the tremendous disaster that had been wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing crises. To wit, one respondent averred that they only had one

service vehicle to utilize for fetching all the LSIs or returning residents from their locality, rendering the latter more distressed and distraught.

Respondents noted that they tried their best as local duty-bearers and stakeholders to address the overwhelming demand of the emergency by placating the affected LSIs and consulting with adjacent

barangays regarding their response mechanisms. Due to the intense stress and uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 virus, the local stakeholders who had responded as frontliners experienced immense stress and anxiety because apart from the strain caused by their work, they also feared that they might spread the disease to their own households and transmit the virus to their loved ones, particularly their children.

Along with this, they also observed how LSIs and other community members had struggled to follow and understand protocols imposed by the national and local government, signifying how affected populations and sectors were largely ill-informed at the onset of the pandemic. This then resulted in a lack of understanding and empathy on the part of the LSIs, given that they themselves were in great distress. To wit, respondents have noted:

“It’s hard to calm people down and cast away their worries because of the lack of sufficient assistance and their quarantine areas are not conducive as temporary shelters. People sometimes downplay COVID-19 and try to violate quarantine protocols. Resources are sometimes not enough for everyone which adds to the burden of the people who are quarantined (LSI), worried for the welfare of their children.”

“Before they are accepted in the barangay and before they apply for travel and service, [we] need to provide and prepare emergency food because there is no assurance that [the LSIs] will be taken and brought to the quarantine center immediately. LSIs are sometimes unsettled with [our response measures], taking these as a form of discrimination rather than just following health protocols.”

It is apparent that the situation wrought by the pandemic has magnified the vulnerabilities communities face when it comes to disasters, particularly in the thematic area of response and recovery, as it revealed that not only were they ill-equipped to respond to the needs of their affected sectors urgently, but they were also caught off guard when it came to the stress and anxiety that had engulfed them as they strived to do fulfill their mandates and duties amid the pandemic. This further underlines the fact that disasters disparately affect at-risk and vulnerable sectors, which also further signifies the critical need for mainstreaming MHPSS activities and services to ensure that all affected stakeholders and sectors are guaranteed palliative care and support in the event of a disaster.







To put it more precisely, one of the respondents affirmed:

“Napakalaki ng natutunan ko kasi nakikita mo yung mga problema ng mga tao sa community at nakikita rin namin sa LGU kung ano yung kailangan mo pang ibigay sa kanila. Nai-encourage namin silang magsalita kasi ‘yung iba ‘di nagsasalita sa una. Nakikita mo rin na yung problem ay hindi lang naman pandemic, kahirapan din (I learned so much about the constituencies we serve, as I learned more about the needs of affected sectors in the community. These have helped us determine what else we need to provide for them. Despite challenges in bringing participants out of their shell, we encouraged them to speak about the issues and concerns they are faced with and realized that their greatest problem isn’t the pandemic but poverty).”

INCREASE IN LEVEL OF PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF MHPSS

Through the MHPSS sessions, DRR frontliners at the local level were able to determine how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is in their line of work, even strengthening their sense of compassion for their peers and fellow duty-bearers that had also been dealing with a lot of stress due to the COVID-19 response.

To wit, respondents noted that they were grateful to have undergone MHPSS sessions as it taught them that they weren't alone in this situation:

"I realized na hindi lang po ako nag-iisa sa mga problema na nararanasan ko. May mga tao na makakaintindi sa akin bilang isang kabataan (Through the MHPSS sessions, I realized that I am not alone in this and that there are people who understand and can relate to me, as part of the youth sector)." The program served as an avenue for me to share what I have been through during these trying times amidst the pandemic. "Malaki ang naitulong nito sa aking mental health kasi sa panahon na gusto ko nang tapusin ang buhay ko, dumating sila para sabihin sa akin at iparealize na kailangan kong ipagpatuloy ang aking laban sa mas malalaking hamon ng buhay (This

has been a big help on my mental health because at the point where I wanted to end my life, my peers reminded me and made me realize that I need to trudge on to face the bigger challenges in life)."

Along the same line, the MHPSS sessions also helped local duty-bearers and stakeholders gain a better understanding of the weight both their colleagues and clientele have been carrying due to the pandemic response, as most had previously given little regard for this amid the restlessness of the situation. Once they went through the MHPSS sessions, they were able to realize that mental health should be prioritized for everyone, as doing so will not only aid them in dealing with their problems but will also help them become better public servants:

"Kapag napangalagaan ang mental health, makakatulong tayo sa ating mga client kung pano nila mahahandle ang kani-kanilang mga sitwasyon sa pandemic (When we take care of our mental health, we will be able to help our clients better, especially in handling their respective concerns and predicaments)."

"Malaking tulong ang MHPSS sa aming mga frontline workers kasi naibabahagi din namin [ang mga kaalaman] sa aming mga client

(The conduct of MHPSS sessions has been a big help because we are also able to impart what we learned to our clients)."

“Malaking bagay po sa amin lalo na sa barangay kasi doon ko nalaman na yung mga kasamahan ko ay may marami palang problema at wala ng masabihan. Nung nalaman nila na nagkatraining ako, marami nang pumupunta para humingi ng psychosocial na tulong (The conduct of MHPSS activities has been a big help to us, particularly at the community level, as it helped me better understand and sympathize with my peers who shared the many problems they were going through with little help or absence of a sound support systems. When my other co-workers and peers learned about this training, they immediately wanted to participate and engage in the MHPSS activities).”

“In this pandemic, siguro bawat isa ay need ang [MHPSS] skills to understand a person better kasi iba-iba ang nagiging epekto ng pandemya sa bawat isa. (In this pandemic, each and every one of us needs MHPSS to better understand a person as the effects of the pandemic on each of us can differ very much).”

Apart from this, the respondents have realized how mental health and emotional wellbeing of vulnerable sectors such as the children and youth should be given more attention, as it is the responsibility of

local governments to ensure that the latter are given proper care and guidance:

“[The LGU should conduct a] thorough [check] on our youth. They feel alone and secluded in this [pandemic]. It is LGU’s duty to give proper attention [and guidance] to the youth and some are on the wrong path because they feel that there is no one there for them.”

The increase in the level of understanding and appreciation of MHPSS, especially at the local and/or barangay levels, can better facilitate its mainstreaming not only in the thematic areas of response and immediate recovery but in the whole DRRM system. In conjunction with this, it will also help foster local advocates and facilitators who can better champion for the integration of MHPSS in DRRM policy, planning, and programming. Since they underwent and carried out the MHPSS activities themselves, they are in the best position to not only champion this in their respective LGUs but also to capacitate and roll this out to their constituencies, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized sectors. To be exact, one respondent noted:

“Malaki ang tulong ng psychosocial support sa pangkalahatan. Pwede din siyang gawin sa mga kaibigan, barkada, pamilya, hindi lang sa sektor. Parang gamot ito. Maraming salamat sa proyekto na ito at sa tulong niyo (We are really grateful for this project. The psychosocial support activities were a big help overall, as it made us realize that this is just like medicine in that we can use or administer it to ease the burdens not only of our constituencies but also that of our friends, family, and other relatives).”

LESSENING OF STIGMA SURROUNDING MHPSS

Inextricably linked with the previous thematic outcome is the facilitation of stigma reduction regarding mental health problems (MHPs) and MHPSS. Given that Filipino culture tends to maintain an insular or dismissive approach towards mental

health issues and problems for the most part, MHPSS is usually overlooked in the overall discourse of Health, DRRM, and other relevant areas of concern.

To add further context to this, a respondent noted:

“Mataas ang suicide rate dito sa amin kaya napakalaking tulong ng PSS, yung pagsasagawa ng training dito sa amin. (The conduct of PSS sessions was a really big help, as suicide rates are high in our locality.)”

Others also averred:

“[The MHPSS training and sessions were] indeed a big help to us as we were able to empathize and identify with our colleagues better.”

“Nailalabas mo yung mga hinaing [mo] tapos di ka nahihiyang magsalita at maglabas ng emosyon (Through the MHPSS sessions, we were able to disclose all our feelings and grievances: all the shyness and inhibition just melt away.)” “Nagiging safe space siya (It becomes a safe space).”

“Nababawasan yung problema. Narealize ko rin na kaya pala yun ang ginagawa ng instructor, pinapaimagine ka nagsasabi ng maganda, kasi nakakarelaax siya at nakakagaan ng loob. Tapos yung iba na di nagpa-participate sa una nakikita mo na nahahatak siya at nagpa-participate na after (Problems are alleviated in a sense [through the MHPSS sessions]. I also realized that the positive affirmations the instructor provides aid in reducing negative and destructive feelings. Another observation noted was the increase in participation throughout the conduct of the MHPSS interventions – those who did not join initially were convinced later on to join.)”

As gleaned from the previous thematic outcomes, the conduct of MHPSS sessions served as opportune avenues to encourage and cultivate champions among the participants who were engaged in the training and subsequent rollout of the MHPSS activities. They witnessed firsthand how their respective constituencies were able to gain clarity and relief from undergoing psychosocial support sessions:

“Yung nakita namin sa participants sa mga barangay na iyon, nailabas nila mga hinanakit at experience nila tulad ng SAP, ayuda, pagiging frontliner. Maraming tao ang naencounter namin, umiyak sila; nailabas nila yung stress nila. Nagkaroon ng reconciliation sa mga kasamahan nila sa trabaho. Nabawasan o natugunan yung depression na nararanasan nila (We bore witness to participants in the barangay who were able to divulge repressed feelings: Experiences as a front-liner, in doling out aid from the SAP. A lot of the people we engaged had emotional outbursts which served as a way to release stress. They not only managed to reduce the depression they were experiencing but also make amends with other colleagues who they might have had misunderstandings in the process of fulfilling their responsibilities).”

At its crux, though the stigma regarding MHPs and the onus entailed by mainstreaming MHPSS in fields such as Health and DRRM largely remain, this signifies a huge step toward the right direction in the journey to effectively mainstreaming and integrating MHPSS in DRRM.

As Gray, Hanna, and Reifels (2020) cited, *“If mental health and psychosocial wellbeing are incorporated within DRR efforts, both those who are affected and*

those who respond may be more likely to demonstrate resilience; engage actively in preparedness, response, and recovery efforts; and contribute to reconstruction and reestablishment of societal functioning.” This further denotes that when duty-bearers and affected sectors at the local/community levels are enabled and supported in all areas/phases of DRRM, they can very well serve as active partners for resilience.

IMPACT ON INSTITUTIONAL APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF MHPSS

Much like the impacts of the aforementioned MHPSS interventions on the individuals who participated in them, there have been significant developments in the focus locales in regard to mainstreaming MHPSS in DRRM policy and programming. To wit, respondents averred, *“Tinitingnan namin ‘yung mga proyekto niyo at maganda ang pagtingin ng mga opisyal namin. Sa mga topic natin, nakikita ko na hindi lang*

maliit na grupo ng tao ang natutulungan. Kaya mong kausapin yung mga tao (Our LGU has assessed the impact of your project on the community and the reception from our officials has been positive. This intervention has managed to help a lot of people, while also providing us an avenue to converse with the people).”



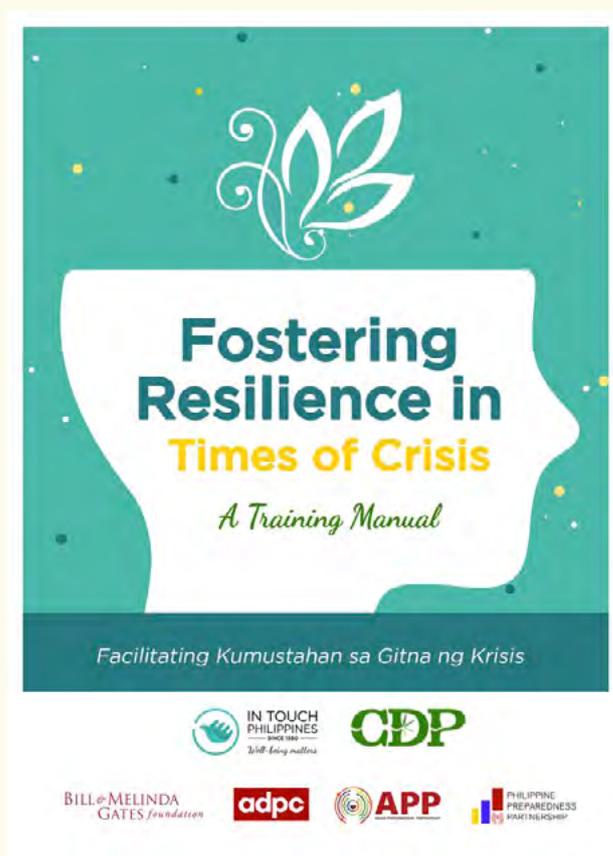
It is also evident that the local duty-bearers and stakeholders engaged in CDP's MHPSS efforts have been fostered as active champions for this cause, carefully working toward the improvement of their knowledge and wisdom in conducting MHPSS activities. To wit, respondents noted, *“Nagkaroon kami ng maikling feedbacking pagkatapos ng programa para malaman namin ang pagkukulang namin sa una at hindi na namin gawin sa next barangay. As we facilitate [more MHPSS sessions in the barangays], we are improving na din hanggang sa kami na ang gumagawa mismo. (We engaged in interactive feedback sessions where gaps and notes for improvement are discussed. As we facilitate more MHPSS sessions in the barangays, we managed to improve bit by bit until we gained the needed capacity and confidence to handle it on our own.)”*

“Ipagpatuloy pa rin namin itong PSS or kumustahan sa aming sector kasi kailangan siya. Magiging main activity siya. Hindi nga namin ini-expect na kami magiging facilitator ngayon sa youth. We are blessed na kami ang trainers nila (We will continue on with this PSS or Kumustahan in our sector because we

understand now that this is necessary. This will be one of our main activities. We really didn't expect to become facilitators for this training with other sectors, particularly the youth. We are blessed to be their trainers).”

Adding to this was the simplicity and ease of uptake of the materials given, which certainly aided in the rollout and localization of the MHPSS sessions at the barangay level. It was noted that previous MHPSS interventions were difficult to replicate which thus hindered them from capturing the interest of their target sectors. They certainly appreciated the clear-cut and straightforward MHPSS modules, which further facilitated the increase in the level of commitment and enthusiasm on the part of community sectors who had undergone training sessions on MHPSS. Respondents from the different localities further averred:

“Naisasama na rin namin yung PSS program hindi lang sa DRREAM kundi pati sa MSWD. Nailalagay na rin namin yung plans sa iba't-ibang sectors. Nai-institutionalize na yung MHPSS (We have managed



to integrate the PSS program beyond the scope of the project, as we have started to mainstream and institutionalize it in the plans of the MSWDO and other relevant sectoral plans).”

Similarly, The program “MHPSS: Kumustahan sa Gitna ng Krisis (Catching Up Amid the Crisis)” is one of the recipients of the KADASIG Award (Kabataan Padayon ang Sigasig Award) of the Province of Northern Samar, the rollout of which was carried out by the stakeholders from the youth sector of the Municipality of Laoang. The award was bestowed to 'the most adaptive and innovative youth initiative in the province.'

Noting how the enabling environment set by their LCE and the whole LGU has emboldened the young MHPSS volunteers to achieve great strides in the field of MHPSS and Youth Empowerment, the LYDO of Laoang averred that, “I always tell our youth volunteers that we are not doing this for the sake of the awards. With or without the awards, we will continue to deliver our services; we will continue to blaze our weapon of empowerment especially in the

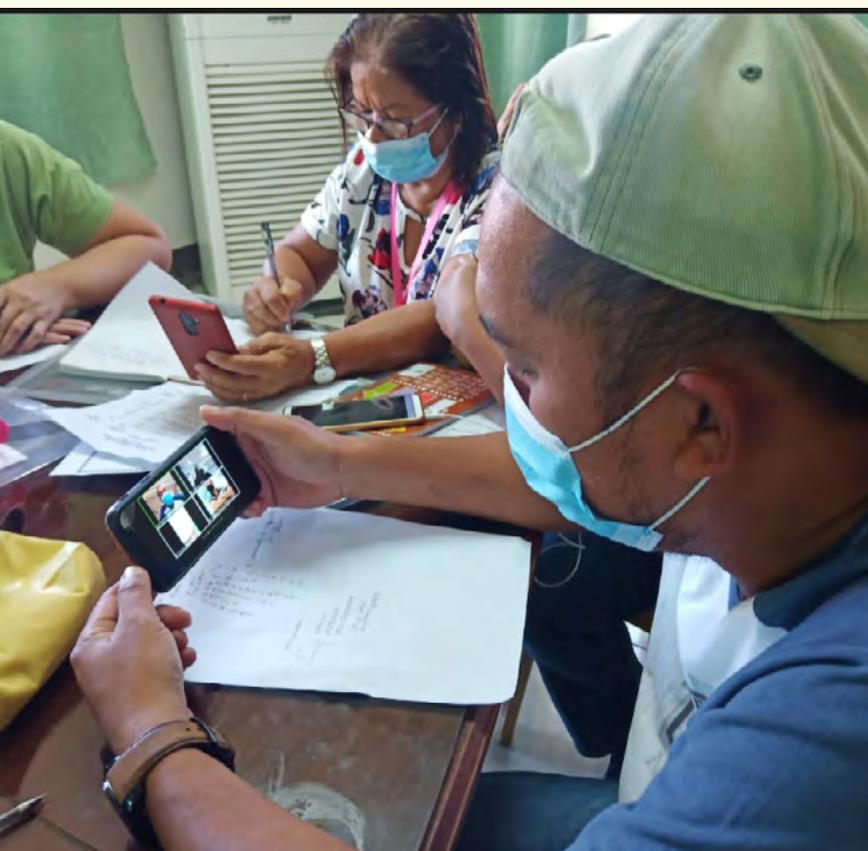
larger community. I also tell them that it's the impact that we're going to make and that it is the priceless feeling that we will experience.”

Apart from MHPSS, the young stakeholders and volunteers of Laoang are also currently enabled to undertake other programs in partnership with the MSWDO which seek to inform and educate other children and young people on the context and impacts of other social issues such as ASRH. The program is dubbed *Usapang Bukas Para Bukas* (Open Conversations for Tomorrow).

As the spark for public service is continuously stoked, the young stakeholders of Laoang along with the rest of the respondents have affirmed that the only way to ensure the mainstreaming and sustainability of these efforts is to integrate it into plans, policies, and programs across all levels, starting with the local level.

While it is awe-inspiring and encouraging to witness our collective care and spirit of *Bayanihan* (Solidarity) at work, the only way to ensure the permanence and institutionalization of valuable DRRM efforts is to make sure that they will remain integrated into policy and planning well beyond the scope of the administration or projects/movements that facilitated their implementation.

As also noted by the Laoang LYD Officer, “Sana mareplicate ang program ng ibang municipality kasi napakalaking tulong [ito] sa mga kabataan sa mga barangay. Sana magsilbi kaming inspirasyon sa kanila na tugunan ang pangangailangan ng mga kabataan sa kanilang mental health (We hope this program is replicated in other municipalities because it really is a big help to the young people at the barangay level. We hope that our undertaking has served as an inspiration to them to respond to the pressing needs of the young people, especially their mental health).”



Conclusion and Recommendations

Under the SFDRR, the global framework for DRRM covering the period of 2015-2030, the overall goal is to *“prevent new and reduce existing disaster risk through the implementation of integrated and inclusive economic, structural, legal, social, health, cultural, educational, environmental, technological, political, and institutional measures that prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disaster, increase preparedness for response and recovery, and thus strengthen resilience.”*

At the national level, many policies and frameworks, particularly RA 10121, make duty-bearers and stakeholders across all levels accountable for ensuring that all vulnerable sectors are involved in all thematic areas of DRRM. This signifies that the guiding structures and systems are mandated to ascertain the wellbeing of the populace, most especially the most at-risk and vulnerable.

However, it remains evident that ensuring the health and wellbeing of the citizenry remains an onerous challenge, especially amid the global pandemic and socioeconomic crisis the country is facing. In essence, the study further revealed that MHPSS, as with the overall landscape of DRRM, is very much a sociopolitical, thus reiterating that mental health should be one of the key priorities of the healthcare and social protection systems. Based on the wisdom and knowledge imparted by the study respondents and other related literature, the following relevant recommendations are presented:

➤ MHPSS should be mainstreamed and integrated in all thematic pillars of DRRM, ensuring that MHPSS interventions and mechanisms are already set in place even before the onslaught of a hazard;

➤ MHPSS should be integrated into policy, plans, and programs, from the bottom up, giving priority to all frontliners and essential workers as well as vulnerable sectors who bear the brunt of disasters;

➤ Without breaking discretion or confidentiality with which the MHPSS interventions are employed, insights, lessons, and other relevant information should be harnessed to ensure that efforts dedicated to disaster risk reduction are derived from the local context and situation;

➤ Collective or community care mechanisms and localized information dissemination systems should be established, recognized, and incentivized, as they will enable the sectors in the communities to partake in the response and recovery efforts and make them active partners in resilience building;

➤ Champions such as children and young people (as evidenced by the respondents from Laoang, Northern Samar) are fitting advocates and champions of MHPSS in the community, thus signifying that they should be better empowered to help in the institutionalization and mainstreaming of MHPSS across different levels of governance;

➤ In this light, consistent and inclusive IEC campaigns via myriad platforms, particularly social media, should be employed to raise awareness regarding MHPSS;

➤ MHPSS services should be made more inclusive and accessible to the most vulnerable sectors, especially amid the current situation;

➤ Publish more literature and knowledge outputs regarding MHPSS that are accessible and are geared to reduce the stigma surrounding MHPs and MHPSS;

➤ Publish more literature regarding the linkage between MHPSS and DRRM to underscore the importance of mental health and wellbeing as a crucial part to the attainment of resilience;

Continuously work to eliminate the stigma linked to MHPSS and MHPs at the community and household levels;

Foster physical and metaphysical spaces in the communities that will not only contribute to the mental and emotional wellbeing of the population but can also serve as safe and inclusive spaces for MHPSS;

For the civil society to continue to strengthen its networks and further engage myriad duty-bearers, sectors, and stakeholders across all levels of governance to ensure that MHPSS is effectively mainstreamed and integrated into policies, plans, and programs, especially at the national level;

For civil society, academe, the private sector, and all other relevant sectors to work together with the government to ensure the rights, wellbeing, and mental health of the most vulnerable sectors are met and prioritized, especially amid this global pandemic and socioeconomic crisis – ensuring that both the physical and mental health of workers and learners are safeguarded in the workplace and/or school settings (e.g. efficient delivery of basic social services, safe back-to-school or *Balik Eskwela* mechanisms to uphold the continuity of learning, and other rights-based mechanisms that give primacy to health over profit and long-term recovery and rehabilitation

MHPSS systems and mechanisms should tie into and correspond to the current social protection programs and mechanisms across all levels of governance, making sure that beyond the provision of palliative care, there are ready referral systems that can help address the root causes or causal factors of distress experienced by the client/s;

Ensure accessible mechanisms for MHPSS service delivery: Social media platforms, mobile phone/hotlines, and/or capacitate and empower young people and other sectors in the community members to conduct community care interventions/mechanisms as an initial provision of palliative care

At the very core, MHPSS echoes the imperative need to address the root causes of vulnerabilities faced by all affected sectors, particularly the most vulnerable. Albeit the remarkable impacts made by the collective action and solidarity or *Bayanihan* of the populace, there is no refuting that mental health and wellbeing are dependent on the quality of life of the community. Mental health should not be viewed in isolation of other aspects of development, as it is indivisibly linked to the inequities, risks, and vulnerabilities faced by the populace. It is thus necessary to continue to campaign and advocate for a genuine, inclusive, and whole-of-society approach to DRRM, which includes MHPSS, as wellbeing and resilience can only be realized if the whole population is able to fully enjoy their rights without fear of discrimination or threat to life.

References

- Gray, B., Hanna, F., Reifels, L. (14 March 2020). The Integration of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support and Disaster Risk Reduction: A Mapping and Review. Retrieved from https://res.mdpi.com/d_attachment/ijerph/ijerph-17-01900/article_deploy/ijerph-17-01900-v2.pdf
- Tanaka, C., Tuliao, M.T.R., Tanaka, E. et al. A qualitative study on the stigma experienced by people with mental health problems and epilepsy in the Philippines. *BMC Psychiatry* 18, 325 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-018-1902-9>
- UNDRR. (2015). Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Retrieved from https://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf

A Case Study of Marawi IDPs Experiences During the Covid-19 Pandemic



Executive Summary

Marawi City was in ruins after the 5-month battle between government forces and ISIS-inspired Daulah Islamiyah, more popularly known as the Maute Group. The siege occurred on May 23, 2017 and prompted hundreds of thousands to flee and left more than 1,000 dead. Its entire commercial center was left uninhabitable. The Marawi Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have been clamoring for their return to their former communities at the heart of the City of Marawi, referred to as the Ground Zero of the battle. Their previous attempts to return to their communities to start recovering their lives, homes and communities were blocked by the government in the past. Some 5,200 of them have been temporarily sheltered in 19 transitional areas for the past three and a half years. Others sought shelter with relatives elsewhere in the country (referred to as home-based; some rented housing units in the Marawi and in nearby City of Iligan. For the IDPs, the pandemic is not just an issue of health crisis but also of socio-economic and political crisis. Living in temporary and transitory shelters for almost 4 years, the dire state of the IDPs in Marawi is further exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic due to their already limited access to basic needs and social services such as healthcare, water, food, housing and sanitation.

The lack of access to clean water, poor waste management and garbage disposal, and open defecation due to overflowing septic tanks are some of the major issues that affect the health and sanitation of these communities. The provision of safe water, sanitation, waste management, and hygienic conditions are essential for protecting human health during the pandemic but it is impossible to achieve given the current state of the IDP communities. The need for water and hygiene projects continues to be a concern. The cramped and crowded conditions in temporary shelters are not physically and structurally

adequate in mitigating the spread of COVID-19 transmission, in fact, these conditions posed a tremendous problem in many transitory shelters.

Earlier last year, the imposition of strict community quarantines has led to the suspension of public transportation, while curfew was imposed and protocols only allowed certain people to leave home, thus, making it extremely difficult for the IDPs to find gainful employment and access government support and services. The imposition of restrictions and lockdowns only serve to increase the economic



precariousness of the IDPs and, for some, disruption of their very limited/meager livelihood activities. With less to no economic opportunities available to them, being infected by the COVID-19 virus would greatly impact their ability to cope and survive.

This study aims to study discriminatory practices to which the IDPs are subjected during the COVID-19 pandemic, to provide opportunity for collective sharing of insights and experiences of IDPs during the pandemic, and to document the lessons, challenges and insights of pursuing IDPs' meaningful participation in addressing discrimination in the government's response to COVID-19.

This study was conducted in 3 transitory shelters located in the city of Marawi - Sagonsongan, Boganga, and Rorogagus Transitory Shelter, where the volunteers had randomly selected IDPs residing in both Transitory Shelters. The participants who joined the FGDs gave their consent and the gathered data was treated with confidentiality.

Patterns of discriminations were identified and assessed based on:

1. Access to information/knowledge;
2. Material assistance to impoverished families adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic;
3. Required health protocols, right to security from COVID 19 and proper health care;

4. Equal treatment of violators of health protocols;
5. IDP children's access to education;
6. On strengthening people's capacity for meaningful participation.

It has been 4 years and many people are still displaced from their homes, living in temporary shelters or in the homes of relatives, not knowing how long this will last. It is known that the IDPs can only occupy the temporary shelter for a period of 5 years and this adds to their anxiety and frustration.

CONCERN Inc., in partnership with Reclaiming Marawi Movement, has been conducting a series of activities such as Mashwara (Listening and Conversation session), FGD's, IDP rights and Women's rights orientation. Most of our projects focus mainly on early recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation, while the most recent project focuses on development and involves claim-making. This is consistent with our development framework that requires projects to be people-based and empowering. We included discussions on rights – mostly socio-economic and environmental rights – in most of our trainings and interventions. For this project, it is important to understand how the COVID 19 pandemic affected the IDP communities and how different capacity building activities helped to provide IDPs, especially women and youth, with mechanisms through which they can raise their voices on issues relative to their right to rehabilitation and development, and to safer and more resilient communities.

Background

OUTBREAK OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THE PHILIPPINES

Last year, the country faced the ruthless impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The government announced lock downs to curb the spread of the disease. This prohibited millions of Filipinos from going outside of their homes, except for buying essential goods and necessities. During this time, all modes of transportation were suspended. Police and military officers were deployed in many areas such as Metro Manila, Cebu, and other places with a high number of COVID-19 cases. Checkpoints were placed to ensure the compliance of the people to health and safety protocols. Temporary closure of many establishments and businesses were also implemented, leaving many Filipinos jobless.

As the pandemic continues, the deepening crisis of socio-economic inequalities has become more and more impossible to ignore. The lockdown and the restrictions imposed limiting the people's movement have exacerbated the economic condition of the people affecting their daily livelihood activity that is a source of their income and that supports the needs of their family. Stay at home policy did not work in poor and marginalized communities such as in the transitional shelters wherein many of them rely on informal and short term jobs for family income.

The continued criminalization of people looking to fulfill their cultural, political, economic and social rights, including access to food, water and work, and especially amongst the IDPs has been happening daily.

The nationwide lockdown severely limits the freedom of movement and expression of everyone in the country. Local government officials and barangay officials were tasked to implement and impose any forms of 'punishment' to those who are caught violating the protocols. The militarized approach in providing disciplinary sanctions to the violators was undignified and aggressive. The people in the communities were treated unfairly by persons in authority and have been subjected to ill-treatment.

Such is the case of the IDPs in Marawi City who are still living in transitory shelters and suffered the brunt of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Living in transitory shelters for 4 years with limited access to basic social services, most especially health care services, having been infected by Covid-19 would mean additional burden to families who are struggling to live daily.

MARAWI CONTEXT AND EFFECTS OF COVID 19 PANDEMIC TO THE COMMUNITIES

Internally-displaced people (IDP) are people whose community and family lives have been disrupted, and have in fact been uprooted from their communities, normally as a consequence of a major disaster, this be stemming from natural or man-made hazards. Under the UN guidelines, they should be assisted in recovery efforts as early as three months from

displacement, or as soon as the situation allows, to minimize the impact of such displacement on the affected people.

Marawi IDPs in 17 transitional areas in Marawi and Lanao del Sur have been existing under extremely difficult situations since their evacuation in May

2017. The evacuation centers they were brought to, now called 'transitional areas', have been hastily set up and thus could not provide for even the most basic amenities for normal family and community life – sufficient potable water supply, power supply, sufficient shelter for all the evacuees, and facilities that normally accompany community life – schools, playground, social hall, community clinic, and the like. The premise was that they would not be staying there for long.

But the battle, which started on May 23, 2017, between no more than 100 armed militants from the Maute group, an Islamic fundamentalist group, and the government forces, lasted for nearly five months. The government declared the group routed and the battle ended in October 2017. From then on, evacuees from the 24-sq. km. Ground Zero, the center of the battleground, have been clamoring for access to their previous communities so they can start rebuilding their lives and communities. Such access had been denied, with government security forces blocking all attempts by the IDPs, even as it promised to take the

lead in their rehabilitation. Yet, until now, nothing significant has been delivered. The government has not endeavored to have power, water and sewerage systems re-installed; roads, drainage, and bridges have not been fixed. All basic infrastructures – schools, barangay halls, barangay health centers, etc. - have not been reconstructed. Meanwhile, none of the family-evacuees from Ground Zero have successfully reclaimed their former domain. Many remain in the 'transitional' areas until now, when the pandemic caught up with them in the first half of 2020.

As IDPs, the Marawi siege victims have been discriminated against, experiencing such a denial of access that other victims of disasters have not experienced before. In response, they are now engaged in a campaign to reclaim their former domain and communities. Pending such reclamation of their communities, they suffer because of the COVID-19 pandemic and all the consequences are stemming from the government's response.

Methodology

This study is qualitative in design. It adapts a case study approach. The data are generally descriptive and analytical. It is descriptive as it describes the living condition of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in transitory shelter. It determined the discrimination and unjust living condition they suffer in the shelters.

Local research volunteers were identified to assist the main proponent interpret and contextualize gathered information. They helped in assisting and collecting detailed information.

Participatory methods of data gathering were employed to enhance the quality of the data. The participants of this study were the internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Brgy. Sagonsongan,

Boganga, and Rorogagus Transitory Shelters. These shelters house the majority of the Marawi IDPs. The consent of the participants who participated in the FGDs were asked and the gathered data were kept with confidentiality.

Three FGD's with multi sectoral representatives were conducted in each barangay to provide them the venue to articulate their own conditions, experiences and sentiments.

Sagonsongan has a total population of 10,320. Before the siege, it only consisted of 500 people and the IDPs were the one who multiplied the population of the area. Sagonsongan has five areas (area 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7) which consist of 627 shelters in total while Boganga Transitory Shelter has a total of 943 shelters in total

and Rorogagus has 520 based from the last data gathered by the volunteers.

A meeting with the Reclaiming Marawi Movement was conducted for presentation and validation of the results from the series of Mashwara and FGD's and from there, a plan of action was discussed by the IDPs. **Respondents of the Study**

The study had a total number of 45 respondents, 15 each per FGDs in each identified shelter and the meeting with RMM had a total of 20 participants. The participants for FGD were IDPs consisting of elders, women, and youth sectors.

Data Results/Findings

Data Presentation and Key Findings

In order to gather the data from the 3 communities, a series of FGDs were conducted in the three transitory shelters. We also conducted some interviews to highlight some stories from the people.

FGD 1 – May 12, 2021 at Sagonsongan Transitory Shelters



Area	Number of Participants	Number of Women	Number of Youth	Number of Elderly
Sagonsongan	15	7	5	3
Boganga	15	8	4	4
Rorogagus	15	10	3	12

FGD 2 – May 15, 2021 at Boganga Transitory Shelters

FGD 3 – May 18, 2021 at Rorogagus Transitory Shelters

A meeting/consultation with Reclaiming Marawi Movement was also conducted to present and validate the issues raised by the community. Action points and recommendations were also discussed and finalized.

RMM Meeting	Number of Participants	Number of Women	Number of Youth	Number of Elderly
	20	8	5	7

FINDINGS

Access to Information

- Respondents from Sagonsongan and Rorogagus who are professionals and have small businesses said that COVID information is accessible to media channels, such as television and social media. But in areas like Boganga and some IDPs in Sagonsongan and Rorogagus who don't have a television or radio and in areas where internet connectivity remains a problem, they relied mostly on getting information from neighbors or family members through SMS.
- IDPs from Boganga, Rorogagus, Sagonsongan also shared that COVID information was not enough to be understood, saying that it only focuses on how COVID-19 can be prevented, without discussing its history. This has caused other residents to question that the disease exists, thus not following health protocols imposed by the authorities.
- Sometimes, local barangay units disseminate COVID information but not enough for the IDPs to fully understand the nature of the pandemic.

On Material Assistance

- IDPs coordinate the receiving of relief and access of assistance to the assigned area leaders and division leaders responsible for the distribution. Other respondents from Brgy. Sagonsongan and Brgy. Rorogagus shared that other IDPs who were designated as sharers were excluded as a recipient of the assistance which caused tension during

distribution. Meanwhile, in Boganga shelter, relief assistance is only enough for 1-2 days for each household.

- Some IDPs received relief assistance from government and non-government organizations, although this cannot fully sustain their everyday needs. However, they are prioritized as beneficiaries since they are closer to the barangay and have direct access to the assistance.
- The IDPs also felt that their access to material assistance before Marawi Siege and during the pandemic has a huge difference, as, “during the first month of Marawi Siege, there’s a relief given every day but as time goes by it changed. When the IDPs received 73,000, the relief assistance was stopped. During the time of pandemic, the government and some NGOs were providing us relief assistance, such as hygiene kits, rice, and cash assistance.”
- Many poor residents in the 3 transitional shelters were not the priority of the assistance provided by the government.
- Access to assistance has been difficult because of “*palakasan system*.” For instance, in Brgy. Boganga the beneficiaries of SAP (Social Amelioration Program) are only for those who are not 4Ps beneficiary.

On required health protocols

- Many IDPs fear that they might contract COVID-19 in quarantine facilities so many of those who have symptoms like cough or colds chose to take medication at home. The authorities in the area provided a set of protocols that some do not follow.

❖ In Brgy. Boganga and Rorogagus there are no designated quarantine facility, while Sagonsongan lacks medical supply.

❖ Many health protocols on the other hand are not clear as information regarding protocols were not shared.

On equal treatment of violators of health protocols

❖ IDPs experienced humiliating and unfair treatment of violators of health protocols. An IDP shared a case that violators were punished for dancing in public areas while in Brgy. Boganga and Rorogagus, some violators need to pay a penalty for violating the curfew hours.

❖ A penalty of Php 1000 is imposed on the violators of health protocols.

On their right to security from COVID 19 and proper health care

❖ For the IDPs, having awareness on preventing COVID-19 is not enough if the barangays do not have a functioning health facility. Although there are barangay health workers who constantly visit the 3 shelters, they do not provide medicines for the sick. This makes them exposed to higher risk.

❖ In Boganga, the barangay has an isolation facility but it is not properly maintained which caused fear for the residents as they might get the virus in the quarantine facilities. The lack of water supply in the area is also an issue that has never been resolved and contributes to the risk of the spread of the virus.



- ❖ The IDPs of Brgy. Boganga have accessed free health monitoring from a Non-Government Organization and free check-up
- ❖ The lack of supply of medicine and other health care assistance is a problem for both barangays.
- ❖ There is no health care facility in Boganga, Rorogagus and Sagonsongan's problem of water supply contributes to the exposure to health risk.

On lockdown and various restrictions to people's movement and how these are utilized to actively control the spread of virus

- ❖ The pandemic affected the economic life of the IDPs. The small income they had before the pandemic was almost gone due to lockdowns and many establishments also went bankrupt.
- ❖ The restrictions for transportation service limit the mobility of the IDPs. Since the

shelters are far from the markets, schools and public establishments, they need public transportation to buy essential needs.

- ❖ Although their economic life has also been affected by the pandemic, some IDPs have other means to navigate resources that can help them support their needs.
- ❖ The head of the families are mostly ambulant vendors and low-income earners. Their livelihood activity was disrupted by the pandemic since they are mostly involved in transportation service and selling of consumable goods.
- ❖ This has caused limitations in their daily activity, which has also made them afraid of going outside their homes because of the penalty imposed on the violators of the protocols. They sometimes make their own ways of not being caught just to earn money.
- ❖ The fear of the spread of the virus in hospitals or quarantine facilities is a reason why people decide to stay at home and opt for home remedies or treatment.



- ▮ The water rationing in Sagongongan is still an issue unresolved before the pandemic and has worsened at the time of the pandemic
- ▮ The youth work as breadwinners, the restrictions brought by the pandemic caused depression and anxiety of not being able to provide help to their family.
- ▮ The youth do not have access to employment opportunities since many establishments have closed due to the pandemic.

On IDP children's access to education: the plan for resumption of classes using hybrid or mixed system: combination of face-to-face and online teaching

- ▮ Many of those in the transitory shelters chose to let their children temporarily stop because of financial problems and safety issues. The main problem with online education is the slow internet connection. They also shared that there was no single assistance provided to their children.
- ▮ A specific instance was shared by a solo parent of Brgy. Sagonsongan of her financial incapability in providing load allowance to her children and transportation fare for the module distribution. She begs from her relatives in order to support her children.
- ▮ Some parents posed an issue on how to guide their children with their modules because they themselves are illiterate.
- ▮ Children have not been prepared on adapting the new normal way in education.
- ▮ Many parents cannot support the educational needs of their children, especially in buying materials and equipment used for online class since their daily source of livelihood has been affected by the restrictions brought by the pandemic.

- ▮ The lack of materials and equipment in support for their children's education has affected its learning condition.
- ▮ The youth felt less prioritized with access to educational assistance coming from the government.
- ▮ The adjustments and the difficulty to adapt the new normal requirements for online class added burden to parents and learners themselves. Parents cannot afford to buy equipment and materials needed for their education while learners are challenged to the new learning styles they need to adjust.

On strengthening people's capacity for meaningful participation

- ▮ The respondents from Sagonsongan, Boganga, and Rorogagus, being part of the Reclaiming Marawi Movement Campaign, shared how different trainings and seminars improved their confidence and skills. The training also empowered them as many of the seminars they attended are human rights activities and rights based framework.
- ▮ During the pandemic, they conducted many online webinars although connectivity issues remain a challenge.
- ▮ Due to the training that the IDPs attended from different NGOs, and academe, they were able to document human rights violations and helped support other IDPs.
- ▮ IDPs from Sagonsongan and Boganga were able to tap support groups (CSO's, NGOs and academe) to help them with their water supply and relief assistance. They were able to send an appeal letter to the LGU.

ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

At the rate at which COVID-19 spread rapidly, it's quite crucial that people and communities have access to timely and accurate information in order to save lives and reduce economic damage. The impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups relies greatly on the quality of communication regarding the health risk and danger.

Most of the IDPs who are living in transitional and temporary shelters in Boganga, Sagonsongan, and Rorogagus were left to scavenge for information regarding the nature and effects of Covid-19 based on the available media channels like internet, TV and radio. Some of them relied on the information passed on to them through chain messages on Facebook by their friends, relatives and family members living in other areas. Most of this information does not have scientific basis like eating bananas can cure COVID-19. Many do not have access to television and social media due to connectivity issues but get information in public announcements. It was clear that the national government and other different government institutions failed to disseminate accurate and timely

information to marginalized communities which led to the reluctance of the people in following health measures and quarantine protocols. Many of the respondents feared for their lives because of the threat of COVID-19 and the enforcement of necessary health measures that were done under the threat of being shot, being arrested or maltreated. Many of those who were arrested for violating protocols and lockdown measures were people who did not know that such policies were in place in their localities. There were no clear public announcements prior to implementing strict health protocols. Many do not fully understand some critical information such as what the COVID-19 symptoms are, and what is meant by being asymptomatic and how fast transmissions occur. There were no clear communication protocols for those who felt like they had contracted the virus or were exposed to positive patients. They did not know what to do or whom to contact as there was no contact information shared to communities by the hospitals and local government units. Many of the respondents felt that they have little to no access to accurate medical information.

ON MATERIAL ASSISTANCE

The national government under the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, was mandated to provide financial aid to 18 million poor families affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Social Amelioration Cards or forms were used to validate and determine which families were eligible for PhP 5,000 to PhP 8,000 cash aid. But the policies provided under the program do not capture the complexities of the situation in Marawi.

Implementation of government assistance,

enforcement of health measures and protocols and clear communication lines to the communities were expected from the LGUs down to the barangay level. However, political dynamics played a big role in whoever gets the biggest share of the pie. Due to the systemic corruption and patronage politics, many of the most vulnerable and marginalized communities do not benefit from the government programs and subsidies which supposedly can help alleviate the suffering of the poor due to the impact of Covid-19.

In the transitional shelters of Brgy. Boganga, Sagonsongan and Rorogagus, shared sentiments as to how they were being discriminated against which resulted in receiving least and sometimes last in government assistance.

The IDPs experienced the biggest effect of the discriminatory practices. IDP family sharers (sharing shelter with relatives) were not provided separate support; only the household owner or shelter-registered families. Cases of discrepancies in emergency aid from government: while the law mandated that all poor families whose livelihood were adversely affected by COVID 19 pandemic shall receive initially PhP 5,000, IDPs in transitional areas got a mere PhP 1,500 plus half sack of rice (which cost about PhP 800 to PhP 900). When IDPs complained that the relief aid is not even half of what they are entitled too, they were told not to insist and demand or else they will not get any relief in the future. Dwindling relief assistance from LGU for the displaced families was already a concern prior to the health crisis which started after they were given

73,000 pesos as Transitory Family Support Package from DSWD.

Meanwhile, some IDPs from Sagonsongan were able to get continuous assistance from the barangay and other non-government organizations since they had direct access to the barangay and powerful people. They added that a few kilos of rice and canned goods would last only a few days at least they were being prioritized for any government programs and interventions.

Many IDPs shared the sentiment that they do not benefit from government assistance because of the culture of “*palakasan system*”. Issues of favoritism and corruption over the delivery of relief assistance both food and non-food were very evident both from the host barangays and in the transitional shelters. Government assistance was based not on priority and needs but on whom they can have more political benefits or allies or in many cases, priorities were given to family relations.

ON REQUIRED HEALTH PROTOCOLS, PROPER HEALTH CARE AND RIGHT TO SECURITY FROM COVID-19

The current reality of the residents in communities, especially the living condition of the IDPs in the transitional shelters do not complement the existing health protocols and standards imposed by the authorities to counter the spread of Covid-19 virus. Although the pandemic has not hit many communities in Marawi City severely compared to other parts of the country, it added a burden to the people living in the area.

The national and local government implemented strict health protocols such as wearing of face mask and face shield, handwashing and physical distancing. The practice of physical distancing in IDP communities is not always possible since most shelters are cramped and crowded due to the fact

that there are 2-3 families living in one shelter. The cramped and crowded conditions in transitional shelters are not physically and structurally adequate in mitigating the spread of COVID-19 transmission. Their shelters do not have spaces that can isolate persons with Covid-19 symptoms.

People’s fear of acquiring the virus in the quarantine facility opted them to just stay at home. Poor IDPs and resident voters cannot afford to buy face masks and face shields due to the high selling price of face masks and face shields which are beyond the reach of unemployed and poor IDPs.



The imposition of required health protocols such as frequent handwashing was made even more difficult and challenging for IDPs of Brgy. Sagonsongan since the whole barangay rely on the water ration provided by the local government and other non-government organizations. Proper hand-washing is seldom observed since water supply is only enough for other household activities. This makes the residents more exposed to the spread of virus and other health risks. Women's special needs are also not being met due to the scarcity of water. For the middle class IDP's and resident voters, they buy water from another source with a cost of 50 pesos per shelter, which is already very expensive for those who by now have lost their source of income.

People's right to health security and access to free basic health care services, like medications, are being deprived because of the lack of health facilities, medicines, equipment and materials in their respective barangays.

The IDPs shared their frustration on the lack of facilities for Covid-19 testing and treatment facilities in their locality. On the other hand, the designated quarantine facility in Marawi City is located at Brgy. Sagonsongan, an area which hosted the most number

of IDPs. The quarantine facility is reported to be unsanitary and filthy which made people uneasy and afraid to be put in the facility. People's fear of acquiring the virus in the quarantine facility opted them to just better stay at home. On the other hand, Brgy. Boganga does not have a designated quarantine facility in case of a possible COVID positive patient.

The IDPs sometimes enjoy medical privileges like house-to-house check-ups provided by a non-government organization for illnesses like cough, colds and other common child-like diseases.

But for most of the IDPs, they normally opt for traditional ways of treating their illnesses rather than seeking for a more scientific and accurate medical means.

The RT-PCR test requirement for LSIs (locally stranded individuals) coming from Metro Manila was not applied equally; LSI relatives of IDPs were quarantined and required to undergo swab tests (with the health workers violating protocol doing it without the mandatory PPE).

ON EQUAL TREATMENT OF VIOLATORS OF HEALTH PROTOCOLS

IDPs from transitional shelters also experienced 'punishment' from police authorities and barangay officials. An IDP resident of Brgy. Boganga who waits for a call of prayer outside his shelter was arrested because of breaking curfew hours and was penalized by paying 1,500 pesos in exchange for his release. There's a lot of cases wherein some were made to crawl in dirty canals; some asked to dance in public; others asked to pay PhP 1,000 or suffer incarceration. Unusually strict restrictions on mobility of IDPs such as when a retired lady school principal who ran out of her maintenance medicine for diabetes was refused passage to get her medicine from the drug store by soldiers at the military checkpoint (going out to access medicine or medical service is allowed under all levels of restriction); knowing her right, she insisted and the soldiers threatened to shoot her if she tries to proceed; it was only when she showed her old principal ID that the soldiers suddenly became apologetic and allowed her through.

Cases of extortion were also documented, such is the case of an internally displaced tricycle driver in the transitional area whose son was ill and needs medicine and who has no food to provide the family

for supper, sought to provide service in late afternoon to earn his immediate need. He, together with several other drivers were arrested, their tricycles confiscated and were taken to the police station. There, the police officers demanded payment of PhP 1,000 for their release. Only after the intervention of some soldiers, who reminded the police officers that such P1000 collection is a violation, were they released. The mandatory use of face mask and shield policy have raised concern as people are being fined 1,000 pesos or else they will be put in a jail for a night.

Meanwhile, in Rorogagus, some of those who violated the protocols were given only reminders and some of them can seek direct help from the barangay leaders so they did not experience shaming and abuse.

The pandemic related restrictions were used to shrink the democratic and civic space and silence those who tried to voice out their opinions. The policies and approach to curb the rise of COVID-19 positive cases was more punitive rather than educating the public on the importance of wearing a face mask and face shield. Moreover, the situation puts on burden especially for the poor IDPs.

ON LOCKDOWN AND VARIOUS RESTRICTIONS TO PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT AND HOW THESE ARE UTILIZED TO ACTIVELY CONTROL THE SPREAD OF VIRUS

Every day, the IDPs are confronted with the hard reality of being uncertain of what and how they can provide the needs of their family while also thinking of the health risk.

The restrictions affected various types of people, from the women, youth and head of households who are breadwinners of their own family. An IDP, a breadwinner and also a single mother was in distress having no source of income because the lockdown

limits her mobility to sell her goods. A young IDP who cannot get a job due to lack of career opportunity and of not meeting the qualifications for a certain position. The head of households who were tricycle drivers and ambulant vendors can no longer work because of social distancing. The access to schools, markets and public hospitals has also been harder for them because the transportation fare has doubled.

Although the restrictions imposed are for people's safety and to control the spread of the virus, the opposite happened to the IDPs, as their living conditions worsened.

Quarantine protocols instituted as public health measures during the pandemic have disproportionately affected poor communities. The

militarized approach to enforcing public health protocols resulted in high numbers of arrests in poor and marginalized communities for breaking lockdown measures as the IDPs needed to look for work in order to pay for basic necessities and services. As what an IDP said, "We are being punished for basically trying to survive."

ON IDP CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO EDUCATION: THE PLAN FOR RESUMPTION OF CLASSES USING HYBRID OR MIXED SYSTEM: COMBINATION OF FACE-TO-FACE AND ONLINE TEACHING

The government's mandate to stop face-to-face interactions in schools furthered the widening gap of those who can afford to go to school and not.

Many parents articulated their concerns on the shift to remote learning due to the limitation and scarcity of resources as they were not able to provide the technical and financial requirements needed in order for their children to attend online classes. Parents cannot afford to buy gadgets and give support for load allowances. The learners (both children and youth) have difficulty in adjusting and adapting to the new learning styles, given the internet connectivity issue in Lanao del Sur.

The quality of education given to their children is low since they are not given much attention in supporting their studies. Additionally, parents are burdened with giving more time to answer modules instead of

working in order to support their family financially. Many were obliged to teach their children and many were confronted with the challenge that those who must teach are also illiterate.

The poor IDPs are saddened with the reality that the local government has not provided any educational assistance to their children. They were left to look for other ways to make sure that their children are mentally prepared for the changes to come. For others, the only way to cope with the financial hardship is to make their children stop from schooling. One respondent shared that there are certain sacrifices that need to be made in order to put food on the table.

ON STRENGTHENING PEOPLE'S CAPACITY FOR MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

The IDPs realized that the trainings they have attended since 2017 from various NGOs, CSOs and academe have given them an opportunity to present to the public the real stories of the daily struggle of IDPs. Last 2019, the IDPs together with other support groups launched the Reclaiming Marawi Movement (RMM). Longing to get back to their communities to start rebuilding their lives but uncertain when the government will allow them this, has pushed for the formation of the Reclaiming Marawi Movement in order to assert the right to their former domain and communities.

Reclaim Marawi Movement (RMM) is a broad network of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's) and CSO's working for the safe and dignified return of the Maranao people to their domain.

RMM spearheaded activities to facilitate sharing of experiences, insights, issues and concerns of IDPs and come up with an agenda in which they hope that the LGU, TFBM and the national government would act on.

Series of "Mashwara" (Conversation and Listening Sessions) in different transitional shelters.

RMM facilitated listening sessions or Mashwara with IDPs at the community-level, which resulted in the consolidation of Reclaiming Marawi Movement (RMM) as an IDP-led organization. Thus, the rights-claiming campaign is from the perspective of IDPs. Women and Youth IDPs articulated their demands and aspirations through the Mashwara. Integrated also is the discussion of IDP rights and right to self-determination (RSD) towards peace-building efforts.

In many of the Mashwaras that RMM facilitated, almost all of them identified the lack of social services and lack of economic opportunities for job

employment as the main problems in many of the IDP communities. But, they also identified their strengths includes unity and resilience in the face of adversity and continued human rights violations from economic, social and cultural aspects. Everyone expressed their aspiration to go back to the ground zero where they hope to rebuild their lives and their dignity as Bangsamoro people.

The Mashwara's led to the formation of their calls and demands such as:

- Safe and Dignified Return – For the government to provide a clear plan on how the IDP's can go back home safely and with dignity.
- Truth, Justice and Accountability – The destruction of Marawi calls for a Transitional Justice mechanism. Healing and reconciliation process can only be achieved through truth seeking, delivering justice, and accounting responsibility. The question of necessity of the conduct by which the war was fought and won should be answered thoroughly including the loss of personal and household valuables. There is also a need to account for the dead and missing with transparency and the human rights violations committed by security forces and the militant groups should also be investigated. The Marawi issue should be corroborated to the broader context of peace and development in Mindanao. The Moro people demand justice for the historical atrocities committed against them.
- Provide access to the needed medical services during the pandemic - Government must ensure that the internally displaced persons have access to clean water, sanitation, facilities for personal hygiene, adequate housing, and food. Systematic and

scientific information drives must be done about the diseases' risks, prevention and treatment. Medical treatment for COVID-19 must be accessible and appropriate health care in a timely manner and without discrimination.

- ▶ The right to have an adequate standard of living. The inadequate delivery of basic and essential services essentially denies the people the basic human right to life. This situation shows the incapacity of the government to provide for the basic needs of the displaced, while during the emergency phase relief goods were actually provided but somehow our prolonged displacement and staying at the shelter was not put into account.
- ▶ The right to be consulted and be informed. The IDPs were alienated from the decision making that would affect their lives. There was no consultation on the rehabilitation and reconstruction plan of the city, nor informed on the progress of the actual rehabilitation, reconstruction, and recovery. The plan was not available to the public and the only visible material for the people was a huge tarpaulin with general strokes of the proposed plan at the entrance going to Sagongsongan Temporary Shelter. As one traditional leader said that they (the Maranao) do not need those infrastructures like sports complexes, what the people need is a place that is reflective of their culture and faith, a Marawi for the Maranao.
- ▶ Respect land rights and land access. Land ownership in Marawi is complex with the issue of overlapping of traditional and legal ownership. For the Maranao, their claim of the land is beyond the issue of rights and titles. It is their domain and ancestral land where the Maranao culture and identity were shaped by the struggle for peace, justice and freedom.

Series of Human Rights Orientation, IDP Rights Orientation and Sectoral Orientation

The activities under these series focused on raising awareness on the rights of IDPs as women, youth, and as human beings, through creative methodologies. This ensures the participation/inclusion of women and youth on matters affecting them, to wit: protection from, and prevention of, gender-based violence; resolution of conflicts and prevention of violence; countering violent extremism; creating legal mechanisms through which women at the grassroots-level can have their voices heard, especially on matters affecting them, their families and their community.

Series of Training on Leadership and Public Speaking and Paralegal (HRV Documentation)

- ▶ The leadership trainings provided perspectives on analysis of the current Philippine situation, organizing, policy formulation and shaping of public opinion. It highlighted: (1) discussions on the different actors in Philippine society, (2) identification of basic power relations, (3) analysis on the national situation of the country, (4) in-depth discussion on the role of the youth in nation building, (5) introduction to basic organizing tools and techniques, (6) exploration of the different avenue affecting policy formulation and (7) inculcation of collective leadership, knowledge and values.
- ▶ RMM activities employed art as a platform to showcase not only the talent of the youth and women but most importantly to consolidate the efforts in creating a youth and women movement that would clamor for truth, justice and dignity amidst the failures of the National Government in addressing the rehabilitation of Marawi.



This enhanced the capabilities of women and youth in conveying and articulating their message to the general public. They were armed with skills and knowledge about social transformation that they could use in their advocacy.

Mobilization and Networking

- ▶ The IDPs through RMM have organized and participated in mobilization activities to push for their agenda. These mobilizations have helped the IDPs to realize that they

have a sense of control over their lives, that they are part of a larger community that aims to rebuild and claim what was once theirs. An IDP shared that community mobilizations gave them hope. In their state of almost being powerless, participating in activities of RMM helped them reclaim their identity and dignity. They have also maximized the network that was built by RMM to give relief assistance and support to the IDP communities at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Conclusions

- ▶ The limitations among different status of people are differentiated to how they can access important information, material assistance, and proper health care in their respective community: having no means or difficulty of access makes them more vulnerable to protection risk. The culture of “palakasan system”, being an ally and close relative is also a dominant factor to these types of community, making the selection of beneficiary to the programs and services exclusive and accessible to few.

- ▶ The negligence of the government towards addressing the problems of the IDPs resulted to prolong agony and discrimination, being deprived of their rights for a more humane and decent shelter, educational assistance, proper health care, and to a more inclusive and equal access to basic services.

- ▶ The present reality of the residents in the community, especially the IDPs living in the transitional shelter, does not complement the existing health protocols

and standards imposed by the authority to counter the spread of the virus. The absence of healthcare facilities in Boganga and Rorogagus, the scarcity of water supply in Sagonsongan, and the lack of supply of medicines in the three barangays contributes to higher exposure to risk.

- ▶ The main problem that the residents faced during the pandemic is the disruption of their economic activity and the lack of job opportunities, resulting in loss of income and inability to provide the financial, educational, and emotional needs of their family. Due to the pandemic, the IDPs struggled on earning money for the family. Most of the families are involved in small-medium businesses, selling of consumable goods and transport service. All of these were restricted during the pandemic. And this had a huge impact on poor families who are depended on a very small income. The cost for the technical requirements needed for “new normal education” of their children added a financial burden. Parents cannot afford to buy gadgets and load allowances

needed for online that have caused their children to temporarily stop.

- ▶ The implementation of the “new normal or online education” has not guaranteed the special needs of the learners and parents. The youth and women (mostly mothers accompany and guide their children) had a difficulty in adjusting and adapting to the new learning style and parents are illiterate themselves. The parents felt that the quality of education taught to their children is low. The internet connection in Lanao del Sur is problematic, and this is another factor not considered in the implementation of the online classes in the area.

- ▶ Prevention of violent extremism through greater involvement and participation of IDPs in planning and pursuing an advocacy project that promotes peace-building efforts.

- ▶ It is essential that the people are being consulted on the type of development they want. In advocacy building, it is important that stakeholders create spaces for sharing and learning. Policy and advocacy will only be effective if this reflects the real condition of the people and their aspirations for the future. Capacity building activities can help empower both individual and organizational levels.

Recommendations

FOR THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

- ▶ The national government should give justice for the people of Marawi City, especially to the affected lives of the IDPs that for almost 4 years are living in the worst condition from evacuation centers to the transitional shelters.
- ▶ The national government must intervene in the process of rehabilitation in the city of Marawi in order to provide a clear answer and concrete plans on their return to their ancestral domain.
- ▶ The national government should have a more inclusive and systematic approach in addressing issues on access to basic needs and services.
- ▶ The national government must not undermine the special needs of women and youth during a health crisis. It must have a separate program that addresses these specific needs, maternal care and educational assistance.

FOR THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- ▶ Strong partnership with the local community. The local government must consistently consult and partner with its local community. It must conduct risk assessment on the exposed threats of protection to the people. Also, take the lead on a more inclusive and equal treatment of people in the implementation of its programs and services and it must be appropriate to their needs.
- ▶ Prioritize building of public infrastructure

and Provision of equipment and materials. The local government must ensure the security of people's access to basic services, like health and education. The absence of health care facilities and the lack of medicine expose people to higher risk of diseases and illnesses. Children's education must be given attention, especially in allocating a budget for the provision of educational materials.

▀ Sustainable Projects and Programs for

the IDPs and local residents. The local government must provide sustainable livelihood for the people.

- ▀ Clear Plans and Transparency for the People of Marawi. The local government must not forget its own people. The issues of discrimination in the community have exacerbated because of the prolong agony that the IDPs felt neglected and unheard with their demands and aspirations.

FOR THE COMMUNITY

Community participation and empowerment must be fully established and strengthened by developing accountability or protection mechanisms at the level of the community. This shall be presented by RMM and the IDPs in the transitional shelter. The community is expected to actively participate and be consulted on the formation of structures by which they are tasked to take responsibility. This will also be designed according to the sensitivity of the community's practices and existing structure, as to the level of authority and coordination. This will act as a monitoring team to document experiences or cases of discrimination and human rights violations. Capacity Building on Human Rights and Trainings on Responsible Leadership must be provided to the leaders of the community. In order to assert their rights and take lead on demanding accountability and

transparency to government projects and services, IDPs should have knowledge on the protection of their rights, this includes their freedom to express their demands on ensuring proper healthcare, decent shelter, educational assistance and sustainable livelihood.

Continuous Advocacy on the campaign of *"Reclaiming Marawi Movement for a Safe and Dignified Return of the IDPs in the Most-Affected Area in Marawi City,"* reclaiming their Lives and Dignity to reclaim their ancestral domain and to Stand for Truth, Justice and Accountability to the destruction of lives and their properties. The uncertainties of the plans of rehabilitation puts the IDPs in a worse situation and more exposed to protection risk.

References

Reclaiming Marawi Movement, 2019. Marawi: A briefing paper.

UN Women, The Marawi Siege: Women's Reflections Then and Now, 2019

<https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/04/the-marawi-siege>. Accessed May 26, 2021.

Gotinga, JC. (2021, May 23). Buildings rise 4 years after Marawi siege but few residents are allowed to go back.

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/05/23/21/buildings-rise-4-years-after-marawi-siege-but-few-residents-are-allowed-to-go-back>. Accessed May 23, 2021.

Lalu, G.P. (2021, May 22). 4 years after siege, Marawi folk, leaders urge gov't to prioritize reconstruction.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1435326/4-years-after-marawi-siege-maranao-folk-leaders-urge-govt-to-prioritize-reconstruction>. Accessed May 26, 2021.

<https://www.dw.com/en/terror-threat-lingers-in-philippines-despite-marawi-victory/a-46783576>. Accessed May 28, 2021.

DRRM Networking in the Midst of a Pandemic: The DRRNetPhils Experience



Executive Summary

DRRNetPhils works closely with government partners and other disaster risk reduction stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of R.A. 10121 to amplify the voices of vulnerable communities and citizens on the national stage. As such DRRNetPhils maintains vibrant communication between all members and partner stakeholders for DRRM. The main communication lines pre-pandemic were island wide consultations and face-to-face meetings with main updates on activities provided via email.

During the pandemic the way the network communicated with its members and partners in DRRM changed from face-to-face meetings and advocacy to one of a virtual nature. New platforms became available each with varying challenges from one of connectivity through to security. The advocacy and practical localization work of the network had to adapt to the new environment with work from home being promoted if not enforced in some levels of community quarantine.

The pandemic highlighted the need of strong coordination and collaboration with local actors but in turn provided opportunities for local actor/ community members the realization of their internal capacities to strengthen their own resilience through empowerment and self-transformation.

Participation was strengthened through the proliferation of online platforms, virtual trainings and knowledge sharing sessions – on usage of the platforms and digital security to those of

the advocacies of the DRRNetPhils and even in the face of extreme challenges in the midst of the pandemic gave way to a story of hope. Background/Context

DRRNetPhils is a national network of DRRM practitioners and advocates with over 60 members throughout the Philippines. DRRNetPhils was formed in 2008 and celebrated its 10th year anniversary in 2018 (just over a year before the outbreak of COVID-19 was first reported in Wuhan, China). DRRNetPhils is a member of Aksyon Klima (a network for climate change action), Balik Local (a movement formed after Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 to advocate for localization of humanitarian efforts), a National NGO representative to the United Nations Humanitarian Country Team (UN-HCT) and a member of the Global Network of CSO for Disaster Reduction (GNDR).

Recognized as one of the country's leading DRRM networks the DRRNetPhils has a seat on the National DRRM Council (NDRRMC) as one of the four CSO

representatives as mandated by R.A. 10121 or the Philippines DRRM Act of 2010. The network advocated for the passage of this law to provide the grassroots communities our members represent with an enabling policy environment to pursue and strengthen efforts for DRRM. The network was also involved in the localization of the law and its implementing rules and regulations together with gathering feedback and recommendations on the issues, challenges and successes of implementation of the law.

DRRNetPhils works closely with government partners and other disaster risk reduction stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of R.A. 10121 to amplify the voices of vulnerable communities and citizens on the national stage. As such DRRNetPhils maintains vibrant communication between all members and partner stakeholders for DRRM. The main communication lines pre-pandemic were island wide consultations and face-to-face meetings with main updates on activities provided via email.

2020 was the year that the pandemic was declared. In the Philippines, 2020 started off with the eruption of Taal Volcano on 12 January – an active volcano situated about 50 kms. south of Metro Manila. This eruption displaced more than 500,000 people that resided mostly within the 14-km danger zone and inundated neighbouring provinces with heavy ashfall.

18 days later, the first case of COVID-19 was officially announced involving a traveler from China. Just over a month later the first local transmission was confirmed on 7 March 2020. Two days later the country was placed under a state of public health emergency; 5 days later (12 March 2020) Metro Manila was placed under the Health Emergency Code of Code Red Sub-Level 1 and partial lockdown in an effort to prevent a nationwide spread. This was further expanded to the entire island of Luzon by 16 March and termed Enhanced Community Quarantine, lasting for 3 months. During this time the country was placed under a state of calamity due to the pandemic. Since then, various modifications of community quarantine have been in place to try

to contain the pandemic whilst preserving the health and welfare of the frontliners and balancing with socio-economic factors.

During the pandemic the way the network communicated with its members and partners in DRRM changed from face-to-face meetings and advocacy to one of a virtual nature. New platforms became available each with varying challenges from one of connectivity through to security. The advocacy and practical localization work of the network had to adapt to the new environment with work from home being promoted if not enforced in some levels of community quarantine.

During this time preparedness and humanitarian efforts had to continue as the country was still prone to natural disasters. There follows a list of disasters the network members were involved with:

- 18 August 2020: 6.6 magnitude earthquake, Masbate, Bicol Region
- October – November 2020: southwest monsoon rains and La Nina
- 22-30 October 2020: Typhoon Molave (Quinta),
- 26 October – 6 November 2020: Super Typhoon Goni (Rolly)
- 8 November – 15 November 2020: Typhoon Vamco (Ulysses)
- 22 January 2021: 7.1 Earthquake off the coast of Jose Abad Santos, Davao Occidental
- 20-23 February: Severe Tropical Storm Dujan (Auring)
- 16-25 April 2021: Typhoon Surigae (Bising)
- Advocacy for the strengthening of R.A. 10121 also continued with the national government pursuing the development of new bills to replace R.A. 10121.

This case study aims to explore the continuing work of the network to achieve its vision, mission and advocacy actions in the midst of a pandemic – how

the changing practices and culture have provided challenges, constraints and opportunities the network adapted to continue the work of DRRM.

Findings and Discussion

The DRRNetPhils continued, during the pandemic, its varied activities from national level advocacy work to supporting member organizations working in the provinces through information dissemination and knowledge sharing sessions to be able to bring up local level DRRM advocacies back to the national platforms the network engages in. The majority of respondents for this case study were those identified from the list of activities undertaken by the DRRNetPhils during the period of the pandemic but who had also been a member of the network before the pandemic was declared to allow comparison of working practices within DRRNetPhils over these two periods.

The main findings were as follow:

▮ The nature of communications changed from emails and face to face knowledge sharing/workshop sessions to online/virtual platforms

▮ The number of meetings/activities increased

▮ There was increased continuity of participation by individual members across series of meetings than before

The DRRNetPhils was quick to adapt to a virtual world of communication to reach out to not only members and co-convenors but to other relevant stakeholders. Before the pandemic, communication had been limited to emails, face to face meetings/activities and when needed Skype meetings. This had its own challenges in terms of participation as not all members responded/joined activities and various surveys were circulated and discussions held on how to improve communications. The pandemic brought with it the necessity to conduct activities virtually as travel restrictions were put in place and face to face meetings/workshops were initially prohibited. The number of ways to communicate in a virtual world expanded as the number of platforms available increased.

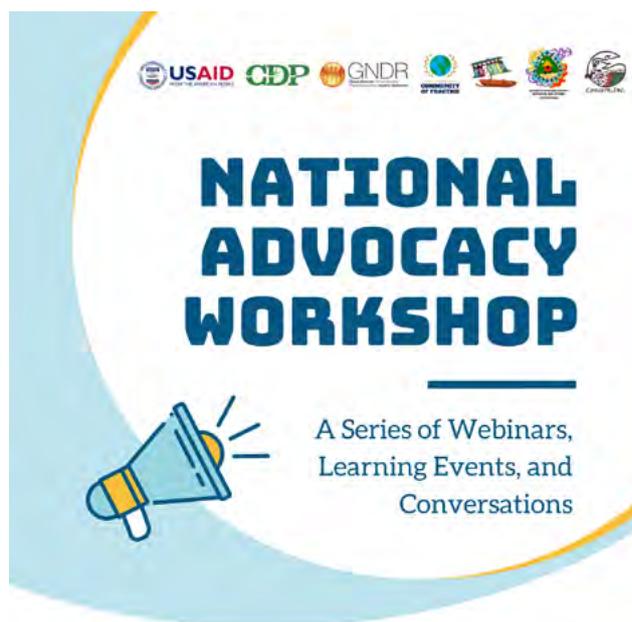
“I believe we have adapted at a fast rate in response to the changes happening in a way that we have easily familiarized ourselves with online platforms or tools such as Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, etc. We have also organized our partners through Viber group chats. In terms of communication, I think that we were able to do well in changing to new strategies.”

-Eena Geslaine Barrun Coordinator, DRRNetPhils

This however, brought on the associated challenges of security in a virtual world and each platform available was assessed for its security measures and digital security trainings and protocols became available and implemented.

To support the advocacy work of the DRRNetPhils, communication within the network is a 2-way process from local to national and vice versa. The original advocacy for the R.A.10121 drew on lessons learned from the ground and supported inputs as to what was needed in terms of a supportive and enabling policy environment at the national level to be able to replicate and scale-up the existing good local practices for DRRM into a nationwide proactive approach to DRRM. Upon the passage of the law in 2010 and with its implementing rules and regulations the localization process started with the work being conducted by individual member organizations and lessons learned and the challenges that remained gathered via island wide face-to-face consultations to support the on-going strengthening efforts of the law from the local to national. As these consultations continued but via online platforms during the pandemic it was also vital that the work of the members be able to continue on the ground amidst the times of the pandemic and that the information can be communicated and shared across the various platforms available.

In the majority of cases reviewed it became apparent that flexibility was key for the members work to be able to continue during the pandemic: flexibility of work practices and approaches but also flexibility on the part of donors and supporting agencies and institutions to be able to realign budgets and activities from those that required face to face interventions and travel to areas to a virtual setting and the savings thus generated go to support the immediate need of the members communities.



USAID GDRP GNDP OPPORTUNITY OF PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL ADVOCACY WORKSHOP

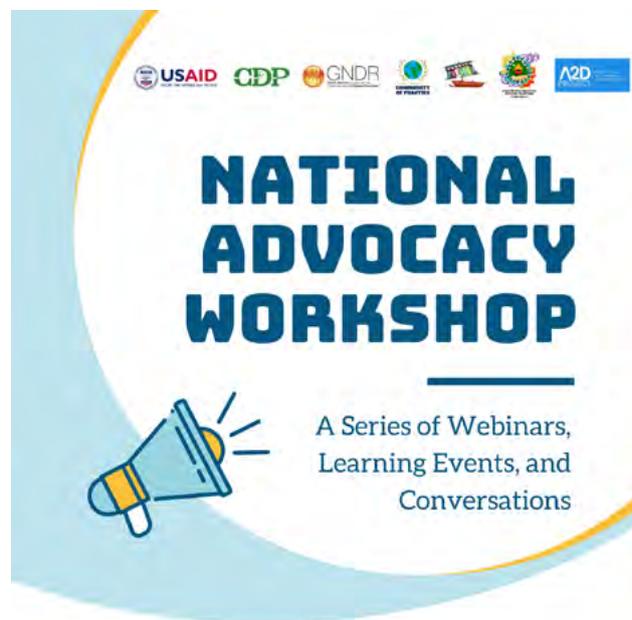


A Series of Webinars, Learning Events, and Conversations

JOIN OUR CONVERSATIONS!

October 6, 2020
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Register via:
bit.ly/LuzonWideConsultation



USAID GDRP GNDP OPPORTUNITY OF PHILIPPINES A2D

NATIONAL ADVOCACY WORKSHOP



A Series of Webinars, Learning Events, and Conversations

JOIN OUR CONVERSATIONS!

October 20, 2020
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Register via:
bit.ly/VisayasWideConsultation

HYGIENE KIT DISTRIBUTION, ACCORD



PORTABLE HANDWASHING STATION DISTRIBUTION, ACCORD



PROVISION OF RISK COMMUNICATION MATERIALS, ACCORD



DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF ASSISTANCE, CDRC



TY ROLLY EMERGENCY RESPONSE



INSTALLATION OF HANDWASHING MATERIALS, ECOWEB





The mandate to work from home provided the participants time to join varied online meetings without having time lost in travelling to venues and delayed via the inevitable travel it takes to get from place to place. This in turn increased the number of meetings members were able to participate in. The DRRNetPhils saw an increased number of meetings being attended by the same representatives during the pandemic compared to pre-pandemic which in turn increased the continuity of inputs, knowledge shared and overall learnings from one meeting to the next. DRRNetPhils was also able to join and set-up online platforms that drew on a wider audience/stakeholder base to further the advocacy for DRRM and related issues. DRRNetPhils became a connector or a center/platform of discussion points with partners and members and continued as a network and as a CSO representative during these times.

Challenges experienced though with the increasing accessibility of virtual meetings were cited as follows:

1. Workload in some cases tripled and was causing burnout
2. Connectivity was still an issue in some areas with low/no signal

3. Technology/communication equipment was not always available in some communities

To overcome these challenges DRRNetPhils members installed the following measures/practices:

1. Limit the number of virtual meetings to attend in any given day; restrict meeting times to half day maximum
2. Provide a centralized venue for participants to gather where there was good internet connectivity abiding by health and safety protocols: provision of PPEs, sanitation (alcohol, handwashing stations), transportation, whilst observing social distancing and limits of number of people at any one venue.
3. Host 'watch sessions'
4. Post the documentation/recording of the meeting
5. Provide an allowance for communication
6. Provide communication equipment

There are now more in-depth discussions taking place to deal with the multiple burdens being faced in the context of a pandemic – both personal and work related. Mental health awareness and advocacy for psycho-social needs has become more accepted with the on-going pandemic and relative isolation of working at home and is no longer as stigmatized.

Within member organizations that had locally based field staff, virtual meetings took place with the staff who were then able to travel locally to communities to relay the activities/information, especially in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. The local field staff involved would be regularly tested for COVID-19 and during the meetings would observe health and safety protocols.

There has also been, through necessity, a greater reliance on the communities/project beneficiaries to undertake the work locally. Pre-pandemic CSOs would have an exit strategy/sustainability plan where there would be phased intervention between the CSO (project proponent) and the community (project beneficiary) with high levels of CSO intervention at the beginning of the project which would decrease gradually until the withdrawal/turnover of the project gains to the community. The pandemic and limited access of the CSO personnel to the areas there has been an earlier than planned reliance on the community to implement the project. This however,

in all cases cited led to a greater self-realization of capability by the community members involved and sense of empowerment. It builds confidence and trust to manage their situation and a recognition of the strength of community. A transformation within occurs. One of the main challenges caused by the pandemic for the local communities, apart from health impacts, is the loss of income due to the lockdowns and closure of boundaries restricting the supply chain and access to markets. This however, has led to the development of localized market and trading systems as a way to adapt to the situation, which in turn lessens food miles – one of the important advocacies for climate change action. With the flexibility afforded by donors and support agencies, budgets saved from the activities that could not take place (face-to-face meetings and activities) were realigned into online communication support, cash support for low-income families, hygiene and relief kits, equipment and facilities. On a wider scale, travel restrictions have lessened face-to-face interactions and travel to meetings – whether on a local, national or even international scale without impacting deleteriously on participation but with the added benefit of reducing the consumption of fossil fuels – diesel, gas, jet oil – used by the transport sector, reducing greenhouse gas emissions – again one of the important advocacy points for climate change.

Conclusion and Recommendations

DRRNetPhils has played a big role in the pandemic response to relay appropriate information to members and partners. Access to the internet and online/virtual platforms has facilitated communication cooperation and coordination. That has been key for the DRRNetPhils to thrive in this new environment. Access is vital and this case study has shown

innovations and adaptations to reach those without access through provision of allowances, equipment, alternative means of access through centralized watch sessions and blended systems of virtual and face-to-face. The latter adheres to all the health and safety protocols and guidelines in place.

Number 1 is to ensure access to internet platforms, second is to train, give the users skills on how to use and maximize the platform, third is protection and digital security.

The tool is there, but of course, it depends on how it will be used. That means there is a need for common, more amplified and intentional actions on maximizing the use of social media/ information technology.

**-Yolanda Esguerra
National Coordinator, PMPI**

Strong communication, coordination and partnership is key for program implementation at all levels. The pandemic strengthened partnership and cooperation at a local level between DRRNetPhils members and the Local Government Units (LGUs) through to national level government agencies. COVID-19 response proved effective in establishing linkages and partnerships with the main duty bearers and in turn it became clear that the role and relevance of the CSOs is important in their program implementation for the whole community. DRRNetPhils through the existing partnerships with the NDRRMC as a

mandated CSO representative, was able to pursue its advocacies and adapt to the context with the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) established for COVID-19 response and able to provide inputs to the IATF's Guidelines for Humanitarian Workers.

Flexibility and the capability to adapt to a fluid and dynamic scenario was also key in coping and responding to the pandemic. Furthermore it highlighted the need for the integration of pandemic responses into resilience building work and programming and not to be kept in isolation.

“Main lesson learned: Same philosophy with DRR advocates, that you always need to look at different scenarios. We did not foresee that the pandemic will be this worse. Contingency plans are very important for us to continue our business even with inevitable disasters. We always need to have a backup to every situation, same on implementation and office continuity – we need to further strengthen our contingency plans, because the unforeseen scenarios are the ones that could impede operations the most. We always need to look for the worst scenario and you need to plan for it, so when that actually happens, you’ll be ready.”

- Benj Mendoza, DRR Officer



Ways Forward/Next Steps

As restrictions lessen and the pandemic response takes effect, we need to develop blended approaches, to retain the learnings of working in a virtual world with those of face-to-face activities.

We can further develop the communication systems by including feedback mechanisms and to further develop skills already gained in maximizing the platforms available to continue enhancing cooperation and coordination.

Community based actions and rights-based approaches still stand for meaningful participation. By further increasing and strengthening existing capacities to participate at all levels, empowerment is instilled and influences transformation as individuals and communities.

The practices, lessons learned, adaptations and innovative methodologies have proven effective in coping with the context of the pandemic. Although there is still room for improvement, these learnings should be consolidated to create a pandemic resilient program and modes of operation.

There is a need to showcase these good practices as stories of hope– in terms of adaptation to the changing context of a pandemic.

ANNEX A: WORK OF THE DRRNETPHILS DURING THE PANDEMIC

List of Activities undertaken/ participated in by DRRNetPhils during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Advocacy at the HoR/Senate for the strengthening of R.A. 10121
- Advocacy on the Anti-Terror Law
- 3Ws for COVID response
- Advocacy and inputs to the IATF's Guidelines for Humanitarian Workers

Regular Convenors Meeting:

- 2021: May 11; April 23; January 21
- 2020: Nov 12; 7 Sept; 14 Aug; 9 Jul; 4 May

Call for Case stories

DRRNetPhils video for World Humanitarian Day (submitted 19 August 2020)

- Video submission for National Disaster Resilience Month (July 2020 and 2021)
Circulation of Survey Requests: UPRI Survey; NDRRMC; UNICEF; PMPI, APP; A4EP/ECOWEB

Training Opportunities:

- Digital Security Training (Basic Course: April 23 2021);
- Balay Rehabilitation Center and UN Women | Learning Discussion with Existing GBV and VAW-related service providers in North Cotabato and BARMM [March 25, 2021
- GNDR: Approaches for Writing and Learning from Practice: March 25 2021
- ALNAP: Adaptive Learning Session: Supporting an Adaptive Approach to Disaster Risk
- Management in the Philippines. December 10, 2020
- GNDR's 2020 Digital Global Summit October 6 2020
- RILHUB: Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM): September 15 & 17 2020
- NAPC-VDC: Voices of Resilience from Communities Most Affected by COVID-19 August 6 2020
- UN-HCT CopCE: Risk Communication and Community Engagement for Frontline Workers: all Tuesdays of June until the 23rd
- GNDR: UNDRR Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism: May 22 2020
- GNDR: webinar on "The value of Community-Based Disaster Risk Management to build resilience: responding to COVID-19: May 14, 2020

- UNHCR and UNFPA: webinar entitled “*GBV and Child Protection in “COVID: Webinar for Protection Actors”*”: May 6, 2020
- TAF (Agap-Banta): FGD: Disaster Preparedness amidst COVID-19 Pandemic Response: May 5, 2020
- UNDRR: Reducing COVID-19 Vulnerability Amongst Displaced Populations and Migrants. 9 April, 2020

Establishment of DRRNetPhils Viber Group

Regular Meetings: NDRRMC, PINGON, HCT; GK national validation and selection committees, Balik-Local

Consultations:

- JICA Project, OCD-CBTS
- World Bank: Consultation on Flood and Drought Management in the Philippines November 5, 2020
- Plan International Philippines: Research Launch of Through Her Lens: The Impact of Covid-19 on Filipino Girls and Young Women: October 15, 2020
- LOOP Project 2020
- NDRRMP Consultation for CSOs: September 15, 2020
- Rapid Gender Assessment – sharing of findings: July 23, 2020

Network and InterNetwork meetings/dialogues

GNDR (ISCBDRM Project) and Ph DRR CoP Internetwork discussions:

- Launch of the National Advocacy Workshop Series and InterNetwork Discussion re DDR Bill (September 30) - <https://bit.ly/AdvocSeriesLaunchMats>
- Luzon-wide Learning Event and Conversations (October 6) - <https://bit.ly/LuzonConsultationMats>
- Part 1: National Advocacy Workshop | Problem Identification (October 13) - <http://bit.ly/NatlAdvocacyPart1Mats>
- Visayas-wide Learning Event and Conversations (October 20) - <https://bit.ly/VisayasConsultationMats>
- Part 2: National Advocacy Workshop | Forcefield Analysis and Power Mapping (October 27) - <https://bit.ly/NatlAdvocacyPart2Mats>
- Mindanao-wide Learning Event and Conversations (November 10) - <https://bit.ly/MindanaoConsultationMats>
- Part 3: National Advocacy Workshop | Development of Key Messages (November 17) - <https://bit.ly/NatlAdvocPart3Mats>
- Part 4: National Advocacy Workshop | Action Planning (November 24) - <https://bit.ly/NAWPart4Mats>
- Rough draft of our Action Plan: <https://bit.ly/AdvocacyIssuesMatrix>
- Deck of Key Messages and Relevant Insights (categorized per sector): <https://bit.ly/NAWSeriesKeyMsgs>

THE NATIONAL ADVOCACY WORKSHOP SERIES, ORGANIZED BY GNDR AND CDP THROUGH THE INSTITUTIONALIZING SUSTAINABLE CBDRM PROJECT AND IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PH DRR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE AND DRRNETPHILS, WAS CONDUCTED THROUGH THE PERIOD OF SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2020.



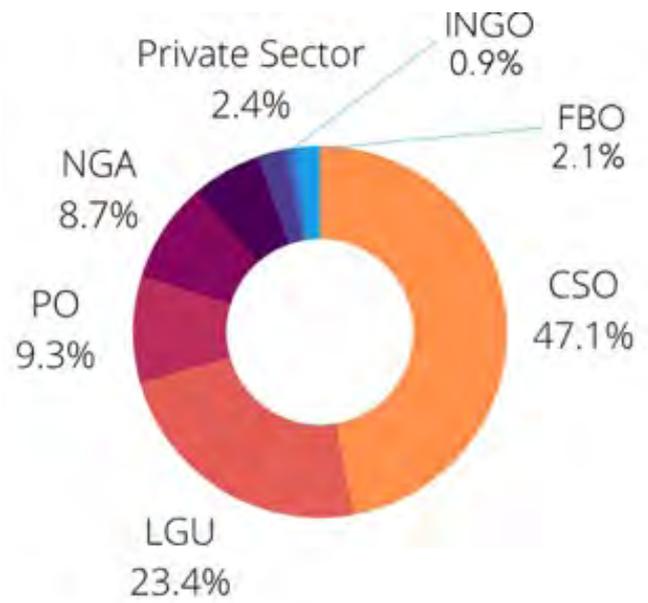
It was a series of national and island-wide events attended by DRR stakeholders from the national and local government, civil society, private sector, and communities. The Office of Civil Defense shed light in discussing the salient features of recently passed House Bill 5989 in the Congress, which seeks to create a Department of Disaster Resilience as primary agency that will forefront the implementation of national and local DRR programs in the country.

DRRNetPhils, represented by Ms. Loreine dela Cruz, remained steadfast with the network’s stand on HB 5989. *“With the current situation the Philippines has, the proposed bill may aggravate the existing gaps of resilience and may not address the roots of vulnerability”* Ms. Dela Cruz added as she presented the position of DRRNetPhils on the amendatory bill.

Media Sectors/General Public

- Kailangang pangalagaan ang aktibong pakikilahok o meaningful participation sa local level; palakasin at suportahan ang local at inclusive DRRM
- **Ang DRRM ay trabaho ng lahat. Lahat tayo ay may taya dito, kaya lahat dapat ay kabahagi.**
- RA 10121 is actually a pioneering law for DRRM, it was much-lauded internationally – HB 5989 set to undo all the gains and wins we have achieved through it; we may attain a department/cabinet-level agency but at what expense?
- **Hindi isang sentralisadong ahensya ang sagot rito kundi ang pagpapaigting ng implementasyon ng kasalukuyang batas.**

CSO, CDP - Byse Co.



CALLS AND MESSAGES FROM THE NATIONAL ADVOCACY WORKSHOP SERIES.

National Advocacy Workshop-Series

STRENGTHENING THE VOICE OF CIVIL SOCIETY
A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INTERCONNECTED PLATFORM

OBJECTIVES

- To Foster dialogue and cooperation among government entities and society
- To facilitate discussion on the primary issues regarding the implementation of the Disaster Preparedness Act
- To serve as a platform for the government and to a wide range of stakeholders

With the ongoing health and socio-economic crisis prevailing the whole nation, the need to centralize the government sector for civil society has become all the more important. It has thus been the main goal of the series for the primary for meaningful participation between and among civil society organizations (CSOs) and government for the multi-stakeholder platform for finding advice and offering support to officials and members from local, central, and regional government on the disaster preparedness, mitigation and response participation in the DRRM system across all levels of government.

ADVOCACY AGENDA

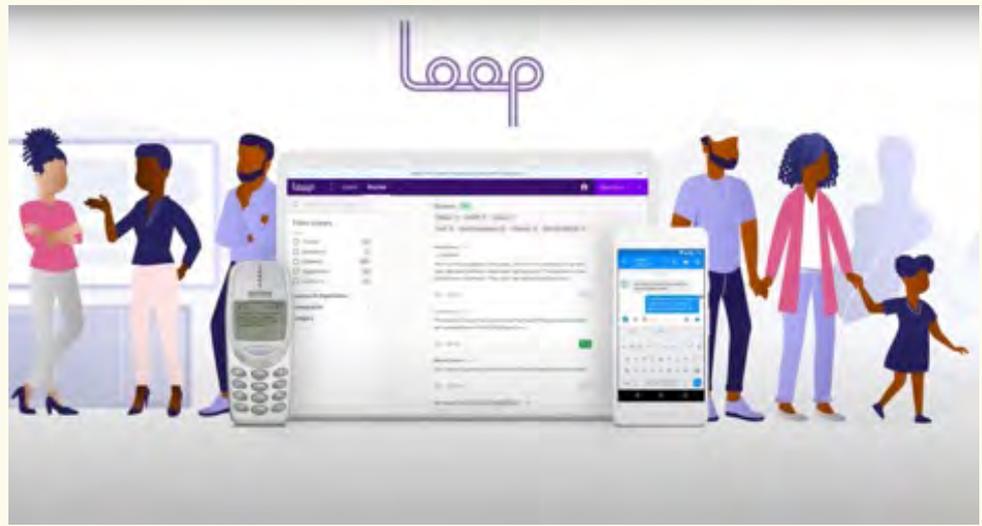
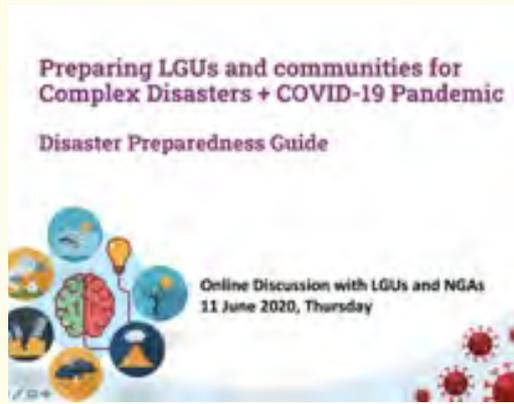
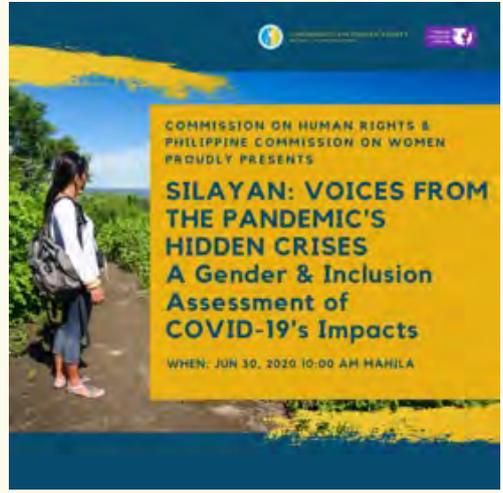
- WE NEED ROBUST MECHANISMS FOR PARTICIPATION
- WE NEED CENTRALIZED MULTI-LEVELS COORDINATION MECHANISMS
- WE NEED SET TO BEHIND DRIVES OF RA 10121
- WE NEED PROTECTA ROOT CAUSES OF VULNERABILITY
- WE NEED POLICY NOT PROMOTE LAW FOR RESILIENCE
- WE NEED CAREFUL WITH FUNDING MECHANISMS FOR SELECTION

CALLS AND MESSAGES

- "DRR is Everyone's Job"
- "Consider recommendations from Subject Review of RA 10121 that believe imposing new law"
- "Uphold meaningful participation of at-risk and vulnerable sectors"
- "Protect and sustain gains and wins under RA 10121"
- "Ensure coherent, integrated approach to managing risks (DRMF)"
- "Strengthen local DRRM structures and mechanisms instead of supplementing them"
- "Ensure that the four thematic pillars are highlighted not just disaster response"

DRRNetPhils also co-organized various learning events and discussions with member organizations and partners.

- 1) Approaches for Writing Stories and Learning from Practice
- 2) Silayan: Voices from the Pandemic's Hidden Crises: A Gender and Inclusion Assessment of COVID-19's Impacts
- 3) Preparing LGUs and communities for Complex Disasters + COVID-19 Pandemic
- 4) Learning Discussion
- 5) Loop Feedbacking Platform - in partnership with ECOWEB and NAPC-VDC



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION NETWORK PHILIPPINES

INTERNETWORK DIALOGUES HAVE ALSO BEEN INSTITUTIONALIZED AS A PLATFORM FOR MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS IN THE TIME OF THE PANDEMIC.

DRRNETPHILS ENSURES CSO REPRESENTATION IN VARIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH NDRRMC REGARDING COVID-19 PROTOCOLS. THE NETWORK ACTIVELY PARTICIPATES IN NDRRMC FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS AS WELL AS TWG MEETINGS WITH OCD.



The Anti-Terror Bill and the Civic Space

Different networks of civil society organizations (CSOs) are going to discuss the 1) likely impacts of Anti-Terrorism Bill to development and humanitarian work and 2) how CSOs can unite and consolidate our actions to prepare for the different scenarios, pending the enactment of the ATB.



INTERIM PROTOCOLS FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE DURING COMMUNITY QUARANTINE

Presented by:
Dir Tecson John S Lim
8 June 2020

MS. MINET AGUISANDA SHARES SOME HUMAN-RIGHTS VIOLATION REPORTS OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS.



DRRNETPHILS CONVENERS IN ONE OF THEIR REGULAR MEETINGS.



ANNEX B: LIST OF CONSULTATIONS

Date	Time	Organization	Name
17 May	1.30pm	CDP	Loreine dela Cruz
17 May	3.30pm	DRRNetPhils Coordinator/CDP	Eena Barrun
18 May	10am	PMPI	Yolanda Esguerra
18 May	3pm	Ecoweb	Renefe Padilla
19 May	9am	CDRC	Sharlene Lopez
19 May	10am	A2D Project	Kat Velmonte
19 May	3pm	CDP	Amor Tan Singco
20 May	9am	Good Neighbors International Philippines	Benj Mendoza
20 May	2pm	ACCORD	Sindhy Obias
21 May	2pm	Habitat for Humanity	Jolly Anne Gibe Malyn Estrellado
24 May	9am	PRRM	

Lead Writer: Sharon Taylor, PRRM.

Documenter: Riza Marie Fausto, PMPI.

ANNEX C

These guide questions will guide the discussion session in a free-flowing manner and will be used as a check to make sure all points have been covered and detailed.

Guide Questions

- Describe your Organization
- Where do you work?
- What is the COVID situation in your area of operations?
- What has been the response by other stakeholders: LGU, CSO, private etc.
- What have been the COVID-19 impacts on food, health, society and economy?
- Which sectors do you work with?
- What programs/project do you undertake that contribute to the VMG of DRRNetPhils?
- Were DRRNetPhils activities such as advocacies, advocacy trainings, workshops for assessment of progress of localization of R.A.10121, workshops for IEC materials, media briefings and conference information dissemination replicated before the pandemic? Are they still being replicated during the pandemic?
- What DRRNetPhils activities have you been part of during the pandemic?
- Have these activities been replicated in your area/s such as the advocacy workshop and consultations re our advocacies with RA 10121, discussion re COVID-19 vaccine, multi-stakeholder conferences, etc.
- How have your approaches adapted to the pandemic and health and safety protocols?
- *What are the innovations, particularly at the community level, that were fostered and/or cultivated in your pandemic response initiatives? How were they carried out or implemented? How are they being sustained?
- *How has your organization managed to uphold meaningful participation amid the response initiatives and efforts that you have implemented/are currently implementing?
- *What were the challenges faced by the partner communities and stakeholders since the pandemic started? What were the measures carried out by the community and their partners (which includes your organization) to address these challenges?
- *What are the lessons that you and your partners gained and documented from the COVID-19 pandemic response initiatives that you have/are undertaking?
- *What are the good practices that you and your partners gained through the pandemic response initiatives that you have/are undertaking?
- Were the results and outcomes used to influence/develop/integrate with Policy (laws, ordinances, resolutions) – please detail and describe
- Has the project been replicated elsewhere?
- Has the project been scaled-up/enhanced?
- Can the lessons learned be integrated into future response protocols and projects?
- *What are your and your partners' recommendations and insights in upholding and bolstering the meaningful participation of at-risk and vulnerable sectors?

Country-Level Dialogue: Moving Forward the Localization in the Philippines



Executive Summary

Localization in humanitarian action first ignited during the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 at Istanbul, Turkey. This is a call for humanitarian action to be locally-led and inclusive to the members of the community. This led to the formation of **Grand Bargain** (1) that primarily aims to *"get more means into the hands of people in need and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action."* Hence, among the Grand Bargain commitments are Localization and Participation Revolution.

ECOWEB together with United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OXFAM, and Alliance for Empowering Partnership, conducted series of *"Country-level Dialogue: Moving Forward the Localization in the Philippines"* which was attended by different organizations – international, national and local organizations in the Philippines.

This virtual dialogue involves the sharing of experiences – real situations during and after the provision of relief assistance, thus, contributing to the realization of pursuing localization in the Philippines. The discussion captures the views and experiences of International Non-Governmental Organizations, United Nation Agencies, PINGON, local and national NGOs, CSOs, POs, Private sectors, Government Agencies which will contribute to the progress of localization.

With the efforts to provide inclusive and participatory services to the different organizations and communities, the dialogue continues igniting stories from the ground and bringing those to the international stage. These efforts shall bridge

between stories and recommendations for the full realization of localization especially on a more localized COVID-19 humanitarian response as a publication series of OCHA which featured various initiatives that have mainstreamed a more localized humanitarian response. To quote OCHA, *"The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has put a spotlight on the need to further accelerate this process. The pandemic fundamentally underscores not only the central role played by civil society organizations, local governments and at-risk communities themselves but also how the international humanitarian community must adjust to the challenges that lie ahead. With the social and economic consequences of movement restrictions imposed since early March being keenly felt, it has become imperative to support localized action to protect the most vulnerable communities and beat the spread of the virus."*

From the United Nations Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) to the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) position paper, and the Philippines Humanitarian Country Team's COVID-19 operational response plan and its Call to Action,

there is a commitment across all levels - global, regional and national - to advance the localization agenda in the context of COVID-19 response, build on

the agenda agreed at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit and support good practices that reinforce a local-first approach in the provision of aid.

Background/Context

Local and national civil society and non-governmental organizations play a crucial role in various response mechanisms. They also have paramount contributions in transforming the conditions of the crisis and disaster-affected communities as well as influencing systems. However, there is a resounding call for a transformative shift in forwarding humanitarian and development aid to the ground. It primarily aims to draw attention for international organizations and funding agencies to support local actors, civil societies, people organizations and/or community groups that should be chiefly responsible for their own response to existing risks and future emergencies. This is building up the aspect of accountability and trustful environment as well as heightening institutional relationships and partnerships between international, national, and local NGOs, CSOs, Private sectors and Government.

Localization of aid in the Philippines has been on the spotlight for years now. Moving forward the localization and participation revolution has been thoroughly discussed by different humanitarian and development actors. The Grand Bargain made this more meaningful as it continually prioritized improving the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian actions, specifically on developing the potential of supporting community-led responses. In spite of that, lackness of momentum and persistent discussions on the aspect of Grand Bargain, its scope and commitments at the country-level was eminently observed. In promoting and setting a wider reach to support the implementation of localization commitments, the Grand Bargain Localization Workstream agreed to call forth a country-level dialogue and maximize local platforms to create a space in gathering information of how localization approach impacts longer-term recovery, community responsiveness, and cost-effectiveness.

ECOWEB, together with United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OXFAM, and Alliance for Empowering Partnership, conducted a series of “*Country-level Dialogue: Moving Forward the Localization in the Philippines*,” which was attended by different organizations - international, national, and local organizations in the Philippines.

Objectives of the Country level dialogues as defined by GB Localization Workstream:

1. To promote wider understanding and implementation of Grand Bargain commitments on localization at the country level
2. To catalyse collaboration between Grand Bargain signatories and other relevant stakeholders at country level on implementation of localization commitments while –when possible– exploring synergies and linkages with existing humanitarian coordination mechanisms (within Humanitarian Country Teams and beyond), donor coordination mechanisms and platforms as well as civil society networks
3. To support in-country counterparts to identify their context-specific opportunities, challenges and specificities when it comes to localization and develop their own plans or solutions
4. To learn lessons that will inform discussions and strategic direction in relation to the next phase of the Grand Bargain beyond June 2021.

DESCRIPTION OF METHODOLOGY TO BE USED, ACTIVITIES, TARGET PARTICIPANTS, AND TIMELINE

The dialogue processes will consist of:

1. Developing a methodology and guide for the conduct and documenting the country level dialogues at different levels.
2. Conduct of an on-line survey (following 7 dimensions framework) to generate quantitative and qualitative data on the awareness and status of the Grand Bargain commitments implementation in the country and recommendations on how to move forward the localization from the local and national civil society organizations, UN agencies, donors, private sector and INGOs.
3. Conduct of FGD to hear the perspective of the affected population of the crisis on localization and Interview with Government representatives.
4. Conduct of intra-network dialogues: CSO networks at sub-national levels (3 major islands); national CSO networks; HCT; MCT; PINGON and Business Humanitarian Groups.
5. Conduct of Inter-network dialogue
6. Conduct of planning workshop with Keystakeholders.
7. Report writing and sharing to Grand Bargain, HCT, MCT, concerned Government agencies, CSO networks and all other stakeholders.

Target participants would include national and local civil society networks, UN agencies, INGOs and donors present in the country as well as the private sector. Voices of the affected population shall also be heard (through FGDs) particularly their views and perceptions on the role of local actors in addressing their humanitarian needs and protection of their rights – specifically their perception on the importance, relevance as well as the constraints and limitations of the local actors.

Representatives of concerned government agencies shall also be engaged to generate views on how policies and programs of the government could be shaped to support the implementation of the Grand Bargain in the country and its future beyond June 2021.

Activities	Dec '20	Jan '21	Feb '21	Mar '21	Apr '21	May '21	June '21
Co-facilitators Meetings - finalization of plan/ Resource Generation to support the dialogue process							
Process designing with details of guidance							
Online survey on Localization							
Intra-network dialogues (CSOs, HCT, MCT, Business humanitarian groups, government) and FGDs with Crisis Affected							
Inter-network dialogues							
Planning workshop to move localization forward by key stakeholders							
Writing, submission and presentation of the report on the outcome of the dialogue process							

Initial Findings and Discussion

Focus Group Discussions with the Affected Communities in Crisis participated where 25 Community level were conducted in 6 Regions with 236 participants:

People would like to participate more in the decision making and setting their own priorities

People would like to be consulted about their needs so the response is timely and appropriate response

People would like cash as it is more flexible and they can make their own choices to fit their needs

People want clear information on INGOs / CSO/ others who come in their communities to help

They would like improvement in government responses, processes and accountability both at local and national levels

On Disaster Experience and score card, of all other disaster experience for the last 5 years, 209 experienced the severity of impact on COVID-19

This had attributed to the severe impact to socio-economic of 132 respondents

8. For the online survey on localization where there are 15 respondents from INGOs and UN Agencies and 63 responders from local and national CSOs/NGOs/ and Private sector:

There is still a need for more information about the Grand Bargain Commitments

Equitable/real and long-term strategic partnerships between local/national CSOs and international agencies are already happening but there are still sub-contractual arrangements

Majority of the CSOs seek out the views and preferences of the community partners in designing own programs but not always in their joint programming with international partners

High level of transparency and accountability has been noted for both local/national CSOs and their international partners although some noted to be needing improvement

About 25% of the CSO respondents have no international funding while about 50% have already accessed multi-year funding support

A number of CSOs indicated that overhead cost sometimes is not covered by international funding although some also indicated substantial support accessed

Majority have limited COVID-19 response due to limited availability of funding, human resources and logistical support but majority made innovations

Funding trend for the last 5 years has also been significantly or slightly decreasing for a number of CSOs

Capacity for managing and implementation of humanitarian response is noted by majority of CSOs and that they just need some technical support that some are getting effectively from partners

Majority of the CSOs are integrating Nexus approach in humanitarian programming

Complementation and not competition is preferred way for effective services by majority of CSOs

While a few have actively participated in coordination mechanism and made contributions, majority still need improvement in their participation

9. For the Philippine Country-level Dialogues on Localization participated by these networks, organizations and private sector – PMPI, UN Agencies/INGO, PINGON, CDRN, NAPC-VDC, Sub-National CSO Networks, SAFER and *Balik Lokal*, Private sector and PDRF, DRRNetPhils and MHT, these has still to be summarized and analyzed and

is not done yet. However, these are just some summaries from the sessions but do not necessarily reflect the outcome of the dialogues:

▀ **On Participation:** There is too less importance given to local organizations when it comes to project implementation





funded by international donors and agencies. Funders tend to look for local organizations equipped with high-elevated standards which subsumes to their checklist. The growth of local organizations may be hampered due to the lack of trust and partnership that should be worked hand-in-hand with international partners. The essence of holistic development and humanitarian works slowly diminish as partnership tends to be built with high standards instead of collaboration and inclusivity.

- ▾ **Funding:** Sources, Quantity and Quality: Scope of funding be not limited to national capacities only but also to regional efforts. Thus, projects must be responsive to sub-national, or local needs. Allocating project funds on the national level has less possibility that it can be sent instantly to regional or local response agents. There are a lot of documents to comply first before receiving assistance and providing a response to the affected communities.
- ▾ **On Partnership and Collaboration:** Donors should not directly implement their bulk of money to INGOs but should be channeled through Local NGOs or local agencies. These local NGOs are the one assisting the communities to avoid conflict. An instance was, there was no proper coordination in the community level, and that relief operation directly engaged with them, beneficiaries did really struggle and fight

over limited resources. Local actors know what the real status is in the community.

- ▾ **On Capacity:** Building the capacities of community-based organizations- the role of community-based organizations in locally-led response is especially highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ▾ **On Coordination:** Government policies, aside from the fact that they are not fixed (constantly changing), do not take into consideration the impact to crisis-affected communities, and how those will impact delivery of aid. This again, highlights the importance of close coordination with the local government- barangay, and community-based organizations.
- ▾ **On Policies and Standards:** Too much bureaucracy in the requirements for travel and gathering the community. Local authorities are inconsistent with how protocols should be observed. Even in the inter-province requirements, there is no unified protocols. Thus, this inconsistency hampers some of the scheduled activities in the community.
- ▾ **On Visibility:** Sometimes, INGO's logo overpowers to that of local partners' and even the Local Government units. Logos of local agencies should also be included with respect to the coordination and partnership of the local government agencies in the community.

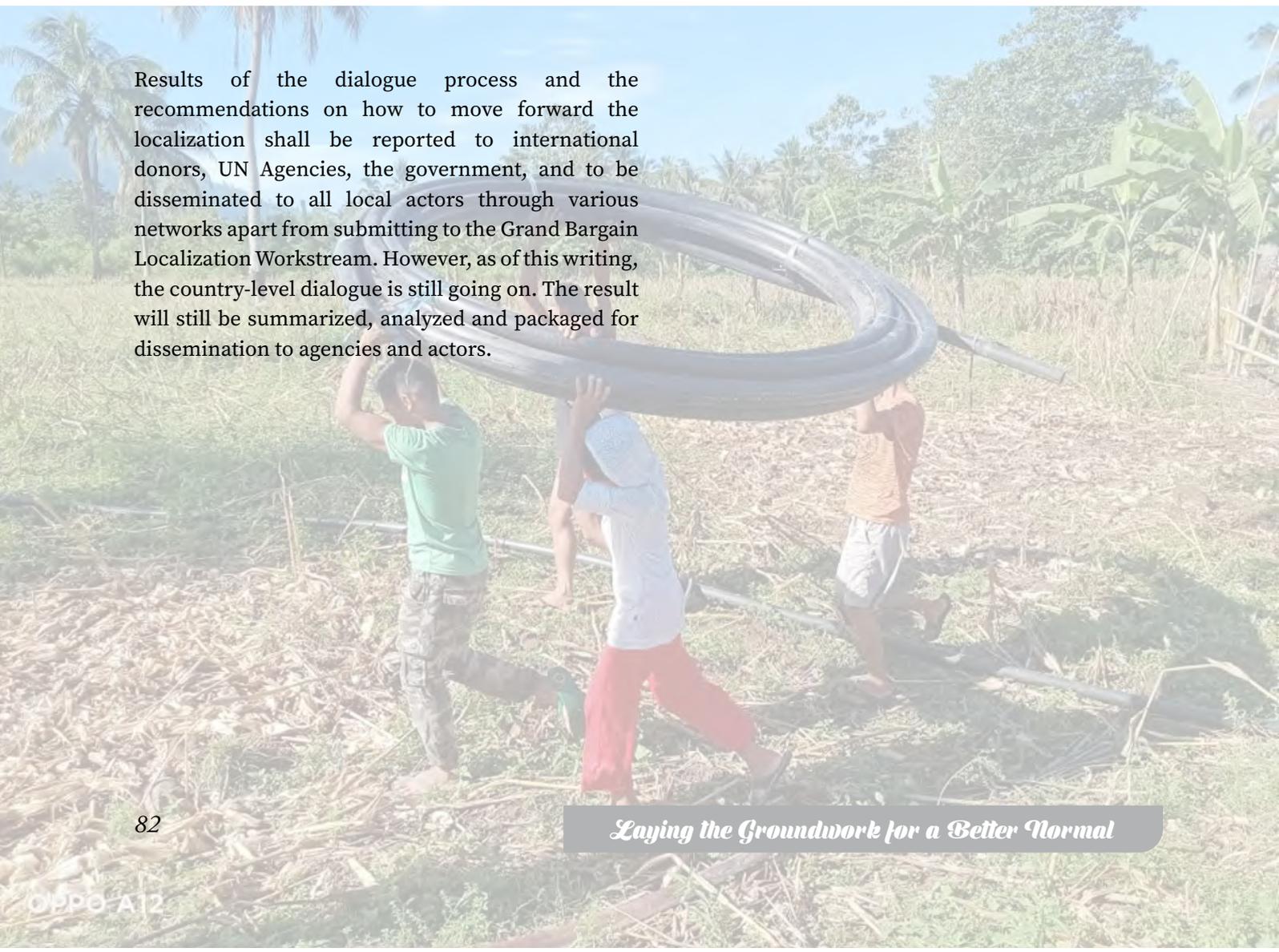
Conclusions and Recommendations

Following recommendations were made by the communities especially on COVID-19:

- Swab testing be made free of charge
- Standardize health protocols in this pandemic at all levels
- Government to prioritize needs of the vulnerable and affected; LGU should give importance to marginalized sectors
- Increase cash assistance, provide assistance to all in need, and make the process transparent and accountable (address corruption)
- Children and youth: Barangay Protection Action Team to inform parents on lockdown policies to include the safety of children; include children and youth in disaster response and risk reduction programming; address issues on education and psychosocial needs of children affected
- To open closed businesses; provide support for affected livelihoods and jobs

Ways Forward/Next Steps

Results of the dialogue process and the recommendations on how to move forward the localization shall be reported to international donors, UN Agencies, the government, and to be disseminated to all local actors through various networks apart from submitting to the Grand Bargain Localization Workstream. However, as of this writing, the country-level dialogue is still going on. The result will still be summarized, analyzed and packaged for dissemination to agencies and actors.



References

OCHA in its [publication series on how the Philippines is quietly implementing a more localized COVID-19 humanitarian response](#)

Oxfam Philippines in its [publication Building Stronger Ground, Narratives of Local Humanitarian Leadership In the Philippines in June 2020](#)

The Alliance for Empowering Partnership (A4EP) has published a paper, [Reversing the inequity – Opportunity knocks again or missed opportunity again](#)

Community FGD Results, Online Survey Results, Summaries of Documentation of Country-Level Dialogue

Annexes

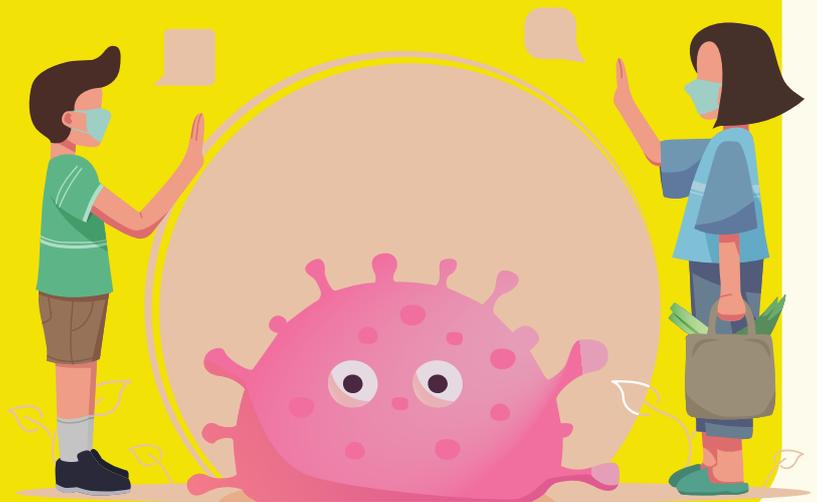
PHOTO DOCUMENTATION





Laying the Groundwork for a Better Normal

Sharing of Experiences, Learnings, and Innovation of Men, Women, and Youth from Muslim and Christian Communities in Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic



Executive Summary

The Lanao Aquatic and Marine Fisheries Center for Community Development, Incorporated has been working in both Moslem and Christian communities on coastal resource management, social cohesion, Gender Mainstreaming and Peace building and on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation. With a wide wealth of experience that LAFCCOD and its partner communities have worked with and worked for in combating the challenges that various disasters come in their way, it is with good reason and a timely endeavour that we have to reflect, learn, document and share the lessons, wisdom and innovations that we have reaped as we confront and respond to various challenges brought about by both natural and human induced disasters. With limited time and resources, our initial focus is on the context of the COVID-19 pandemic response initiatives that we have implemented in both Moslem and Christian communities. This has been done by conducting a series of area visits to different communities and the Consultations of all the POs who have availed the services for COVID-19 Pandemic. A Learning Session with the partner communities will be

conducted where everyone will be learning together. This will also be a venue where data will be gathered and documented in order to give meat and substantiate the essence of the Case Study. After these sessions, Analysis, Write up and Finalization of the Case Study, the Validation session from among the selected respondent before the submission of the Case Study will be done and once the Case Study will be finished, this will be submitted to the CDP. The community will be informed and will also have a copy of the Case Study because this is their own and it is from them that this Case Study has become a reality.

Background/ Context

It is indeed a concrete reality that the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting everyone in almost all of the communities. It affects all humanity from all walks of life. Considering the situation of our partner communities, who experienced lockdowns and were confronted with many restrictions, it has caused the appearance of hoarding and increasing prices of prime communities. Because of the social distancing and the declaration of most of the municipalities and cities in a total lockdown, the effect has not been only felt by the rich and the middle-class, but especially by the farmers and fishers, who are the food producers of protein sources like fish and other sea products. Thus, the farmers and fishers are not allowed to display and market their products in the 'Tabuan' or a marketplace where people could display and sell their product in a designated time and place. Means of transportation like tricycle, *habal-habal*, and *payong-payong* are no longer allowed to cater more than two passengers. They are only allowed to accommodate one passenger and it's a *pakyaw system* wherein the passenger would pay double or even triple of the original fare. There are limited economic activities happening in several places and communities because there is also a constriction of economic activities in nearby municipalities. There is also the situation of "no work, no pay" that put poor people in extreme misery, especially those who are considered "hand to mouth" for survival and existence. Access to food is also very difficult because people cannot work as all the commercial establishments are advised for temporary closure during lockdowns, except for the grocery stores and pharmacies. While it is true

that self protection is very important and a must for everyone, alcohol and masks are also insufficient in some groceries and pharmacies. In some places, it creates fear and stigma.

"Indeed, it is hard to predict when this situation will end. As the days go by, people are experiencing crisis and difficulties while the government has declared enhanced/extreme community quarantine. If this situation continues and will not be addressed, poor people in the community will not die of COVID-19, but they will die of hunger. In some of our communities, there's an increase in crimes like robbery, theft, etc. just to survive and ease the pain of hunger and economic difficulty. As of this time, the government has no clear cut program on how to address the economic crisis and hunger, especially in some of our communities. They have a program but these have never been benefited and enjoyed at the maximum by most of our partner communities in conflict affected communities.

The following are the various response conducted by the government, private sector and also by LAFCCOD:

- Several weeks after the declaration of the lockdown by the government, some people in the various communities were extremely affected economically, culturally, and many of them lost their jobs and income, as they had to cease going to fishing, farming, etc.
- There were several people in the

community who cried for help and immediate assistance. With all these problems that arose from the community, the LAFCCOD staff and the community development volunteers conducted online meetings and also online consultations with some local officials in the various barangays. After several online meetings and consultations, we conducted need assessments with the help of the community development volunteers and some of the youth volunteers and primary actors.

After the Needs Assessment and Planning that we conducted, a proposal letter was submitted to the VSO Philippines for their support. Fortunately, the VSO Philippines responded positively to our proposal. After the approval, we immediately implemented the emergency relief operation. During the relief operation we mobilized the Community Development Volunteers and also the youth volunteers in the various communities.

DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF GOOD TO BOTH MUSLIM AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES



We also coordinated with the local officials that a relief operation would be conducted in their barangays. Likewise, we also observed the protocols coming from the local advisory, such as wearing of face masks, face shields, social distancing and we also coordinated with the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Office and Municipal Office for travel passes so that we would be able to safely deliver the relief goods to the intended communities.

Part of the relief operation was the distribution of the vegetable seeds and planting materials, where they could develop Bio-intensive Gardens while they were staying at home and undergoing the

process of quarantine. We also distributed Organic fertilizers for their Bio Intensive Gardens (BIG).

Since right information is needed in time of pandemic, LAFCCOD conducted Interface Meeting between Provincial Health Office, Provincial IATF, and Networks of fishers, women and youth to learn from one another about COVID-19 and how to coordinate and help one another to fight the pandemic. Production and distribution of “Iwas COVID-19” campaign materials to the strategic places in various places and communities was conducted.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF CAMPAIGN MATERIALS



MEETING WITH THE PROVINCIAL IATF AND PROVINCIAL HEALTH OFFICERS



While we implemented the relief operation and distribution of seeds and planting materials to the different communities, our youth coordinator constantly coordinated with the youth that we have engaged in the communities for the U-report. They reported the situation in the various communities and also some initiatives to respond to problems brought about by the pandemic.

We also conducted monitoring and follow-up activities to ensure that all our interventions are benefiting the community, not only during this time of uncertainty due to pandemic COVID-19 but also beyond this time of crisis.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

National Government

The National Government provided different programs, projects and activities (PPAs) to address the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it has been observed that the PPAs developed and implemented by the government have been more a reactionary measure given by the government. Some of these programs are the Social Amelioration Program (SAP), *balik-probinsya* program, blended learning education, COVID-19 Adjustment Measure Program (CAMP), among others. These were observed to be insufficient for bigger families and families with special needs (i.e. with sick members, with elderly members, with children needing special care, with pregnant women,

etc.). The methods used to identify the beneficiaries and distribution of the 1st tranche were chaotic and had resulted in severe delays.

LGUs Response

- Local government structures like the CDRRMCs have been operational and have engaged other stakeholders (private/business, CSOs, individuals) during the pandemic, in service delivery and also in dissemination of information.
- Distribution of seeds
- Relief distribution

Findings and Discussion

A series of consultations, discussions, and learning sessions have been conducted in the project sites

together with the Staff, fisherfolks, farmers, women, men, and the youth. The following are the results.

COMMUNITY LEVEL

For the Men

Most men shared that their fishing activities are affected because, during the declaration of the lockdowns, they could not freely go to the fishing ground as their local government also declared early curfew hours. Once caught during the curfew hours, there's a corresponding penalty. They had difficulties selling their fish and farm products because the transportation costs doubled, and even tripled, compared to the fare before the COVID-19 pandemic. Likewise, the '*Tabuan or palengke*', where they market their products, have been disallowed

by the local government. Since they could not sell their products, they were forced to sell whatever it was possible to sell, including appliances, in order to earn some income and survive. Where there is maize (corn) of their neighbors or friends ready to harvest, they go and volunteer to harvest just to have a share and food for their family.

On the other hand, while the crisis during the pandemic has no end, men realized to strengthen the family solidarity, strengthen their immune system, strengthen the organization and the community to fight COVID 19.

For the women

Most of the women we interviewed felt that the lockdown meant multiple burdens for them because usually they are assigned to their houses and do the caregiving tasks. They are the ones taking care of children, the elderly, and PWD in the families. They get preoccupied with household chores because all the members of the family are at home. In some communities, women shared that the lack of space in their homes puts children/girls and women at risk of abuse and violence. They also shared that there are lots of women, including young women, who became pregnant in the community due to long lockdowns and many restrictions. There is a lack of information dissemination in various areas that resulted in different misinformation and created stigma to many of the people in the community.

The Pandemic created stigma and fear. As Ms. Thelma Quinco, a member of the BAFFA said *“Kaniadto Kung naay moabot gikan sa gawas (abroad, Manila, Cebu, Davao, etc.) motagbo ta basin naay dala nga pasalubong. Pero karon nga naay pandemic, mahadlok ta moduol basin naay dala nga virus nga Pandemic 19”* (Before the pandemic happened, if somebody arrived from abroad or from other cities within the country, the family or people in the community would welcome them immediately without reservations. But now, it’s the opposite. People have to think twice before going near or welcoming them closely, as they are afraid that they have carried the virus and would spread contamination).” The local

government also put those people in the quarantine area every time people from abroad or from high risk areas arrived in the community.

They are also afraid to go to the hospital to have a medical check up because they are afraid that even if their illness is not related to COVID-19, the hospital or doctor will declare that their illness is COVID.

Mrs. Celia Broa, Chairperson of Dangolaan Ladies Organization, shared that *“imbis bati ta og kinaiya, mobati ta ogkalooy kay wala may gikaon ang uban panahon sa taas kaayo nga lockdowns”* (Even if we have a negative attitude, we feel compassion and charity to others because they have nothing to eat especially during long lockdowns).

During the interview, several women realized the difficulty of not having cash in the house during the lockdown. They discovered that it is important to have a cash reserve to have a financial safety net in order to survive any crisis/calamity that will come in their lives.

For the youth

For more than a year now, some youth in the community did not observe the health protocols, such as wearing masks and face shields. They only wear masks and face shields if the police are around. In short, some of them are not afraid of the COVID-19 pandemic, but they are afraid of the police and the penalty once caught in the act.





For the youth, staying at home with nothing to do during lockdowns is quite boring. They could not go outside of their community, nor to nearby municipalities since it is restricted, especially for the youth aging below 18. Some of the youth complained that the modular and online education system is quite different from the time that they are studying face to face in their school. They were not able to learn during this time of the pandemic as the modular and online study is very limited and the interaction is not balanced well. Some of the youth said that their learning is very limited.

In some remote communities early pregnancy and early marriage happened because some of the youth have nothing to turn to in this time of pandemic but to engage in some activities that hamper their future and ambitions.

As they have shared, they had some realizations. They realized the need for more community-level activities for young people to participate and complement in their promotion of community-managed Disaster Risk reduction and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation. Mobilizing the youth for the promotion of DRR-CCAM amidst the pandemic

Since the youth that we have organized are engaging in U-Report, they learned and realized how to develop strategies that are youth-friendly and interesting for young people to partake in order to increase their interest in responding/completing U-Report Polls and registering in U-Report. We have also recognized the gaps in the actual number of U-Reporters who respond to the poll vis-à-vis total number of active U-Reporters. Responding to the challenges that young people encountered when taking part in online activities (i.e weak internet connectivity, gadgets, etc.), the solution provided was offering them internet/mobile data support.

Mr. Jaymark Cole, a youth person in Barangay Dableston, shared *“One thing I learned while in lockdowns and isolation is to take care of myself, my family, and our environment. We are very thankful to LAFCCOD because, during the lockdowns, they provided us with vegetable seeds and organic fertilizer*

made from seaweed that kept us busy and we enjoyed planting vegetables in our community. Thus, we were able to use our time productively, rather than doing nothing in the community during lockdowns.”

Cultural Traditions

For both Moslems and Christians, practice of their religion is very limited. The number of devotees is restricted and only few people can enter the mosque and the church. Social Gathering is restricted. For Filipinos, Fiesta and other related occasions are embedded in our culture and traditions. With the COVID-19 pandemic, social gatherings, especially celebration of Fiesta, are strictly not allowed during lockdowns. *Sabong* or cockfighting games are also prohibited. Once caught, a big penalty is imposed.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted religion in various ways, including the cancellation of the worship services of various faiths and the closure of Sunday schools, as well as the cancellation of pilgrimages, ceremonies, and festivals. Many churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples have offered worship services through livestream amidst the pandemic.

Effect to the environment

With the effects of the pandemic, the fishers have realized that it puts pressure on the ongoing dwindling situation of the coastal environment. Due to increasing poverty in the coastal communities and with the strict implementation of the health protocols where people’s convergence and economic activities are limited, people in the community have a tendency to go to the fishing ground everyday in order to extract and get resources from the sea by all means for food and income. Ms. Juliet Sarita, a member of the Dangolaan Ladies Organization, said that *“every day you can see many people in the community such as men, women, youth elderly that go to the sea to fish, gather seashells, crabs, and collect whatever they can collect, etc. I could not imagine how many kilos and volumes of fish and other sea products they*

extract everyday. This reality worsened the dwindling resources of our sea because they extract even those juvenile fish and young/small ones.”

sailing in this difficult and challenging time (Eddie Delicano).

Innovations

Measures carried out by the community:

- Volunteerism and helping one another;
- Strict observance of budgeting in the family in order to survive in this challenging time;
- Solicit to their relatives and friends who are working abroad;
- Sell whatever they could sell just to earn money in order to meet both ends and survive;
- Establishments of the Bio-Intensive Gardens and distribution of the BIO Grow, an organic fertilizer made from seaweed;
- Together with our families we help one another in fishing, fish vending, processing in order to earn money and to keep on

While the people in both Moslem and Christian communities are engaging in strengthening social cohesion towards coastal resource management and Marine Protected Area development, they innovated especially during the time of pandemic when nutritious food is needed. They did not only focus their attention in developing their coastal environment through planting of mangroves and managing their marine sanctuary, but they engaged in establishing their Bio Intensive Gardens and in producing the BIO Grow, an organic fertilizer made from seaweed. Since they are in quarantine period and in lockdown, they innovate. They establish communal gardens and produce their own food through the establishment of the Bio-intensive Gardens using the organic fertilizer. The Bio-Grow is an organic fertilizer made from seaweeds and has been processed and managed by fisher folks composed of Moslem and Christian women.

FRESH SEAWEED FROM THE PROJECT SITE



An observation that also became apparent from the sharing of other members of the People's Organization is that while the men and women were developing their communal garden (with due consideration of social distancing and wearing of face masks), sharing among them were happening as well regarding their situation while in quarantine period or lockdowns. It became a venue where each helped one another and in doing all these things, it strengthened bonds not only in the organization but in the community as a whole. It also develops camaraderie and unity. In short, it contributes to strengthening and sustaining

social cohesion and also in strengthening gender relations between men and women who engaged in the development of their communal garden. They are able to use their time productively with good results.

Finally, with their communal garden or Bio-Intensive Garden, they have been able to harvest fresh, healthy and organic vegetables. Some women from other communities gained income from their harvested fresh vegetables. Seeing its importance and great impact in their family and community in the whole, they will continue and sustain this good practice.

BIO-INTENSIVE GARDENS





Conclusion and Recommendations

The COVID-19 pandemic has indeed affected all people from all walks of life economically, politically and socio-culturally, including the environment. It affected children, men, women elderly, LGBTQ, the rich and the poor. The hardest hit are the poor who do not even have savings in the banks nor extra money in their pocket in this difficult and unexpected time.

There are responses that have been implemented in various communities. These responses came from the NGOs, Private sectors, Local Government Units, National Governments. However, the responses are not enough given the situation that nobody knows

when this crisis will end. As a matter of fact it is worsening as the day passes by.

Within this crisis and uncertain time, several people in the community realized we should stick together. We need to work and cooperate with one another to win this battle. We need to observe restrictions and follow health protocols, i.e wearing of face masks, face shields, use of alcohol and disinfectants, etc. We should unite together and help one another in fighting this virus. Our strength lies in being part of a community.

LEARNINGS

Recognizing that the new normal arising from the COVID-19 pandemic would necessarily mean incorporating into the approaches and strategies, other possible ways of working, for example, the need to maintain social distancing, the risks involved in face-to-face interaction and

consequently, the need to maximize use of social media and other IT-based platforms for interactions, and others, until there is evidence that the pandemic is completely addressed.



Like other calamities that hit our country, people in the community realized the importance of preparedness. *"Sa wala pa ang mga kalamidad o peligro nga kahimtang, kinahanglan mangandam gyud ta kanunay* (Before the calamities strike our community, we really need to prepare at all times)."

Several women during the interview discover the difficulty of absence of cash money during lockdowns. They realized that it is very important to have a cash reserve anytime in order to have financial safety nets in order to survive in times of crises and calamities.

Men realized the importance of family solidarity and strengthening the immune system. While the family's health is being strengthened, it is also important to strengthen the organization and the community to build a resilient and peaceful community.

Ways Forward/ Next Steps

With the worsening economic situation in the various communities wherein some sectors are already complaining, *“they will die not from the virus but from hunger”*, it is indeed necessary to provide livelihood programs that are designed and will fit to the capacities of the people, especially designed for persons with disabilities. Since the Bio-Intensive Gardens and the distribution of Organic Seaweed Fertilizer proved their effectiveness and great impact, this should be also replicated to other communities that are suffering from the crisis. From this, the community can produce and can also stress the importance of healthy food to strengthen one’s immune system.

With the problems of the transportation and movement restrictions, wherein it is difficult to enter and operate in the project areas due to health protocols, the Community development Volunteers, including the PO leaders, can be utilized to deliver our mission and services to various communities.

Campaign and advocacy both to local and national should be hastened and sustained, especially since several communities experienced and have realized

the need of the government to improve their COVID-19 response.

The pandemic stressed the importance of healthy food to strengthen one’s immune system. As some sectors have complained, they will die not from the virus but from hunger. Having Bio-Intensive Gardens and to plant root crops in their home is important in promoting people’s welfare and healthy foods in their community and family.

Information, Campaign and Education should be continued and sustained primarily in promoting proper health practices and disseminating accurate and timely information about COVID-19 (i.e., information campaigns and education at the community level through online platforms and social media).

We should continue the Learning activities we have started with CDP and other partners so that we can create more significant changes in the lives of the people, primarily the small fisherfolks, farmers, men women, youth, LGBTQ, and the persons with disabilities.

References

- FGD with the Bagaan Farmers and Fisherfolks Association officers and members in Barangay Bangaaan Sultan Naga Dimaporo, LDN on May 11, 2021
- FGD with Dangolaan Ladies Organization officers and members in Barangay Dangolaan, LDN, on May 12, 2021
- Consultation with the youth Organizations in Barangay Sugod, Tukuran, Zamboanga Del Sur on May 19, 2021.
- Parke, Caleb (13 March 2020). *“Churches cancel Sunday service, move online amid coronavirus outbreak”*. Fox News. Archived from the original on 15 March 2020. Retrieved 16 March 2020.

Project Ugnayan: A case study on PDRF's urban poor community response early in the COVID-19 lockdown



Abstract

Early on the declaration of coronavirus (COVID-19) as a global pandemic, strict lockdown measures were initiated across the globe. As called upon by experts, the Philippines underwent an Enhance Community Quarantine (ECQ)¹, a lockdown initiative that has continued to disrupt the everyday lives of Filipinos. Urban areas specifically suffer from this disaster due to the consequential rate of transmission in communities. The pandemic has disrupted food systems amplifying food insecurity and malnutrition as one of the most pressing concerns in low-income households in urban cities. In response to the pandemic, Project Ugnayan, a multi-sectoral, collaborative effort spearheaded by the Ayala Group of companies with the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), the private sector, local government units, and Caritas Manila, was organized. The project provided unconditional emergency cash assistance to economically vulnerable families in the Greater Manila Area to address food security needs of those affected by the first ECQ last 16 March to 16 June, 2020. Findings show that the project went beyond its initial target of reaching 1.5 million households and, at the final tally, stretched to a total of 2.8 million beneficiaries. The project's key feature lies in its decision to use gift certificates as the medium of assistance and the selection of Caritas Manila as the distributing arm of the project. This article highlights how the project created a novel

1 "On 13 March 2020 a quarantine was announced and was initially limited to the National Capital Region (NCR) but as more cases of community transmission were recorded from the nearby provinces, a Luzon island wide quarantine was implemented by the President effective March 17. Under this expanded quarantine, land, sea and air transportation was banned. Only transportation for essential services as allowed. The ECQ exempted medical personnel and goods, sanitation operations and emergency cases from mobility restrictions. People were advised to work from home and use online communications and business transactions to avoid gathering in offices. This quarantine period expired on 14 Apr 2020 but upon recommendation of the IATF to the President of the Philippines based on epidemiological models of the UP COVID 19 task force, it was extended to 30 Apr 2020." (Vallejo & Ong, 2020).

system that exhibited innovative features across all stages from its conceptualization to implementation to achieve a large-scale, time-efficient goal. It has highlighted the role of the private sector in disaster response by showcasing its strength through the mobilization of immediate and tangible initiatives, management expertise, and sectoral approach. The case of Project Ugnayan may serve as an exemplary model for similar future initiatives. Although the project achieved its goal, no proper evaluation of its impact on households or individuals was conducted due to limitations on data collection. Mobilization to acquire data from the ground (beneficiaries and the distributing arm) were restricted because of the lockdown. This study contributes to the body of literature on pandemic response directed at food insecurity in urban poor communities and showcases the role of the private sector in community engagement.

Keywords

Private sector response; Community response; COVID-19; Urban poor; Food insecurity; Financial and in-kind assistance; Case study

Background

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was officially declared as a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11 March 2020 as it affected more than 110 countries and was spreading at an alarming rate throughout the continents (WHO, 2020). Similar to other countries, the Philippine government implemented the necessary quarantine measures to manage transmission. The Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was carried out in the Luzon Region on 16 March 2020. During ECQ. All forms of public transportation were down and mass gatherings were prohibited; only grocery stores and those involved with essential supplies were allowed to operate (Vallejo & Ong, 2020). Private transport was limited to essential workers (i.e. health workers, food vendors, logistics for essential goods) and to one person per household only to purchase food and basic commodities (Talabong, 2020). Metro Manila and its surrounding urban cities have been the epicenter of COVID-19 infection in the Philippines. The spread of the virus is heightened due to the congested number of residents, rate of internal migrants, and presence of urban poor communities in these areas (United Nations, 2020). Before the pandemic, those living in these vicinities were already exposed to numerous

vulnerabilities. With the unforeseen outbreak, their precariousness is intensified not solely because of the severe threat to health, but rather due to the socio-economic implications of the needed quarantine measures (World Vision, 2020). Enforcement of the lockdown² caused thousands to lose stable sources of income and have restricted the opportunities and coping economic activities of households (International Labour Organization, 2020).

Experts have already anticipated a significant increase in poverty incidence in the coming years due to the COVID-19 response. Financial tolls tied to other social factors continue to affect urban low-income families. Low-income households will continue to be hindered moving up to middle-income status (Albert et al., 2020). Although Albert et al., (ibid.) claimed that the massive economic consequence of the lockdown has been interceded by the different

2 Several lockdown measurements have been enacted by the national government; this references the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) and Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ) version present around the greater Manila region.



financial subsidies provided by the government; the Economic Policy Research Institute (2020) report on National Capital Region (NCR) households, have perceived that a larger implication beyond anticipation is taking effect. Non-monetary poverty impacts health, education, social activities, and hunger will prevail if no proper intervention is taken. Food purchasing habits have changed in adjusting to the logistical challenges of the city-wide lockdowns (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020). However, because the population has varying capacities to adapt to these challenges, access to food and optimal nutrition has become even more inequitable.

Interventions in the provision of food security should be a priority area for stakeholders. It is predicted that food insecurity in Asia and the Pacific will worsen doubly as the pandemic progresses (World Food Programme, 2020). Both supply and demand sides have been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown (FAO, 2020). A survey conducted by the Zero Extreme Poverty Philippines 2030 (ZEP2030, 2020) last 21 August to 11 October, 2020, showed that food insecurity has been a major issue among low-income and vulnerable families residing in Metro Manila during the pandemic and Metro Cebu (55%). With 16% of the respondents skipping meals at least once a week. To compensate, families resorted to informal loans (financial and in-kind), buying cheaper food, and relied on food aid. Similar strategies were also seen in the World Vision rapid assessment (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted food systems in the Philippines. Stringent lockdown rules have made households living in poverty rely largely on aid in the form of food packs distributed by local governments and private donors. The average weekly food expense of households were lessened during the lockdown. 83% of those who received financial assistance from the government prioritized acquiring food and groceries (ZEP2030 & UNDP, n.d.).

The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) has been at the forefront of private sector response for disaster-related initiatives. Since its establishment in 2009, the organization has responded to different adversities that came in the country (Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation, n.a.). The pandemic has not been an exemption; PDRF has continued to conduct programs and interventions to assist affected communities and sectors.

To adequately address the challenges brought about by the lockdown and to provide relief from acute hunger, the Ayala Corporation, through Fernando Zobel de Ayala and Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, tapped the PDRF to coordinate with its 100+ members and partners to convene for this initiative. On 1 April, Project Ugnayan was launched thanks to 220 individual and corporate donors.

Project Ugnayan is a multi-sectoral, collaborative effort between private sector partners, Ayala Group of Companies, the PDRF, and Caritas Manila. It aimed to provide unconditional emergency cash transfers to economically vulnerable families in the Greater Manila Area to address the food security needs of those affected by ECQ. Project Ugnayan also supported ABS-CBN's Pantawid ng Pagibig program, which delivered food packs to impoverished communities through local government units (LGUs). Jollibee's Food Group Foundation's FoodAID program also contributed ready-to-cook meals to communities as its participation in Ugnayan. In contrast, Asian Development Bank (ADB)/Government's Bayan Bayanihan! program delivered critical food supplies to the most vulnerable households in Metro Manila and neighboring provinces as part of its engagement in Project Ugnayan (Ayala Corporation, n.d.).

This case study aims to answer the general question: “How has Project Ugnayan engaged with communities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?” Specifically answers the questions:

1. What were the challenges faced by the partner communities since the pandemic started? What Project Ugnayan carried out measures and initiatives to address these challenges?
2. What innovations, particularly at the community level, were fostered and/or cultivated in PDRF’s pandemic response initiatives? How were they carried out or implemented? How are they being sustained?
3. What lessons has PDRF and its partners gained and documented from Project Ugnayan? What good practices were achieved through the pandemic response initiatives?

4. How has the private sector contributed to the coordination in pandemic response? What role does the private sector play in pandemic disaster situations?

This study contributes to the body of literature on pandemic response directed at food insecurity in urban poor communities, showcasing the private sector’s role in community engagement. Its research objective, to contribute to stakeholders’ capacity in providing an immediate and tangible response to pandemic disasters by (1) providing a summary of the project initiatives, (2) sharing best practices, challenges and opportunities upon implementation, (3) and lastly, highlighting the role of the private sector in community response.

This research is a qualitative case study that utilizes primary and secondary data. Key informant interviews(KIIs) were initiated between PDRF administration and staff, and document analysis of project reports, evaluations and other relevant materials served as primary sources of data.

Findings and discussion

During the start of the lockdown the Ayala group of companies determined that one of the biggest challenges that communities would face would

involve food insecurity. According to the Chief Resilience Officer for PDRF and Associate Director for Ayala:

“...within a few days, we figured one of the biggest needs would be food... the question in our mind was: if it (the lockdown) lasted one month, how could people work, and how would people put food on the table?”

- PDRF, Ayala

In urban areas, including the Greater Manila region, food is primarily accessed through purchases made from monetary income. Thus, urban access to food requires work. However, due to the enforcement

of the lockdown, which caused a high increase in unemployment, particularly among the economically vulnerable, hunger became an evidently pressing issue.

To mitigate this issue, the government planned to provide unconditional cash aids under the Social Amelioration Program (SAP)³ and *ayuda*⁴ (either in-

3 SAP is a financial subsidy program by the national government. It is specifically aimed to assist low-income households during the pandemic lockdown.

4 Ayuda is a local term referring to in-kind assistance from government entities (ZEP2030 & UNDP, 2020).

kind or monetary depending on the region) programs. However, this process takes a certain amount of time before its initiation. Since hunger is a problem that requires immediate relief, there is a need to efficiently address hunger while the government's *ayuda* program is underway.

PROJECT UGNAYAN

Keeping in mind the immediate problem of food insecurity, Project Ugnayan was conceptualized. Project Ugnayan was created as a short-term response to provide immediate relief against food insecurity and complement the initiation of the government's *ayuda* program. The Ayala group of companies decided to tap PDRF in initiating the project.

In the implementation phase, PDRF chose Caritas Manila as their leading partner under their Project, Damayan. The program's initial goal was to provide 1.0 - 1.5 million of the poorest families across Greater Manila (e.g. Metro Manila, Rizal, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas) with PhP 1,000 gift checks to nearby supermarkets that can be exchanged for basic needs. The rollout's target duration was immediately after the initial implementation of ECQ (March to April).

Two key decision points were made in the conceptualization of Project Ugnayan. These were crucial points in meeting the demands of its large scale, time-efficient goal:

5. Utilizing gift checks as the mode of relief to be distributed.

Gift checks (GCs) have several advantages over other options such as food packets, cash, or e-cards, namely: (a) It is light and easy to carry, making it faster and easier to distribute compared to food packets, which also presents various logistical

difficulties, such as the procurement, storage, re-packing, and transporting of food. More importantly, GCs allow the beneficiaries the dignity of exercising their freedom of choice; (b) It is more secure than carrying cash, making it a safer option; Finally (c), it does not require the use of technology, making it more accessible and cheaper to produce than e-cards.

6. Partnering with Caritas Manila for the distribution of gift checks

Caritas Manila is a non-profit organization that serves as the primary ministry for the social development programs of the Catholic Church. Caritas Manila is the closest organization that possesses the specific combination of qualities necessary for Project Ugnayan's distribution:

7. (a) **Organizational Size.** A network of 700 parishes is present in all the most vulnerable communities of Greater Manila that Ugnayan aimed to reach. With its abundant number of parish priests and volunteers, Caritas Manila can centralize the distribution to these networks from their main office.
- (b) **Experience.** The parish priests have already served these communities for other projects, including their own, and are present in these communities daily.
- (c) **Trust.** Caritas Manila is a trusted institution from both ends: the project

implementers and beneficiaries. Fr. Anton, the head of Caritas Manila, is personally known by the main organizers of Project Ugnayan. Caritas Manila is also easy to trust from the beneficiary's end due to its previous experiences in serving poor communities and representing a trusted institution – the church.

Following the initial partnership with Caritas' project Damayan, other private sector distribution channels were also tapped to expand the project's reach. These were (a) ABS-CBN's Pantawid ng Pag-Ibig program, (b) Jollibee's Food Group Foundation's FoodAID program, and (c) Asian Development Bank's Bayan, Bayanihan program

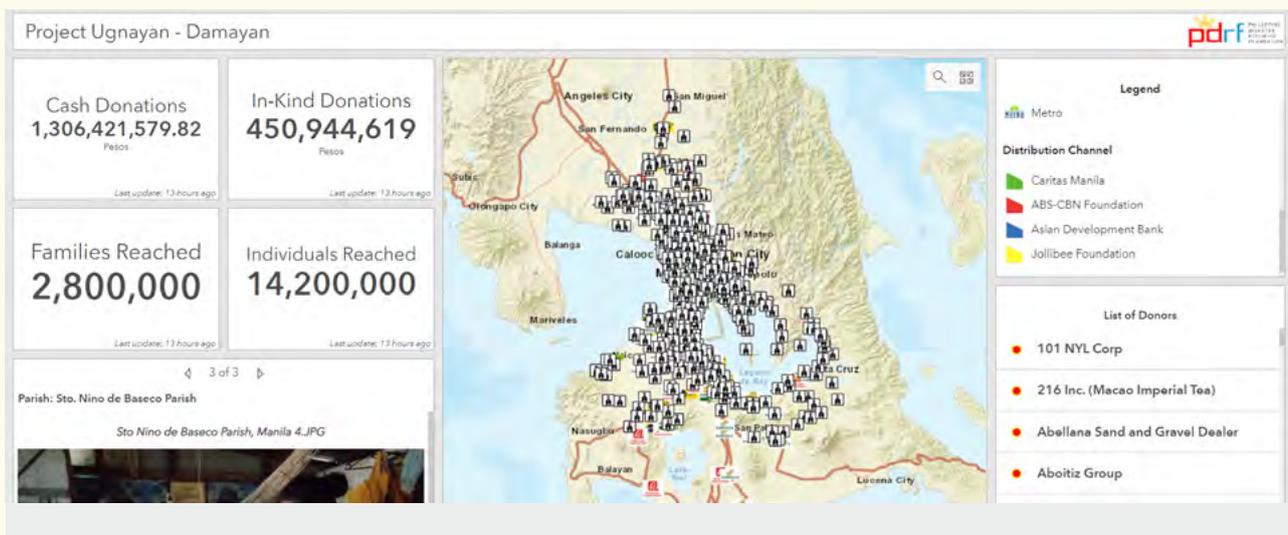
IMPLEMENTATION

The project was mainly implemented through the coordination of PDRF and Caritas Manila. This became a large-scale project as the partnership grew with more than two hundred private sector donors (see appendices for complete list). Its implementation efficiently proceeded in coordination with barangay captains of the various communities that were reached.

As secretariat, PDRF managed the project's finances, maintained the project's mapping database, and coordinated with Caritas Manila and other partners to monitor and track distribution through parishes and LGUs. Furthermore, the organization served as the monitoring arm using its ArcGIS platform (the aforementioned mapping database). You may see the final screenshot of the project dashboard in the Figure 1 below.

PDRF's primary role was to serve as the lead implementer and secretariat for Project Ugnayan.

FIGURE 1. DASHBOARD OF PROJECT UGNAYAN⁵



5 Source from the official PDRF website: https://covid19.pdrf.org/project-Ugnayan/map-of-disbursements/?fbclid=IwAR2agDlv3GRwp9f6091QUySdQ_ke69_yxZLCnAchCI1uhBQU3uo63jUoAhc.

All the funds donated by the private sector went to PDRF. The organization would then secure the gift checks and proceed to coordinate with Caritas Manila

for the actual distribution of the GCs. As mentioned above, it was a pivotal decision to choose Caritas Manila as the distributing agency of the project:

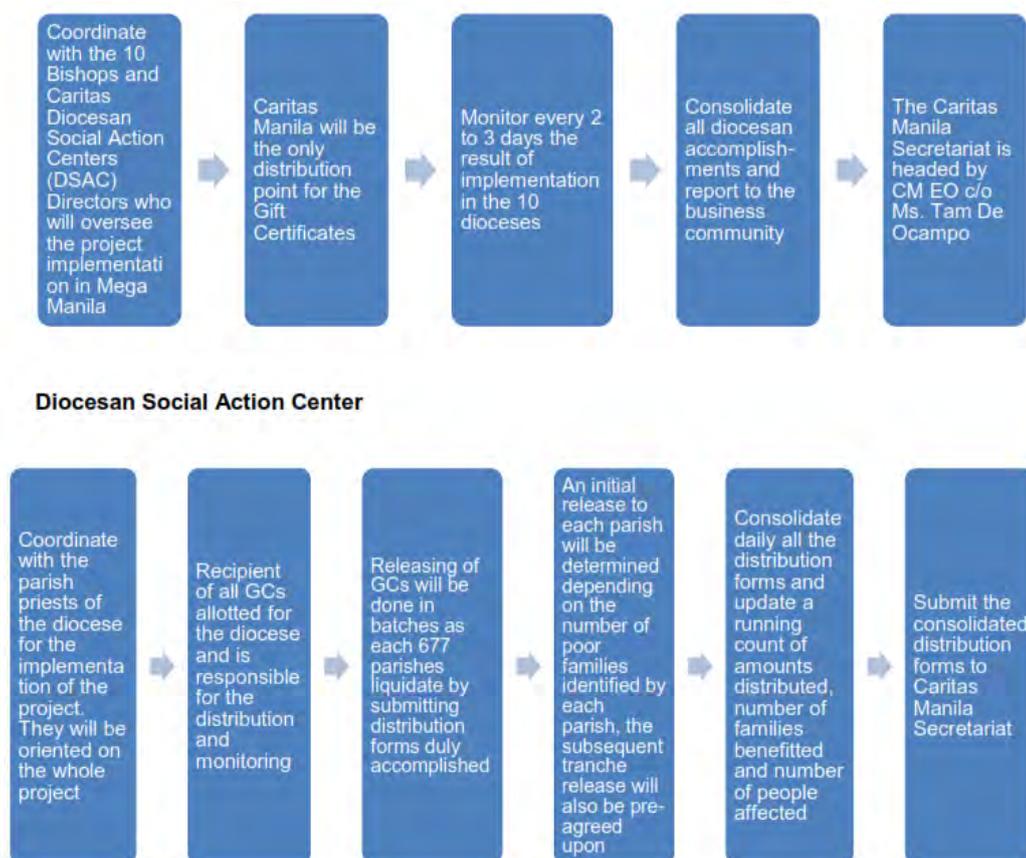
“Caritas was an easy choice, because it’s got the organizational size to do it, it’s got people used to distributing, it’s a very trusted institution – it’s the church, and they have parish priests... It was easy to select them. We couldn’t see any other organization that could come close to replicating all the conditions that we would want in terms of trust, manpower, and reach”

- PDRF, Ayala

Through its network of parishes and volunteers, the organization coordinated with barangay captains to serve as the main distributor of the gift checks. Figure

2 summarizes the coordination and distribution plan undergone by Caritas Manila.

FIGURE 2. COORDINATION PLAN THROUGH CARITAS MANILA



Project Ugnayan moved with purposeful intent throughout the distribution process. To avoid creating a super spreader event and prevent the indignity of having people line up, the setup for the distribution of gift checks was made door-to-door. Despite the catholic background of Caritas Manila, its distribution was designed to be non-denominational.

This was made to ensure an equal opportunity among Catholics and non-Catholics alike. The coordination with barangay captains also made it possible to conduct the distribution during curfew hours at night. It was making the initiative easier and safer since it was more relaxed and everyone was indoors.

“The distribution was set up as a door-to-door distribution... We didn’t want a super spreader event by having people lineup... We didn’t want people having the indignity of having to line up for their health, for their ayuda. We wanted to do it in a more dignified manner.”

– PDRF, Ayala

Grocery stores closest to the community were deliberately chosen to compensate for travel restrictions caused by the lockdown. Surprisingly, this had the added benefit of a new experience for some beneficiaries who had never stepped into a supermarket. This was a common experience for far-flung communities that were reached. After distributing GCs, the parish priests would inform local store managers of the activity that had taken place to ensure their stores were well-stocked and prepared. In cases of shortages, parish priests will notify the central office of Caritas. The message is then relayed from Caritas to PDRF, then from PDRF to the market headquarters. This system informs the headquarters and reminds them to restock their supplies if needed.

“...we felt we should pick supermarkets which are closest to the community, kasi wala naman transport because of the lockdown. We try to pick places that are within walking distance of the neighborhood.”

- PDRF, Ayala

PDRF coordinated with ADB for the communities that were difficult to reach and/or have no nearby supermarkets. ADB would then purchase in-kind

goods as an alternative to the GCs. PDRF provided a list of suppliers where they can buy goods at wholesale prices. ADB was able to deliver food packets to these areas through the Philippine Army.

In addition, ABS-CBN’s Pantawid ng Pag-Ibig has assisted 17 Metro Manila local government units and the provinces of Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal. Jollibee’s Food AID program also delivered ready-to-cook chicken packs to low-income families from its commissary through a network composed of Don Bosco, Caritas Manila, and the Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Pamilya ng Pantawid.

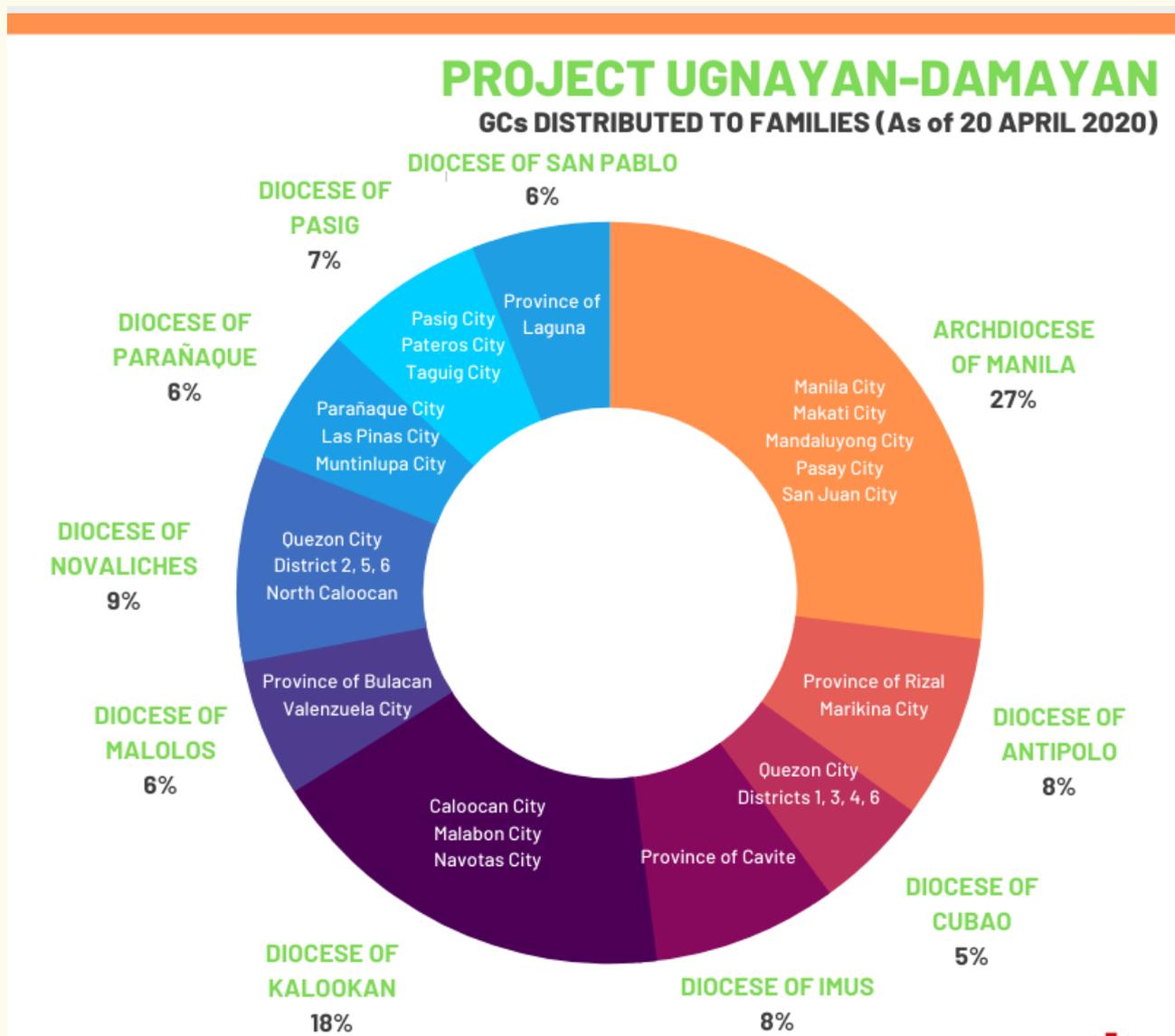
Overall, the whole of Project Ugnayan was a novel system that exhibited innovative features across all stages from its conceptualization to implementation. A quick recap of its notable innovations is summarily listed as follows: (1) The use of gift checks, (2) a door-to-door setup for distribution, (3) a non-denominational practice of distribution, (4) the barangay level coordination, (5) the grouping of nearby grocery stores, (6) communication with local store managers, and (7) coordinating with market headquarters.

TARGETS AND DELIVERABLES

The official initiation and roll out of gift checks spanned less than four months after the implementation of ECQ; from March to April of 2020. As of the official closing and final tally on 30 June 2020, Project Ugnayan reached 2,837,367 families or 14,186,835 individuals in various dioceses in Metro Manila, Rizal, Cavite, Bulacan, and Laguna. With over PhP 1.75B cash and in-kind donations from 220 individual and corporate donors distributed to families, 14.2

million individuals were reached through the project. A summary of GCs distributed (under project Damayan) to families is illustrated in Figure 3 below. The majority of the beneficiaries came from Metro Manila, with 27% of total GCs distributed by the Archdiocese of Manila. Distribution was followed by the Archdiocese of Kalookan, covering the cities of Caloocan, Malabon, and Navotas (18%).

FIGURE 3. PERCENTAGE OF GCS DISTRIBUTED BY DIOCESE



Starting 1 April, 2020, the distribution initially reached 492,067 families and 2,460,335 individuals. Since then, there has been a total percentage increase of 467.36%, where 2,837,367 families and 14,186,835 individuals were reached in total on 30 June, 2020. This has clearly shown that the coordinating partners were efficient in their system of distribution. Aside from the fast-paced roll-out, the vast increase in

beneficiaries illustrates the capabilities of private sector response. With the final tally reaching 2.8 million households from originally targeting only 1.0 to 1.5 million, the capacity to provide relief is beyond estimation. This increase is best illustrated in Figure 4 below where the actual increase in numbers can be seen.

FIGURE 4. PROJECT UGNAYAN AND TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILIES REACHED



As mentioned earlier, beyond project Damayan, several more initiatives were implemented. Table 1 below summarizes each distribution from Caritas Manila to those reached by ADB/Government (Bayan, Bayanihan!), Jollibee (FoodAID), ABS-CBN (Pantawid ng Pagibig), and Caritas Manila (Project Damayan).

TABLE 1. DISTRIBUTION OF REACH FROM DONORS

Partners	Families		Individuals		% increase
	Starting reach	Final reach	Starting reach	Final reach	
ADB/Government	8,030	160,000	40,150	800,000	1,892.53%
Jollibee	47,537	515,512	237,685	2,577,560	984.44%
ABS-CBN	161,301	790,000	806,505	3,950,000	389.77%
Caritas Manila	283,229	1,371,855	1,416,145	6,859,275	384.36%

With these numbers in mind, the project’s targets and objectives were breached, the implementers generally perceive the project as a huge success. The following statements best describe this:

“We were able to move beyond a million families within two months, and it was fast. Especially if we combine with ABS-CBN’s operation, and then Jollibee, and then ADB, then it was like well over 2 million families in something like 8, 10 weeks at most... in terms of the speed of distribution, the reach, it exceeded our target. We were looking at over a million families, but we got more than that. We got more than 2 million when we combined the partnerships. The generosity of the business community was surpassed. We thought we would start with a billion pesos, and we got well over that. Almost 1.7 I think.”

- PDRF, Ayala

“Within a month, or 2-4 weeks of implementation, everything was finished. Maybe this is what’s most unique for Project Ugnayan. The mobilization was very fast in terms of receiving donations from member companies, then processing it to distribute to the beneficiaries. Yeah, that was fast. Yeah, I think it’s also seen as a model for other countries or organizations that want to help in this magnitude”

- PDRF

Several testimonials gathered from the beneficiaries also highlighted the significant impact of the initiative towards their families. Most of them were thankful since their primary sources of income were disrupted during the lockdown. Another beneficiary shared that she was grateful because they have a disabled household member:

“We are thankful for the given help from the sponsors because my husband is a tricycle driver and we have no daily source of income. That’s why we are thankful of the assistance we received”

- beneficiary from Caloocan City

“I am thankful for the help given by Caritas Caloocan. It has especially helped my father who is a person with disability (PWD). We are three families living here. This has really helped us. -beneficiary from Malabon City

Although implementers were generally pleased with the project, some challenges and gaps needed to be filled. These limitations are further discussed in the Ways Forward section.

Summary and conclusion

This study has been successful in its objectives by firstly providing a summary of the project initiatives. The findings have outlined the story of how project Ugnayan was conceptualized and implemented. Sharing the national government’s sentiment that cash assistance is an effective combatant to acute food insecurity, the Ayala group of companies decided to coordinate with its 200+ business partners in providing GCs and in-kind assistance to urban poor communities in the Greater Manila Area. This was initiated at the first few months of the lockdown while the SAP and *ayuda* initiative was still underway.

Secondly, the project’s best practices lie mainly in its innovative feature to use GCs as a medium and determining Caritas Manila as the ideal distributing partner. The cashless transaction was strategic as it honored the safety of people involved through social distancing and other minimum health standards of Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases(IATF). It was efficient as mass gatherings were avoided through house-to-house distribution. With their extensive network, LGUs and barangays were directly coordinated by Caritas. It guaranteed that each household received the assistance since the distribution was conducted during curfew hours, where people were sure to remain in their residences. Vouchers also ensured that people would utilize them

for food and other necessary goods. It was providing flexibility and limitation at the same time by selecting and coordinating with supermarkets and grocery stores around the vicinity.

Moreover, the Ayala group of companies—being a major business group—easily collated response efforts. Requesting financial and in-kind support was no big deal, and the initiative expanded its coverage at a rate of almost 500%. It started from Caritas Manila’s Project Damayan to expanding network partners such as ADB, Jollibee, ABS-CBN, and more.

Lastly, this case study has highlighted some of the critical features and roles of the private sector in disaster response. Firstly, it has been a significant theme in the conceptualization of project Ugnayan to complement and fill the gap between government efforts and immediate and tangible needs. This project was mainly possible because the Ayala group of companies perceived food insecurity as a primary concern. The government initiative (SAP and *ayuda* program) to combat it will take time. With the private sector’s capabilities to relatively mobilize faster than the national government (mostly shrouded in bottlenecks in bureaucratic systems), it is evident that the private sector strength lies in its ability to immediately respond. Distribution channels were



clearly efficient due to the existing ties among partners and coordination with LGUs. Furthermore, holding abundant resources and the means of production has led to a snowball effect leading to the enlargement of the effort. This has also cut time in provision of resources.

“Of course when it comes to the government there are a lot of layers and a lot of bureaucracies. If it’s from the private sector we can cut those systems, especially when the people in charge request it.”

- PDRF

A key characteristic within the private sector is their collaborative approach. Each company can interdependently function with a specialized role according to their area of expertise, thus maximizing their capabilities for disaster response, than if each were to contribute separately. Private sector entities have excellent knowledge in the field where they operate. Speaking regarding the private sector’s joint effort and role in disaster response, the Chief Resilience Officer for PDRF and Associate Director for Ayala have stated:

“...I think this is the contribution that we (private sector) can make, and I think it’s going to continue. I think it has to continue, because these problems are too large for a single institution to manage, so I think we need to band together. And when I say private sector, it’s not one or two companies. We’re talking of dozens of companies all helping.”

- PDRF, Ayala

When discussed during the interviews, it was evident that the private sector response moves through sectoral programs. Compared to government agencies that have specific focus areas, the private sector does not have a particular area but answers to the call of disasters by responding to sectoral needs. For example, PDRF’s programs generally assist the health, education, and other sectors concerning disasters.

It is also important to note that the private sector should not be regarded as a separate or distanced entity in disaster response but as development partners.

“There are also technical capacities and competencies that the private sector can contribute. There are many benefits to the government and society from the way the private sector operates... So yeah, one of the things that we would like to emphasize, that we would like to push, is private sector as partners in development in DRR response”

- PDRF



Ways forward

Project Ugnayan’s principal value is on its promotion of efficiency in its response systems. The project was the first to respond to a unique disaster with this magnitude of targets from the private sector. Ugnayan’s successful endeavor to accomplish such

a large scale, a time-efficient goal may serve as a model for similar initiatives in the future and as an example of the private sector’s benefit to society as development partners.

“This unprecedented assembly of so many of the country’s corporations and business families coming to the assistance of the most vulnerable in our society illustrates and speaks of the heart and generosity of the business community” – PDRF, Ayala

CHALLENGES, GAPS, AND AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

Project Ugnayan naturally faced a handful of administrative difficulties, including the secretariat functions of PDRF, due to the sheer speed at which everything had to be accomplished. As for the actual implementation itself, few challenges have emerged along the way, but none ultimately prevented Ugnayan’s goal from being reached. This is mainly due to Ugnayan’s flexibility to adapt according to the demands of constantly changing situations.

Firstly, the procurement of GCs became a challenge. These were not readily available to cater to the large volumes Ugnayan required, especially considering how they became the biggest buyer of GCs at the time. However, this challenge was evidently addressed.

“.. GCs are not deliberately printed... The need is so great that sometimes providers run out of GCs, it takes time to print... So sometimes, there are days where we want to get GCs but there are no supplies. We can only buy a partial number of GCs and then we have to place orders and buy GCs a day later, two days later, three days later. So it’s just the sudden demand for GCs, and of course we became the biggest buyer of GCs for that period... Suddenly we were ordering a lot. But you know, we were able to get that addressed.”

- PDRF, Ayala

Furthermore, some recipients were not familiar with GCs and how to use it, but the parish priests from

Caritas could explain it to them. Some communities were difficult to reach and/or have no nearby supermarkets, but ADB could deliver food packets to these areas through the Philippine Army and their coordination with PDRF. Although there could

be more challenges on the ground when it came to the distribution process, these were the only few remarkable ones noted by PDRF. Perhaps other challenges may not have been as noteworthy due to their people's flexibility to adjust on the spot.

“...you learn to be flexible, and people make their solutions on the ground. And something of this scale, and of this speed, there will always be changes. So long as we keep the spirit of the program- of course changes are made on the fly- but it's all good, they all meet the objective of feeding people.”

- PDRF, Ayala

Despite Ugnayan's general success, the initiative would've improved if there was a national I.D. system in place. Manually listing has slowed down the whole process; having a national I.D. system will allow an electronic identification medium, thereby making the process much more efficient. In disaster

situations like a pandemic, the ability to respond efficiently is a crucial factor, so while Ugnayan was still successful despite the absence of a national I.D. system, it would be better if similar initiatives in the future could follow through with a more efficient system of identification in place.

“...there's no I.D. system for people. There's no national I.D., so we're having to list people. Imagine if we had an I.D., and you could scan it. It could be much faster. You could use a phone and scan the I.D., then record it. We couldn't do all that. We're still very manual. That slows things down and makes things difficult. In a pandemic situation, in a hunger situation, I think speed and contact list methods are the best, but we do not have that national I.D. That slows us down, because it requires a physical listing and sign-up. I would say that's a problem... I would say the biggest handicap at the time was no I.D.. No electronic means of identification and therefore everything was a physical sign-up.”

- PDRF, Ayala

The impressive number of 2.8 million families reached ideally could be higher. It was expressed in interviews that the implementers would've reached out to more beneficiaries if more resources were

available and time constraints were not challenging. This was possible, especially considering the relatively larger affected population from the Greater Manila Region.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the project utilized an efficient mapping tool to monitor the targets and deliverables, no proper evaluation of its impact on households or individuals was conducted. With the use of the dashboard in tracking progress as well as greatly visualizing the beneficiaries, no existing measures were checked after the implementation. Given the limitation of the lockdown and the lag time before initiating this research (almost a year after the closing of the project and the fast-paced shifting of needs brought by pandemic events), a data gap is present. There are great limitations on mobilization on the ground because of lockdown restrictions.

This study also experienced great challenges in coordination with its partner organizations. Originally it intended to cover ground data from the beneficiaries and the distribution arm—Caritas Manila. It was hard to find a free schedule with the demands within the development sector during this

period. The data is only limited to PDRF staff, leads, and relevant materials. With the aforementioned missed opportunity for evaluation, this study has not been a help in reaching that gap. It merely highlights how the project was conducted.

Furthermore, this study's main emphasis is on the initiation and delivery of Project Damayan. The connection between PDRF and Caritas Manila were the main highlights. Rich insights from Bayan, Bayanihan!, Jollibee Food Group Foundation's FoodAID, and Pantawid ng Pagibig were missed.

Given these limitations, clearly, further explorations need to be made. Qualitative and quantitative studies could be conducted to capture the project's strengths and weaknesses adequately. Areas of focus such as explorations in the household, community, and barangay level may be the next steps in Project Ugnayan's examination.

References

- Albert, J. R. G., Abrigo, M. R. M., Quimba, F. M. A., & Vizmanos, J. F. V. (2020). Poverty, the Middle Class, and Income Distribution amid COVID-19. *Philippine Institute for Development Studies*, 58.
- Ayala Corporation. (n.d.). Project Ugnayan. Project Ugnayan. Retrieved 7 April, 2021, from <https://www.projectugnyan.org/ourstory/project-ugnyan>
- Bowen, G. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9, 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- Economic Policy Research Institute. (2020). The Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis on Households in the National Capital Region of the Philippines. <https://www.unicef.org/philippines/reports/impact-covid-19-crisis-households-national-capital-region-philippines>

- Food and Agriculture Organization. (2021). Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on food supply chains in the Philippines. FAO.<https://doi.org/10.4060/cb2622en>
- International Labour Organization. (2020). COVID-19 labour market impact in the Philippines: Assessment and national policy responses [Report].http://www.ilo.org/manila/publications/WCMS_762209/lang-en/index.htm
- Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation. (n.d.-a). Corporate History [Www.pdrf.org]. Corporate History. Retrieved 5 April, 2021, from <https://www.pdrf.org/about/history/>
- Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation. (n.d.-b). Project Ugnayan Dashboard. Retrieved 29 May, 2021, from <https://covid19.pdrf.org/project-Ugnayan/map-of-disbursements/>
- Talabong, R. (2020, 15 March). Metro Manila lockdown begins. Rappler.<https://www.rappler.com/nation/coronavirus-metro-manila-lockdown-begins>
- United Nations. (2020). Policy Brief: COVID-19 in an Urban World. ReliefWeb.<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/policy-brief-covid-19-urban-world>
- Vallejo, B. M., & Ong, R. A. C. (2020). Policy responses and government science advice for the COVID 19 pandemic in the Philippines: January to April 2020. *Progress in Disaster Science*, 7, 100115.<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pdisas.2020.100115>
- World Food Programme. (2020). Macro Analysis of COVID-19—Threats to Food Security and Livelihoods in Asia and the Pacific.<https://socialprotection.org/es/discover/publications/macro-analysis-covid-19-threats-food-security-and-livelihoods-asia-and-pacific>
- World Health Organization. (2020). Archived: WHO Timeline - COVID-19.<https://www.who.int/news/item/27-04-2020-who-timeline---covid-19>
- World Vision. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 to Children and Their Families: A Rapid Assessment in the Philippines.<https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/impact-covid-19-children-and-their-families-rapid-assessment-philippines>
- Zero Extreme Poverty Philippines 2030. (2020). COVID PULSE PH: Urban Poverty in the Time of the Pandemic. Zero Extreme Poverty Philippines 2030.<https://www.ph.undp.org/content/philippines/en/home/library/poverty/covid-pulse-ph---urban-poverty-in-the-time-of-the-pandemic0.html>
- Zero Extreme Poverty Philippines 2030 & United Nations Development Programme. (2020). COVID PULSE PH Phase 1: How might we innovate data collection to analyze the impacts of COVID-19 among vulnerable populations? United Nations Development Programme.<http://covidpulseph.azurewebsites.net/main/home/phase2.html>
- Zero Extreme Poverty Philippines 2030 & United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). COVID PULSE PH. COVID PULSE PH SURVEY RESULTS - PHASE 2. Retrieved 7 April, 2021, from <http://covidpulseph.azurewebsites.net/main/home/phase2.html>

Appendices

**APPENDIX A - DONOR LIST:
AS OF 30 JUNE, 2020.**

Aboitiz Group	Leonioland Group
ABS-CBN / First Gen/ Lopez Group	Mercury Drug Corporation
Alliance Global Group/ Megaworld	Metrobank Foundation, Inc./ GT Foundation
Ayala Corporation/ Zobel de Ayala Family	Nutri-Asia
AY Foundation/ RCBC	Oishi/ Liwayway Marketing Group
Bench / Suyen Group	PepsiCo/ PepsiCo Foundation thru Give2Asia
Bonifacio West Development Corporation	PLDT/ Smart/ Metro Pacific Investments Corporation
Century Pacific Food, Inc.	Puregold
Concepcion Industrial Corp	Ramon S. Ang & Family
DMCI Group of Companies	SM/ BDO
Gokongwei Group/Robinsons	Sunlife Foundation
Golden ABC Corporation, Inc. (Penshoppe)	The Rise Development Company, Inc.
ICTSI	Unilab Foundation Inc.
Jollibee Group of Companies	Wilcon Depot, Inc.
101 NYL Corp	Century Ironworks, Inc.
216 Inc. (Macao Imperial Tea)	Champions Roaster
Abellana Sand and Gravel Dealer	Chriscole Construction and Development Corp.
Abratique & Associates Philippines Inc.	Christine Sicangco Lighting Design Inc.
AC Energy, Inc.	Cityville Realty & Development Corp.
Aerophone	CMG Retail Inc.
AIG Shared Services Corp. Phils.	Coca-Cola
Alaska Milk Corporation	Collezione
Aluace Corporation	Concentric Industries

APPENDIX A - DONOR LIST: AS OF 30 JUNE, 2020.

Aluform Pre-fab Construction and Consultancy	Concrete Point Construction, Inc.
Alveo Land Corp.	Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Foundation
Amaia Land Corp.	Coogee International Development
Amaysim	Cosine Industries, Inc.
AMD Construction Corp.	Crane Cat Tradings and Services
Amici Mercantile Inc.	CST Engineers & Builders
Anding's Toys and Flowers Inc.	DakasiPhilippines Inc.
Aon Insurance & Reinsurance Brokers Philippines, Inc.	Dalkia Incorporated
Apple One Properties, Inc.	Dannysai Corporation
Arcadis Philippines Inc	Delimondo Food Specialist Inc.
Arlo Aluminum Company	DG3 Idocs, Inc.
AS Enriquez Engineering Consultancy	Dior
Automatic Centre	DLM Konstruct, Inc.
Avocadoria	Do-All Metal Industries and General Construction, Inc.
Ayala Land, Inc.	Don Antonio O. Floirendo Sr., Foundation Inc.
BBR Philippines Corporation	Dowell Container and Packaging Corporation
Billion Link Construcion	EABL Printing Services
Bistro Americano Corp.	Elevatione Time Stops PH Inc.
Bo's Coffee	ESA Engineering and Consultancy
BPT Paints and Colors	F.F. Cruz & Co., Inc.
Bradphil Inc.	Fadz Construction Inc.
Bright Asia Realty and Development Corporation	Far Eastern University
Cathay Land, Inc	Farillas Group/ Eric Farillas
Cebu Landmasters Inc	FBC Holdings. Inc.
Cebuana Lhuillier Foundation Inc.	FC Home Center Project
Fercat Holdings, Inc	Management Association of the Philippines

APPENDIX A - DONOR LIST: AS OF 30 JUNE, 2020.

First Life Financial Co. Inc. Formtech Builders Corp	Manila Consulting Group, LLC
Fotoshow Digital Printing Services	Marinelink Tankers Corporation
Gigatech Inc.	Mary Grace Foods Inc.
Gilmon Holdings, Inc. Global Food Group	MCC Labels (Manila) Philippines
Glorious Commercial Exports, Inc. GRM Ecozone Storage Inc.	Meinhardt
H & F Retail Concepts/ Jappy Gonzales	Meralco Energy, Inc.
Health Solutions- Tao Corp Affiliate	Meva Philippines Inc.
Healthy Options Corporation HNH Builders and Enterprises Hok Lu, Seu Foods (Polland)	Mickenllain Trading
Hyundai Elevator Services Phils, Inc. (Hyco)	Miten Trading Inc.
i-Fix Handyman Construction Inc. Infinite Events Manila/ Sandra Gomez Intogadgets Inc.	Monark Equipment Corporation
IPM Construction	MRS Wood Industries and Construction
J. Santos Construction, Inc. Japan Home/ Home Retail	My Girl Milk Tea
JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. – Philippine Global Service Center	Nail Tropics
JTRG Concept House	NBF Consulting Inc.
Health Solutions- Tao Corp Affiliate	NEC Telecom Software Philippines, Inc.
Healthy Options Corporation HNH Builders and Enterprises Hok Lu, Seu Foods (Polland)	New Carinas Garden
Hyundai Elevator Services Phils, Inc. (Hyco)	New Mandarin Sky Food Inc.
i-Fix Handyman Construction Inc. Infinite Events Manila/ Sandra Gomez Intogadgets Inc.	New Marketlink Pharmaceutical Corp. - Tao Corp Affiliate
IPM Construction	Nike
J. Santos Construction, Inc. Japan Home/ Home Retail	Noble House
JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. – Philippine Global Service Center	Nyxsys Philippines Inc.
JTRG Concept House	One Elcar Mercantile Corp
Kamiseta	One Meralco Foundation
Kawit Prime Holdings, Inc. Keti Coatings Inc.	OneI Builder Resources Inc
Kima Glass Supply Co., Inc.	Orient Goldcrest Realty, Inc.

APPENDIX A - DONOR LIST: AS OF 30 JUNE, 2020.

Lighters Galore	Panorama Property Ventures, Inc.
LIXIL Philippines Ltd. Co.	Parv Engineering Services
LoxonWandset, Incorporated	Penguin Group
M.E.S. General Services	People are People
Magna Business Solution Commercial Corp. Magnaxa Construction	PHAR Philippines Inc.
Majestic	Philippine Bank of Communications (PBCOM)
Makati Coverall Interior, Inc.	Philippine OPPO Mobile Technology Inc
Makati Development Corp. (Ayala Land Company)	Philippine Racing Club, Inc.
PP Aldana Construction and Supply	Pilipinas Shell Foundation, Inc.
Precision Point Incorporated	Power Mac Center Inc.
Prime Pacific Grill Corp./ Gerry's Grill	Sugar and Swirls Sugar Junction, Inc.
Private Ice	Super Prime Holdings Inc.
Puregold	Supreme Steel Pipe Corp.
Rapid Forming Corp	Sysquared& Associates Inc.
Raqi Builders Construction and Supply	Tang International Enterprises Inc.
RB Ravela Engineering Services	Tao Commodity Trader Inc.
Real Property Innovative Solutions , Inc. (RPISI) Daiichi Properties	Tao Corporation
Regan Industrial Sales, Inc.	Taste of Royal 828 Corporation
Reinosa Holdings, Inc. Rholean Builders, Inc.	TDK Philippines Corporation
Raqi Builders Construction and Supply	Techno Stress Systems Corp.
RB Ravela Engineering Services	Technoglass Curtainwall Systems Inc.
Real Property Innovative Solutions , Inc. (RPISI) Daiichi Properties	The Alpha Suites, Inc.
Regan Industrial Sales, Inc.	The Alvarez Foundation
Reinosa Holdings, Inc. Rholean Builders, Inc.	The Mamalou Group
Raqi Builders Construction and Supply	The Outlet People Inc.
RB Ravela Engineering Services	Translift Ship Management Inc.

**APPENDIX A - DONOR LIST:
AS OF 30 JUNE, 2020.**

Real Property Innovative Solutions , Inc. (RPISI) Daiichi Properties

Daiichi Properties

Regan Industrial Sales, Inc.

Reinosa Holdings, Inc. Rholean Builders, Inc.

Rogan Builders and Development Corp.

Royal Sporting House Rustan Coffee Corporation San Puente Holdings, Inc. Sandmile Enterprise

Secaucus Development Corp.

Sharholders' Association of the Philippines Sichuan Overland Machinery Co., Ltd. Silverbow Events Services

Skyrise Realty & Development Corp.

SLA Prime Ventures, Inc/ Focus Global, Inc

Starxpo Property Management Corp

Station Square East Commercial Corporation

Steel Centre Phil Inc.

Triplewell Construction Corp.

Tutuban Chow Corp.

United Paints, Inc.

Vamos Holdings, Inc.

VH Holdings, Inc.

Visionarch Visionary Architecture Inc.

Voltage Electrical Contractor Corp.

Wall Vision Corporation

Washington Group of Companies Phils. Inc.

WN Paragon Exhibit, Inc.

Wynnsline Fashion Exhibit

Yataimura Food Creations, Inc.



The Forgotten Disaster Survivors and their Environment are Victims



Purpose of the study

The primary purpose of the study is to revisit the recent condition of the Typhoon Sendong survivors after nine years and assess their situation amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Specifically:

- ▮ To assess and gather basic data on the actual situation 9 years ago regarding its overall status, some unresolved relevant issues and environmental situation;
- ▮ To tap and mobilize local leaders and involve them in the initiative for the concerns of forgotten survivors and understand the situation of the IDPs communities;
- ▮ To lead the community in developing and initiating unified lobbying actions in countering anti-social, anti-environment activities and morale degrading deeds through strengthening structures of ISM chapter;
- ▮ To project the results to local outlets such as media platforms, other networks of Civil Society Organizations (both local, national and international) and conferences with Local Government Units, to gather attention for possible action/s.

Executive Summary

The conducted study was part of the continuing process and follow ups of the Ranaw Disaster Response and Rehabilitation Assistance Center (RDRRAC), Inc. as being the vehicle to why the Typhoon Sendong survivors organized themselves and worked united in claiming their rights in accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacements (UNGPID) in the absence of laws for the Internally

Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Philippines.

It is already known that the international typhoon named Washi or Sendong severely devastated a portion of Northern Mindanao, Cagayan de Oro City and Iligan City in particular in December 17, 2011. The catastrophe's mid - Christmas season's gift to the affected populace was leaving multiple damages, not



only in its infrastructure and economy, but also to the hearts and lives of the public.

The event tested the readiness of the responsible line agencies and Local Government Units (LGUs), together with other players that were also tested by the said unexpected incidents.

“Disaster is no pleasure for time,” says a long decade slogan which tested the duty bearers if they were well-prepared, from inclusive planning their ranks, capacity to face the real situation and rebuilding.

Several years have passed since the permanent relocation sites of the survivors were built, but they were not up to the standards based on international guidelines of an ideal relocation. In fact, the early stage of the process showed several gaps but, since the only purpose was to provide shelters, there were issues that were not resolved and survivors were forced to occupy the given relocations due to fear of not being prioritized and included. In any situation, political interests existed which resulted in another agony of the survivors because of a very complicated process that resulted to a peaceful mass mobilization of members of Iligan Survivors Movement (ISM) in 2012, supported by local Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), to have a face-to-face dialogue with the Local Executive in the purpose of hearing the sentiments of the survivors of the very slow implementation process.

The Philippines in general faces at least 20 typhoons every year. During the process of rehabilitating the survivors of typhoon Sendong, there were other events that happened in other regions of the country. The scenario gradually put the history of Sendong survivors into an archive of hidden treasures. The implementation became slow because of the annual prioritization of the LGUs. Other Humanitarian actors gradually vanished from the scene, diverting their focus to new events, presuming that the Sendong rehabilitation was sincerely taken over by the LGU.

After nine years of commemorating the incidents, the survivors learned to stand and rebuild their future in their new environment in different relocation sites.

There were more than 2,000 families until now that did not receive their relocation shelters while issues on basic social services and security of tenure for the relocated were the nightmare that will always haunt them.

Life must go on, according to the Sendong survivors. They had no choice but to live with the unending struggles to attain a better situation than before.

The continued struggles through the ISM with its partner local NGOs and its networks are the only options to earn the attention of the duty bearers, of their responsibilities for the almost forgotten disaster survivors. By involving the ISM leaders in the technical works to revisit and evaluate the condition was significant and an unique initiative of the locals to fight for their rights as IDPs. At this moment, the ISM clusters in different relocation sites are in a consolidating stage to strengthen their ranks for the protection, security and development of the forgotten disaster survivors. The ultimate goal of the ISM is to be part of the reliable, competent and effective disaster survivor's movement even though it was already recognized by LGUs since creation but, being part of the regular local bodies in the LGU is a great success in order to make the survivors' voices regularly heard and be part of the decisive committee.

As part of the process, there's a need for ISM clusters

to be consolidated and strengthened not only on economic aspects but also on how to develop the capacity, assert constructively, and deal with LGUs or even national line agencies.

This study is of great help to the ISMs and their members to make them capable by getting significant facts and document regularly their situation, as well as use it to lobby to the corresponding support groups from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) together with its partners from local, national and even international arena. With this, the ISMs will become the model of a united, capacitated and competent community-based disaster managers and practitioners.

As a result of this initial but substantive study, the status of the Sendong survivors in six (6) different relocation sites within Iligan is in need of further support. The support needed is not merely on organizational development but also on integrated interventions, for them to effectively continue their purpose at the same time act as living witnesses about the real situation on the ground and become reliable if the same struggles occur.

The recent managers of their relocation say it's enough to give the shelters for now, leaving other aspects or components of rebuilding for later.

Methodology and Limitations

The methods used in this study were simple and suited the levels of the target respondents. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) was the tool used with limited but selected participants representing sectors within the relocation sites. The strict government's protocol due to the pandemic period adds to the things to be considered during the actual conduct. A facilitator, which is also a leader, serves as a main driver of the discussion sharing assisted by a documenter for salient information plus an observer of the meeting and surroundings in general.

In order to identify the significant input and time management, the facilitator used several guide questions. Follow-ups were made by other members of the study team which was composed of five persons.

Most areas where the study was conducted are located away from the highly urbanized communities of Iligan City. Exclusively and separated from non-Sendong survivors communities both government-established and private relocation sites.

Most areas where the study was conducted are located away from the highly urbanized communities of Iligan City. Exclusively and separated from non-

Sendong survivors communities both government established and private relocation sites.

CONSOLIDATED STUDY RESULTS

Out of Five (5) Target Communities, Six (6) Communities Conducted

Iligan Bay Vista Village, Upper Paitan, Dalipiuga, Iligan City, May 25, 2021

Background

- Place of origin of the residents are: Hinaplanon, Santiago, San Roque, Del Carmen, Tubod and Upper Hinaplanon.
- All barangays of Iligan city located in the danger zones along the rivers of Mandulog and Iligan;
- Prior to the displacement, the sources of income were *labandera*, *sikad*, and jeepney driver, gardening, quarrying of aggregates, construction workers, *sari-sari* stores, market vending, janitors and other income generating jobs as dearly earners;
- The organizations were assisted by *Purok* leaders in order to gradually recover despite of the LGU's lack of assistance;
- Basic social services are nor provided for in the relocation sites like water supply and livelihood – people are forced to spend money to have water for 10.00 per container to be brought at the lower part of the place but the water is for domestic usage and they will have to spend another amount for drinking water;
- Since relocation, the struggle for the security of tenure is still the main problem because the National Housing Authority (NHA) initiated a system where the residents will be paid the relocation, opposite to the pronouncement of the Presidents and even on the agreement with the DSWD – only the NHA and LGU Iligan designed such systems;
- Due to these issues, a certain leader (ISM) was in danger because someone tried to assassinate her through batting her head while on her way from her house but luckily survived and continued leading the DPs;
- Training and capacity building were acquired but, in terms of livelihood intervention, it never succeeded due to poor management, lack of supervision support, and participation of members;
- All road networks were made and a water reservoir was built but there was no water source;
- Shelter units are built in concrete but are of very low quality or very sub-standard, water drainages were made but the liquid substances from the septic tanks of each houses flow down directly to the open drainage which is a serious environmental hazard;
- In terms of public facilities, a covered court was usually used for public gatherings;
- A Public school building for elementary students was built and it operated as an extension of the Barangay public schools for elementary grades;
- A lending institution existed as an option of the residents to have capital for any income generating activities – they rely on it rather than waiting for the LGUs to support them;
- No significant business establishments like stores with enough supplies of basic commodities to avoid the going out of the community for fish, meats, rice, etc.

Organization is:

Not fully structured, only *Purok* guided the Relocation;

There are people who are willing to get involved but are waiting for the right timing;

Residents were mostly busy with their daily basic needs because the majority of workplaces were located in the city proper with a distance of about 11 kilometers, spending more or less Php 100.00 back and forth.

The complaints of the residents due to difficulties added to the forgotten support during Sendong because the LGU never had enough answers or actions but kept their silence – if residents were forced to go out their homes to look for money, the LGUs had no other answer but to charge them for violating the governments’ orders – a very inhumane act;

A certain NGO with BLGU came but only for tuberculosis examination, while the primary needs of the people are food for the table;

Concerning the land ownership problem, people had hopes that there is a possibility to award them their current homes, even for those who had illegally entered. For their group to be legalized and for the previous “ayuda” to be given back to them, “SAF” hopefully needs to be availed and the 2nd and 3rd batch to be continuously granted. The DSWD has given few families financial support (capital) for livelihood but those grantees are selected.

Recent Condition

When the pandemic arrived, all surviving residents experienced difficulties due to the lock down and governments’ health protocols;

As early as March 2020 to April 2020, few assistance from LGU were received in form of few kilos of rice and some canned goods

which were enough for the consumption of maximum of 1 week for a family of 5 members excluding viands every meal;

The Social Amelioration Program (SAP) support was also provided but not all families received the support because there was a quota numbers which resulted in some people not being included;

Because of the situation, there was no other choice but to look individually for different options on how to thrive again, especially for the daily food requirements;

Other Comments

The Sendong survivors lacked in financial and technical support for sustainable livelihood:

They are dependent on the Government support because of the pandemic, engaging lending institutions as being no options and 4Ps beneficiaries;

They lack money due to limited movements for daily earner families resulting in food shortage (on/off operation)

Despite the problem, due to good leadership of Purok, transparency and bayanihan were still observed

Relocation site in general:

Prone to soil erosion and other risks due to deep open drainage; without complete road guard or signage, slopes road networks prone to any vehicular accidents, poor standard of shelters,

There’s a security risk due to no visible PNP or BPAT in the area of more than 1,000 households;

The relocated people came from different communities of Iligan, not

subdivision for middle class and rich communities, but came from the extremely poor communities. For this reason it is expected that the environment is in great need of peace and order systems.

- Stop the advanced politics and focus on the needs of the poor and survivors that were forgotten;
- For sustainability of initiatives
 - Those who are in soap-making have the homeowner's association but the association is not functional, it needs guidance of ISM and its partners;
 - Support the formal organizing of IDPs Senior Citizens, which greatly needs facilitators and partner agencies (ISM, NGO's RDRRAC);
 - Members or upcoming members should cooperate and participate for the betterment of all members;

Recommendations

- Needs to be organized through the help of Iligan Survivors Movement (ISM) partner NGO and networks;
- Include skills for livelihood development such as home based initiatives. Only a few benefited from the trainings on meat processing, *bangus* (milkfish) deboning, and bread making which were initiated by the ISM partner NGO and networks;
- Community pantry is very relevant to the residents at this moment

For the Government/LGUs

- Residents are still hoping for your assistance, basically with food, because of the limited movements and no earnings for the breadwinners;

- The LGU department for livelihood should develop feasible and sustainable strategies to help. They should consult and have partnership with legitimate local NGOs;

For basic social facilities:

- The LGU should provide drums/water containers for the households which could store water from rains;
- BLGU should have a stand-by fire truck, it should be doing schedule water rations for the household to store water for domestic use during sunny days;
- Land Tenure; award the shelters and lot prior to the arrival of the Sendong 10th year commemoration;
- To all persons that will come upon the age of 60, the LGU should have a community based enlisting for the senior citizens for them to avoid traveling to the city proper and having to wait in line for several hours which is very risky at their age;
- For the security of the Village, BLGU, in partnership with the PNP, should establish mechanisms to minimize unnecessary incidents in the village because when they have some troubles, the purok presidents would often request the BPAT but usually respond late.

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

ILIGAN BAY VISTA VILLAGE (IBVV UPPER PAITAN, BRGY DALIPUGA IS LOCATED AT NORTHERN PART OF ILIGAN CITY. IT'S THE OUTERMOST BARANGAY TOWARDS MISAMIS ORIENTAL AND CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY. IT IS A SENDONG GOVERNMENT RELOCATION SITE.



AT AROUND 1:00 PM ON MAY 25, 2021, A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) WAS CONDUCTED AT THE RESIDENCE OF ONE OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERS. WITH GREAT SINCERITY, THE PARTICIPANTS SHARED THEIR RESPECTIVE, GRIEVANCES, AND GRATITUDE FOR BEING HEARD FOR THE FIRST TIME.



RIGHT AFTER THE FGD, THE TEAM HEADED BY MERY JEAN "TATA" GENON, ONE OF LEADERS OF THE ILIGAN SURVIVORS MOVEMENT (ISM) CONDUCTED ITS OCULAR VISIT TO WITNESS THE ACTUAL QUALITY OF CONSTRUCTED SHELTERS OF ILIGAN BAY VISTA VILLAGE, UPPER PAITAN, DALIPUGA, ILIGAN CITY.



Nehemiah Village, Purok 8D Del Carmen, Iligan City, May 25, 2021

Background

- Permanent relocation of 50 families coming from Santiago, Hinaplano and Sta. Felomina all barangays of Iligan City;
- All locations are in the danger zone, along the Mandulog rivers, they are temporarily relocated at Luinab Amakan, right after the Sendong incidents;
- A certain religious group namely Nehemiah voluntarily offered its owned parcel of land to become a permanent relocation site;
- The relocation sites, particularly the shelters, have established funds from the DSWD/CSWD (to be confirmed). Since it was a government funded project, the land was legally donated to the LGU of Iligan.
- Nine (9) years ago, the relocated disaster survivors experienced internal conflict caused by a local religious group leader. The united 50 families members of the association divided into two (2) factions, one in favor of the religious leader and the other is opposition;
- Conflicts began when the security of tenures were discussed because the previous owners of the other land are demanding payment of the beneficiaries amounting to Php 3,000.00 per square meter, which is very different from the agreement they had previously;
- Another issue in the village was the Livelihood project which created a conflict within beneficiaries due to improper guidance of the donors (LGU) controlled by the said religious leader in the area – they wanted to divert the funds for the maintenance to build their (religious) center in the village. The funds were diverted without proper consultation with the organization (recipient);
- The LGU of Iligan, particularly the responsible department, had no concrete action to resolve the problem and forgot about it, in spite of consistent efforts made by the leader of the organization to partner local NGOs;
- Several areas were not developed by the LGU, such as the road networks, creeks, and the main road access which was under high risk of major transmission lines of the National Power Corporation (NPC), now the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) which the usual way of the people and vehicles of about 200 meters long;
- The forgotten problem of the residents was the security of land tenure, aside from other problems on basic social services and safety;
- The BLGU had also no concrete support regarding such problems and often relies on the City LGU of Iligan;
- Aside from the above mentioned situations, the people did not fail to look for any income generating works and activities to gradually recover from the tragic events of typhoon Sendong;
- People are suffering from the economic crisis ever since the relocation but no one can help besides themselves, through daily earning like driving, construction workers, market vendors, selling any products to generate money

Recent Situation

- ▶ The pandemic situation is another burden for us (forgotten survivors), we have already suffered for 9 years after Sendong and now here's another problem which directly puts us into a more difficult situation;
- ▶ The source of living of the families are disrupted, income generating activities are stopped, daily earning families have no income, drivers have no passengers and, *sari-sari* stores in the neighborhood are more on credit because people have no money to buy anything but the necessary food;
- ▶ People had to rely on loans in order to survive, which is better than having no income;
- ▶ LGU assistance is few
- ▶ The basic social services were already an old forgotten problem and now we expect to have sufficient support during the pandemic
- ▶ The usual problems of the Sendong survivors were the long struggles of ISM. In fact, if we did not come along into the mass mobilization and faced the LGUs in 2012 through the support local support of NGO partners and its networks, we may still not have shelters;
- ▶ We did not fail to work for the basic social services but we have not received any answers. We looked for options through legal means and services initiated by communities like the "community pantry" in other barangays, but they were tagged as supported by terrorists / communists.

Other Comments

- ▶ We're glad that until now we have local partner NGOs even during this time of pandemic. They continuously communicate with us on how to continue despite the struggles of being Sendong survivors and try to help us in our daily needs;
- ▶ We are happy that since last year they (the NGOs) visited us and documented our actual situation in which the majority people of Iligan - and Philippines in general – are found. More than 3,000 families of the Sendong survivors now did not receive even shelter, despite the promises of the LGUs - even the previous administration.

Recommendations

- ▶ Our organization shall be strengthened but with consistent guidance of our local partner NGOs, our organization is intact and only need guidance and support;
- ▶ The condition of forgotten disasters should be exposed to solicit attention from external agencies for possible help to solve the forgotten problems;
- ▶ Line agencies of the government should take action to make our local LGU act as they had promised;
- ▶ Any developmental assistance should be consulted to the recipient, a reason why all interventions fail.

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

AT AROUND 4:30 LATER AFTERNOON ON MAY 25, 2021, AN FGD TOOK PLACE AT THE SMALL OUTPOST OF NEHEMIAH VILLAGE, BRGY. DEL CARMEN, ILIGAN CITY. SOME OFFICERS AND LEADERS OF THEIR ORGANIZATION, HEADED BY RONALD RAMOS, ENGAGED IN OPEN DIALOGUE AND DISCUSSIONS.



THE 69 KV TRANSMISSION LINES OF NPC/NGCP TOWERING OVER THE MAJOR ACCESS ROAD TO ENTER AND EXIT THE VILLAGE POSES A THREAT TO ITS RESIDENTS.



THIS IS THE ONLY ROAD ACCESS TO THE VILLAGE BECAUSE PRIVATE OWNERS OF LANDS SURROUNDING THE AREA REFUSE TO PROVIDE RIGHT OF WAY.



Kapuso Village 1 (Muslim), Mandulog, Iligan City, May 26, 2021

The organization has a micro financing lending, people were not forced to pay their loans due to pandemic;

Main priority is the family's daily needs, especially food.

Brief Background

Residents are Muslim-Maranaw Sendong survivors

Organizations (Riverside Women's Association), also members of organizations like 4Ps, Women's and seniors citizen under the barangay

Past organization status – once a month meeting

Activity-skills training stopped due to the pandemic (sewing, recycling)

Already lived in the said area, near Mandulog river bank before the Typhoon Sendong

Before Sendong, the common source of living is farming and *sari-sari* stores

Dependent on loans, Pag-Ibig, etc.

Received support before - housing unit, kitchen utensils, appliances, trainings on dress making, bread and pastries, pancit making;

When the pandemic started, they received some support like Social Amelioration Program(SAP)

Challenges - past supports were not sustained, so financial assistance is needed again, even now during the pandemic;

During the pandemic, there's no other choice but to continue the backyard gardening, root cropping, vegetable and flower gardening to thrive.

The key to thrive is self-discipline. Josephine Janal, a Sendong survivor, has a backyard garden full of herbal plants to sell and use;

Current Situation

The organization rarely held meetings anymore due to the pandemic, so the organization officials are the only ones who did the monitoring, but sometimes they also held organization meetings.

Only the Barangay LGU gave some support/ assistance, but it only happened once;

The Women's Association's rice lending is still on-going to this day;

Structures are weak and need further capacity development;

In this current situation, the main help needed would be from the LGU, and the NGOs. The community needs to stay united and self-disciplined.

The group did not receive any support / assistance from the Bottoms-up-Budgeting of BuB-NAPC since there was no facilitator;

The organization received some baking tools and utensils from the City Development and Livelihood Office of Iligan and sewing machines used for dress making. However, the said machines broke down and can't be used anymore;

Immediate needs during this time of pandemic:

Medicines and vitamins for the children

Water supply needed due to the broken deep well

Food

Additional lending funds for

investments/capital

- Further development for Women's Bigasan
- There should be more studies done in project management
- For now, we just need to try really hard because our current situation is difficult, especially during this time of the pandemic
- The backyard livestock raising would have been a big help but it was also stopped due to the swine flu
- This situation is really difficult, so the only option is to find loans

Suggestions

- Provide financial/capital support
- Provide loans

Basic Social Services:

- There's a barangay hall, health center, mosque, and rolling store, but the place is lacking a mini market
- Need a water-refilling station.
- In the event of a disaster, they have already started building a giant dike;

Security of Land Tenure:

- Law determining owners: the lot has not been awarded, just the house.

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

KAPUSO VILLAGE PHASE 1, MANDULOG, ILIGAN CITY



Laying the Groundwork for a Better Normal

TERESITA L. GANTE, ISM VICE PRESIDENT, IS SEEN HERE PERSONALLY ASSISTING THE TEAM TO CONDUCT FGDS IN KAPUSO PHASE 2 VILLAGE, A MUSLIM-MARANAW COMMUNITY. DISCUSSIONS REVOLVE AROUND A CENTRAL THEME: SURVIVORS COMMUNICATE WELL WITH FELLOW SURVIVORS.



Kapuso Village 2 (Christian), Mandulog, Iligan City, May 26, 2021

Background

- Homeowners Association Purok 7 and 8, Dojungan, Mandulog, Ligan City
- Approximately 7 kilometers from the center of Iligan City, with on-going road access which is more or less 70% completed;
- Prior to the displacement, the main source of income of the residents in their original place was usually farming, variety stores, and backyard livestock;
- After the relocation, they had difficulties due to major adjustment because of living in other urban communities in Iligan city, such as Brgy. Mahayahay and other along the Iligan river and Mandulog river banks;
- CSWD, DSWD, LGU of Iligan and some CSO (livestock) provided them some support to gradually recover, particularly on economic aspects; But due to capacity, readiness, individualism mentality, and other attitude related constraints of the recipient, the project sadly failed.

Recent Condition

- When the pandemic arrived, the community was severely affected; It was added to their hardship since they were not receiving any support from the LGU;
- The community wanted to eat delicious and nutritious food but it is not possible;
- In order to survive, the community continued to rely on farming, even though it was not so productive. They primarily planted corn to have food alternative to rice;
- Community pantries are now very popular nation-wide but not in the community. Even though it was criticized by the government,

it helped a lot of people like us to survive this time;

- To augment the capacity of survival, engagement in lending still existed and expanded because the people have no choice
- In terms of facilities and some assistance, the Barangay LGU was only the companion;
- There are health center, multi-purpose hall and other basic social facilities;
- In terms of organization:
 - Only 14 members were left in the women's group, membership was gradually diminished and perished
 - Factors contributed greatly are guidance for continuing capacity development;
- Since they are in the situation of being discriminated as Sendong survivors, there are potential partners for future recharging to capacity the residents:
 - Government agencies and LGUs
 - Non-Governmental Organizations like the partner networks of Iligan Survivors Movement (ISM)
- Support is needed primarily through seminars, training, skills development for livelihoods and some seed capital
- In the part of the organization/residents:
 - Provide serious commitment, especially in this moment when external support is greatly needed;
 - Cooperate by participating in organizations and community initiatives in general;
 - Follow the agreed policies in the organization and respect each other;

As much as possible, external assistance should arrive, especially during the pandemic, since all of us are suffering the unwanted difficulties that worsen our situation of being forgotten

Challenges due to the pandemic

The pandemic greatly added to the burdens of being Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) due to Sendong in 2011 and almost being forgotten because of incomplete delivery of basic social services;

We already survived the wrath of Sendong and were trying hard to do better for our family in order to have income, but the pandemic sent us back in agonizing conditions, not knowing who could help us but ourselves;

Every day we are looking for initiatives to generate income to buy food that we can bring to our families;

Our local DSWD and LGUs provided us minimal assistance in food but it was not enough in terms of volume and occurrence;

People will not die because of the COVID-19 virus but because of being hungry – living after Sendong was already difficult and we had no choice but to survive because we're forgotten. But now, because of this pandemic, even more so we cannot rely on the government – if they can offer support then it is good, but if not then we will try again to survive;

As IDPs living in one community we try to help one another (gardening) because we are the only ones who could help us at this moment.

greener pastures;

If not, hopefully we can receive some support from other agencies. It would have been hard to survive if not for the help of a few NGOs, the 4Ps program, Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT), Damayan Homeowners Association, neighborhood support, and the bayanihan system. These make us stronger and still standing;

Our village road network is still not paved after almost 10 years and we do not have any public social facilities or a mini market;

River banks are gradually denuded due to no concrete flood support;

The mode of transport of the residents is mainly one single motor or *habal-habal*;

The water system is only for domestic usage and is achieved by using the communal deep well. However, it is not drinkable and the people are forced to drink it if they do not have the means to buy mineral water from the refilling station;

Another great problem was the land tenure which until now our documents as legitimate recipients are only for the house provided by the GMA Kapuso, excluding the land which we don't have any idea about its situation and that's why we're happy that ISM was there again.

Recommendations

Reinstatement and support of backyard livestock raising which stopped due to swine flu - a great chance to have starting livelihood.

Other Comments

GMA have a raffle on appliances and this is good, but only few could potentially benefit; Hopefully this situation (pandemic) could be back to normal for us to freely look for

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

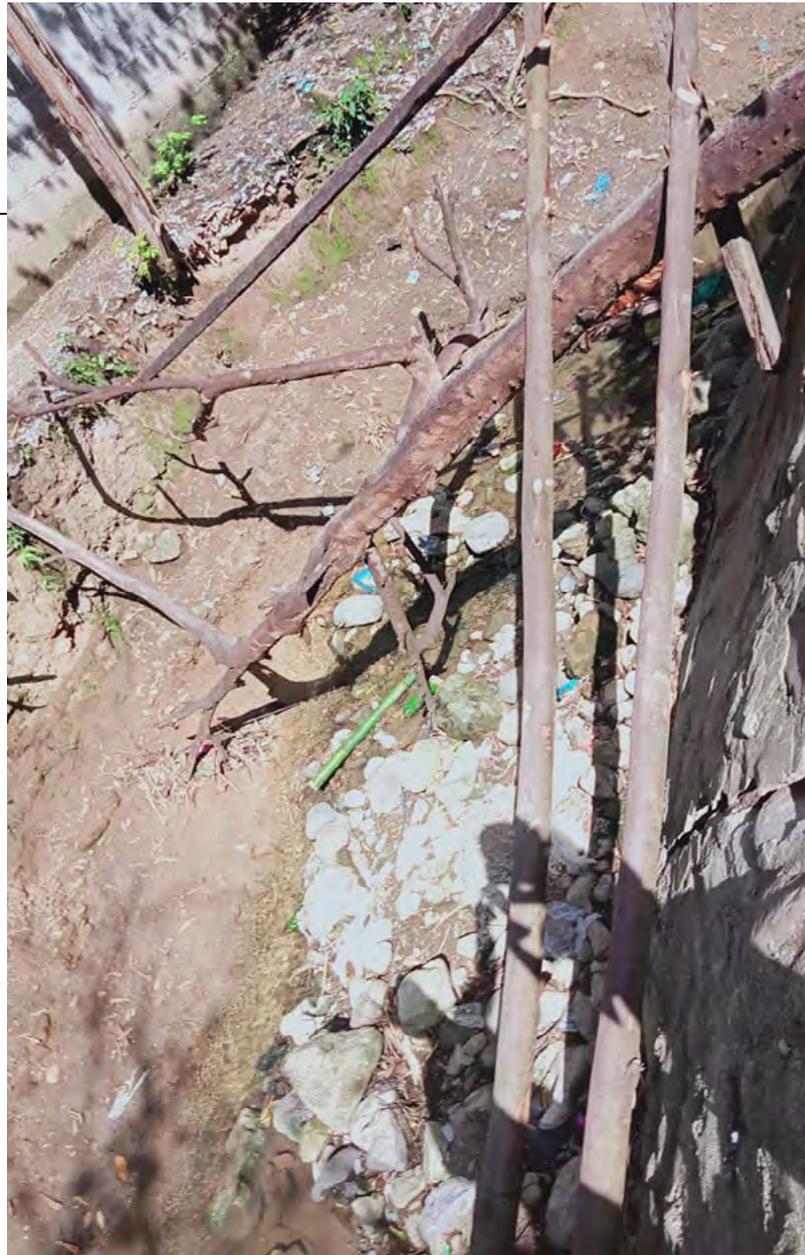
KAPUSO PHASE 2 VILLAGE, MANDULOG ILIGAN CITY: A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEARLY ADJACENT WITH THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY WHICH BOTH BENEFITED WITH THE GMA KAPUSO SHELTERS.



SOME RESIDENTS AND VILLAGE LEADERS ARE ENGAGED IN A DISCUSSION WITH THE TEAM. THEY HOPE THAT THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF THEIR COLLABORATION AS SENDONG SURVIVORS AND COORDINATED EFFORTS TO ENJOIN ORGANIZATIONS IN STRENGTHENING THEIR HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION.



FOR NINE YEARS, THE CONDITION OF THEIR ROAD NETWORKS INSIDE THE VILLAGE IS STILL DISMAL. THEY HAVE SEEN LITTLE TO NO GOVERNMENT ACTION AND THE LGUS HAVE FAILED TO INCLUDE THE RESIDENTS OF THE VILLAGE IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT PLANS.



**Caritas - Daughters of Charity
Village, Upper Tominobo, Iligan City,
May 27, 2021**

Background:

- ▶ Prior to the typhoon Sendong incident, place of origin of the people were Hinaplanon, Tambo, Tubod, Mahayahay, Villa Verde, Upper Hinaplanon and Santiago, both in Iligan City barangays
- ▶ The usual sources of living are driving, selling through micro variety stores, repairing, collecting junk (junk shop), and domestic helping
- ▶ Assistance received early after Sendong were livelihood trainings on dress making, mushroom culture, soap making, *pancit* cooking, acupuncture & massage, bamboo furniture making and many other skills and knowledge development;
- ▶ Results and impacts of the trainings acquired;
 - ▶ Many of the trainings were not applied because it lacked support like kits, tools, and materials as well as follow-ups and monitoring
 - ▶ There was a small number of people who were able to utilize the massage training
- ▶ In terms of daily living, all were already adjusting to the condition from early stage after Sendong to 9 years
- ▶ Families resettled in the place likely adapted to the new environment and ways of living away from their works or economic activities before;
- ▶ In short, they were almost back to the normal living since the incident of displacement in 2011 even though they still have the long term struggles of IDPs like basic social service, land tenurial issue, and



sustainable livelihood among others;

- ▶ Every year during the anniversary of the event, as Iligan Survivor's Movement (ISM) with support of our local NGOs partners, we consistently commemorate the events in order to be remembered or maybe to bring to the attention of the LGU and other key actors during Sendong their unimplemented responsibilities and duties; However, the situation was reversed when the COVID-19 pandemic arrived;
- ▶ There were 133 households and 155 families who lived there.

Recent Condition

- ❖ Difficult condition of community, especially on the economic aspect brought by the pandemic;
- ❖ As majority relies on daily income, the locked down brought by the pandemic made us economically disable;
- ❖ In the early part of March 2020, the Government provided us assistance like few kilos of NFA rice, sardines and other expired canned goods, but after no more was provided;
- ❖ Majority of us benefited the Social Amelioration Fund (SAF) from national government but it was politicized in the locality;
- ❖ Some were members of the *Pantawid Pampamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)* and Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) but there were cases that even some beneficiaries complained they did not received it;
- ❖ The support of the government during this period is in the context of the political interest that prevails in the locality;

- ❖ The 5 kilograms of rice that were first offered, and the 10 kilograms during the second time in one year of pandemic is not helping the community too much as they would rather risk catching the virus than watching their families slowly dying because of hunger. All root crops, vegetables, and banana heart were gone

Challenges during the pandemic

- ❖ Meeting activities had to stop during the pandemic
- ❖ The major problem this time was the three (3) BLD – breakfast, lunch and dinner;
- ❖ Daily food for the family;
- ❖ Heavy burdens to parents or the breadwinners of the family especially when the different mode of locked down existed for more than 1 year;
- ❖ The electricity bills and water bills
- ❖ In 9 years, the people gradually recovered from the effects of the displacements with feelings that the government/LGUs have forgotten about them after offering them shelter;
- ❖ On top of the previous difficulties, the pandemic added even more issues to the communities;
- ❖ Sometimes the Barangay Local Government Unit, Diocese of Iligan and City LGU were there;
- ❖ As we've known, SAF was from Bayanihan 1 program of the national government, the only support received by the residents;
- ❖ The organizations of Iligan Sendong Survivors, despite several members being inactive, encouraged us and made us stronger since we still had the CSO/NGOs willing to guide and provide us technical skills that could potentially generate income. Among these are meat processing, *bangus* (milkfish) deboning, bread making,



and coconut virgin oil processing – with some financial seed capital support potentially add in our daily survival struggles;

✓ The officials of the organization still doing their roles to monitor and manage the project

✓ Microfinance Project of the organization although suspended, was able to collect a few finances

✓ Some members continued in their hog-butchering as livelihood

✓ Majority of members were still active in spite of the difficulties

✓ Another initiative that was taken was the flower gardening, that can generate income in both rural and urban areas;

✓ The government/LGU did not support the citizens, but the citizens still follow the health protocols and, as community of disaster survivors, they work as one helping each other in order to survive;

✓ Meeting activities had to stop during the pandemic;

✓ The Mushroom Project had to be stopped. Aside from not having enough water supply but also capital was used by due to the difficult situation;

✓ The following forgotten issues are still unresolved: the land tenurial, cash assistance to improve the temporary shelters, strict policy without consideration – for instance, a recipient was forced to live near their source of living in the city due to pandemic and there were limitations of movements yet the management of the resettlement decided to sanction them by padlocking their house because of violating the rules;

✓ How could people stay home without food?

Other Comments

✓ The village had existing basic social facilities, like the basketball, court but they were not allowed to play during the pandemic;

✓ Since the relocation site was donated to the Sendong survivors by a religious organization, a multi-purpose center and a church were established;

✓ The village was far from the barangay proper as the barangay hall was 3 kilometers away;

✓ The organization is looking for future partners who could come in aid. Preferably should be an NGO or private institution since relying on the LGU will turn into political interests and has no sustainability;

✓ Even though the pandemic is still going on, the community managed to benefit from training available through partnerships, such as training on processed meat or therapeutic massage. The training is of great help for daily income since regular work had stopped;

✓ For those working, they have experienced the skeletal system, which means no work no pay;

✓ The only institution that benefited from the situation is the private lending because people have no choice than to engage in more loans to pay overdue loans;

✓ Our partner NGO and its networks continue to guide us and look for potential partners to help our local organization in terms of livelihood projects.



Recommendations

- ▾ LGU/Government will hopefully perform their responsibility to disaster survivors;
- ▾ In this difficult time, the national and local government should initiate steps to support the basic daily needs of the people and not do any political cultivation in preparation of the coming 2022 elections;
- ▾ Management of the relocation sites will expedite the processing of road concreting, such as donation to the local government;
- ▾ Review with proper dialogue and consultation for the pending issues or policies;
- ▾ Review their own interpretation of usufruct and land security of tenure for the recipients;
- ▾ Partner NGOs and their networks will guide

regularly the community organizations for strengthening and development;

- ▾ The BLGU may consider some infrastructure development like expanding the creeks due to floods – creek side gradually denuded and the source of domestic water is unsafe
- ▾ Several areas were prone to landslides and no action was taken by the responsible line agency in the LGU.

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY CARITAS VILLAGE, UPPER TOMINOBO, ILIGAN CITY: A FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION THAT ESTABLISHED RELOCATION SITES LOCATED IN THE INTERIOR PART OF ILIGAN CITY ABOUT 7 KMS AWAY FROM THE CITY PROPER.



THE FGD CONDUCTED INSIDE THE MULTI-PURPOSE HALL IN THE SITE. SAID ORGANIZATION ALREADY PHASED OUT OF THE RELOCATE SITE AFTER TURN-OVER TO THE DIOCESE OF ILIGAN.



RANAW DISASTER RESPONSE AND REHABILITATION CENTER

THE ONLY SOURCE OF WATER SUPPLY FOR THE RESIDENTS IS DEEP WELL. SOME RESIDENTS HAVE THE CAPACITY TO BORE PIPES IN THE GROUND AND INSTALL WATER PUMPS TO PUMPOUT GROUNDWATER FOR HOUSEHOLD DAILY ACTIVITIES WHILE OTHERS DO NOT. POTABLE DRINKING WATER ARE SOURCED FROM WATER REFILLING STATIONS.



THE SITUATION OF THE SMALL RIVER ALONG THE VICINITY OF THE RELOCATION SITE. CONTINUOUSLY ERODED CREEK SIDE. IN FACT EVEN A LITTLE RAIN TRIGGERS OVERFLOWING AND INUNDATES THE NEIGHBORHOOD. IT WAS ALREADY REPORTED TO THE LGU. PROHIBITIVE GUIDELINES BY THE RELIGIOUS THE DIOCESE OF ILIGAN IMPEDES ANY FORM OF GOVERNMENT-FUNDED DEVELOPMENT IN THE VILLAGE.



Caritas - Daughter of Charity Village, Upper Tominobo, Iligan City, May 27, 2021

Background:

- ▶ The place of origin is mainly from Tubod, Palao, Mahayahay, and Hinaplanon, all in Iligan City;
- ▶ The usual sources of living are market vendors, house helpers, raising backyard livestock, drivers of PUJ and *sikad*, vegetable farmers, variety stores, and other income generating activities;
- ▶ After the Sendong, plenty of assistance was received during the temporary relocation in the city;
- ▶ When they relocated in the permanent settlement, it was difficult in the beginning since they are living far from any sources of living, while they also did not have access to basic social services, and they were under a strict management from the Diocese of Iligan (even non Catholics were required to attend Catholic activities);
- ▶ The shelter was temporary because it was built with light materials but, when the government funds arrived to improve it, a certain priest of the Diocese did not allow it on the basis of people being selfish;
- ▶ Because of the already mentioned situation, the shelters have not improved in the past nine years, as the people missed on the opportunity of the financial support;
- ▶ Some people managed to develop their shelters, but it was done only by those who have the capacity;

- ▶ Trainings and seminars offered included banana chips making, dress making, mushroom culture; all coming from different sponsors;
- ▶ The challenges after the training were the seed capital (materials/ tools), organizational strengthening, monitoring and supervision that resulted into failure of the given projects;
- ▶ Since the relocation was done by a religious group, the development of the site was difficult as it was affected by the political dynamics in the locality;
- ▶ Nine years have passed and the unresolved issues and concerns of the survivors were gradually forgotten.

Recent Condition:

- ▶ The nine-year period was not an easy journey for the Sendong survivors, even if they are now in a different relocation site. It was not easy since they had to find solutions on their own;
- ▶ That left them with no choice but to adapt to the situation. With help from some active leaders and NGOs partners and parallel with individual initiatives, at least the survivors found someone to help them in their long time struggles of providing for their families and to afford the basic required commodities and overheads;
- ▶ When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, it added more to the ongoing recovering of the survivors;
- ▶ The breadwinners struggled during this time to provide food for their families and many times they had to stop their normal routine in order to provide for the families;

Most Sendong survivors relied mainly on the breadwinners but the pandemic and the lockdowns affected them not only economically but also emotionally and mentally;

The survivors had no choice but to follow the health protocols, even though this made life harder for them and they did not have enough income to cover the expenses of one week;

In order to survive, the survivors started doing other activities that generate food, such as gardening or buy and sell in the neighborhood through small capital from lending companies;

The villagers cannot rely on the LGU as they feel that the local official did not experience their hardships, since the survivors were the ones that suffered as some were forced to sell their house equipment in order to buy food;

The organization served as a venue for sharing and planning for the future;

The mushroom project was stopped, the banana chips making and the rice trading project activities were stopped as well. Moreover, the drivers of *habal-habal* had no more income and the dress making activities stopped because food became the priority of the people;

The officers are still trying to manage the organization. Through the initiatives of the NGOs and their respective partners, the villagers were able to learn how to debone the *bangus* (milkfish), meat processing, virgin coconut oil making, and other skills that can potentially generate income:

Seed capitalization is minimal and only few managed to avail;

The people need further guidance so that the organization can help the members;

Thus, they rely on the NGOs and their partners to find agencies with which the organization can connect;

Organizational initiatives are relevant at this moment as the pandemic continues.



Other Comments:

- Hopefully, even during the pandemic the organization can still provide help to the members;
- The people are thankful to the NGO partners in Sendong who are coming to visit them and assess the situation;
- The city LGU and barangay are providing only a few support in the form of few kilograms of rice (NFA) that also comes with political interest;
- Some members of 4Ps and UCTs are strongly depending on it;
- There was support offered in the early part of the pandemic such as SAF but it was for only a short period of time. Moreover, an inhumane system was installed as people were being blamed for asking for assistance and yet they were not allowed to go outside to search for opportunities for potential income;
- The people had to resort to taking loans during the pandemic as they did not see any other option;
- At the risk of the ongoing pandemic, political dynamics have been already observed in the community as the LGU is preparing for the coming elections.

Organizational Initiatives:

- Seed capitalization is minimal and only few were able to avail it;
- The organization needs further guidance in order for them to help the members;
- The NGOs and their partners can connect the community with several agencies;
- Organizational initiatives are relevant at this moment as the pandemic continues;
- Members should cooperate and have a wider perspective, not mainly personal but helping co-members and neighbors so that the community will become stronger and resilient.

PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

NASA CARITAS VILLAGE, UPPER TOMINOBO, ILIGAN CITY: THE ILIGAN DIOCESES MANAGED THE RELOCATION SITE DEVELOPMENT. THE LOCATION ADJACENT OF DCC CARITAS LOCATED ABOUT 7 KILOMETERS AWAY FROM THE CITY.



FGD CONDUCTED AT THE RESIDENCE OF TATA GENON LOCATED AT NASA CARITAS RELOCATION, UPPER TOMINOBO, ILIGAN CITY. THE MAIN IMPLEMENTER OF THE RELOCATION SITE WAS THE DIOCESE OF ILIGAN. AFTER 9 YEARS, THE GROUP IS STILL MANAGING THE VILLAGE BUT THERE ARE UNADDRESSED GRIEVANCES OF THE INFORMAL LEADERS AMONG THE HOMEOWNERS RELATING TO THE CONDITION OF THEIR SHELTERS. FOR ONE, THEIR HOUSES ARE MADE WITH LIGHT MATERIALS. LGU FUNDS FOR RETROFITTING AND RE-CONSTRUCTION WAS REFUSED BY THE DIOCESE.



ORGANIZATION OF THEIR LEADERS ARE WILLING TO INITIATE MEETINGS TO BRING UP DIALOGUES AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THEIR SITUATION. HOWEVER, LINE AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS IN-CHARGE OF THEIR RELOCATION CONTINUE TO IGNORE AND ADDRESS THE BASIC NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE. THE NEW NORMAL NEGATIVELY AFFECTS THEIR SOURCE OF LIVING AND FOOD FOR THE TABLE AND OTHER BASIC NEEDS LIKE WATER AND ELECTRICITY.



CASH ASSISTANCE FOR THE FAMILIES AMOUNTING TO PHP 70K TO IMPROVE THEIR HOUSES' CURRENT STRUCTURE WERE STRONGLY OPPOSED AND REFUSED BY THE IMPLEMENTERS TEACHING THEM TO BE "CONTENTED WITH WHAT YOU HAVE."



WATER IS SUPPLIED BY THE WATER DISTRICT OF ILIGAN BUT WAS LATER PROVED TO BE INADEQUATE TO SUPPLY THE NEEDS OF THE FAMILIES. THE ONLY SOURCE OF WATER NOW IS THE SMALL SWALLOW WELL IN THE RIVER. NO HAND PUMPS ARE INSTALLED IN THEIR VICINITY AND DRINKING WATER ARE PROVIDED BY REFILLING STATIONS, AN ADDED EXPENSE TO FAMILIES WHO CONTINUE TO SUFFER TODAY.



FOOT BRIDGE, THE ONLY ACCESS TO CERTAIN PORTIONS OF THE VILLAGE. POSES DANGER TO THOSE WHO USE IT. THE ABSENCE OF FLOOD CONTROLS ALSO CAUSE THE GRADUAL EROSION OF THE CREEK SIDE.



Conclusion and Recommendations

The overall presentation or results of the study were the final output of the pre FGDs consultations with the concerned local bodies, both government and private. Initial dialogues and lobbying to the concerned LGUs were already made but the initial recommendations on such dialogue were never realized due to being again forgotten. The beginning political preparation by both leading local parties and the pandemic restrictions were factors as to why the face-to-face dialogue conference was not timing and could potentially create a negative impression and be interpreted as having a political motivation.

The results of the study are facts that will be used in the coming electoral forum activities as planned by RDRRAC and its network partners, to be presented and gather commitment of personalities who are hopeful to win the local elections. The study results

will be the content of a pre-election agreement to be signed between sectors and running candidates in their commitment, if given a chance to win the desired position in the government.

This signed agreement serves as the documented commitment between and only proof of evidence of the ISM in claiming their rights as Sendong survivors. Hopefully more meaningful steps can be made preceding the incoming 10th year commemoration of the Sendong incident on 17 December 2021, as the hope is to remember the forgotten disaster survivors and their environment where they're relocated now.

Lastly, the general feedback from the ISM clusters was that they were now happy that RDRRAC provided them enough time in their journey towards realization of their struggles that lasted for almost a decade.

Ways Forward

The unified ways forward as identified during the study is to strengthen the local chapters of the ISM to modify the strategies in the continuous struggles, especially on basic social services and the land security issues of the relocation sites. The long-time NGO partners of ISM are starting to provide specific focus in terms of community and issues which as the disrupting factors are different for each relocation community.

During these nine years of struggles, there are approximately 3,000 IDP families in different danger zones which are still awaiting the relocation promised by the LGUs. In fact, certain areas are still under-developed and need consistent follow-ups to the duty bearers, with back-up support from the NGO mentoring partners of the ISM.

The results, as mentioned previously, are a tool that can be used as proof of evidence to be presented during the electoral conference prior to the 2022 election. In this venue, the running parties/candidates and the ISM leaders will hold face-to-face conferences and sincerely discuss the platforms and bargaining issues of the ISM to be addressed after election, as the running candidates are given a chance to win with the support of the ISM.

This will be done through an agreement that will be used as documented evidence of commitment between the political parties, NGOs, and other institutions that will be attending. Government, non-government, and media will serve as witnesses to the said commitment.

References

- Selected Members and Leaders “Iligan Bay Vista Village of Upper Paitan, Dalipuga, Iligan City – second week of May 2021 to May 25, 2021, 1:00 to 3:30 in the afternoon;
- Ronal Ramos; President, Nehemiah Home Dwellers Association, Purok 8, Del Carmen, Ligan City – second week of May 2021 to May 25, 202, 4: 00 – 6:00 in the late afternoon;
- Muslim Residents and leaders of Kapuso Village Phase 1, Mandulog, Iligan City – second week of May 2021 to May 26, 2021, 9:00 am to 12:00 noon;
- Christian Residents and leaders of Kapuso Village Phase 2, Mandulog, Iligan City – third week of May 2021 to May 26, 2021, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm;
- Selected recipients of Deus Caritas Village (Daughters of Charity), Upper Tominobo, Iligan City – of May 2021 to May 27, 2021, 9:00 am to 12:00 noon;
- Selected recipients and leaders of Deus Caritas (NASA), Upper Tominobo, Iligan City, of May 2021 to May 27, 2021, 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

