

NATIONAL HUMANITARIAN STAKEHOLDERS' SUMMIT

Our Localization Agenda - Shifting the Power for Change

30 SEPTEMBER 2021



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BACKGROUND

In a global stage still dominated by huge and powerful international players, Philippine local actors continued to strive throughout the years in order to make its presence and influence felt and its voice heard to neutralize power imbalance. For many communities in the country, especially during this challenging time, local humanitarian actors were always at the forefront in enabling strength and resiliency at the grassroots and community levels. In this climate where local actors and stakeholders are at the cusp of realizing their true value, capability, and responsibility; it is high time to shift the power towards ourselves and to our partner-communities. Shifting the power is unlocking the inherent power of communities to determine their own pathways to development – based on harnessing their agency and resources. Together, as partners and contemporaries, we can usher in a new era of ground-breaking local actions, cooperation, and solidarity in the Philippines.

This event was made possible through the Philippine Preparedness Partnership (PhilPrep), which is a tripartite partnership between the government, represented by the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), the private sector, represented by the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), and the civil society organizations, represented by the Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP). Filipino Sign Language (FSL) Interpreters were invited to ensure that everyone can participate in the program.

This summit aims to showcase and highlight recent actions and gains in the Philippine localization initiative. It also serves to ignite the commitment and action of key humanitarian stakeholders in adopting a unified call-to-action that can strengthen the drive and guide localization initiatives in the country moving forward.



OPENING REMARKS

When I think of humanitarian action, I think about the children of Tacloban who wave signs of gratitude after we rebuilt their school. Or the community in Marawi who welcomed our donation of water tanks to supply their needs. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of local actors and national resources. With international NGOs unable to travel, and with traditional donors hoarding vaccines and assets, countries including the Philippines have been forced to rely on our own capabilities and strengths.

Today, I hope we can shed some more light in that process. Although we welcome overseas assistance, particularly during large-scale disruptions, like Super Typhoon Yolanda, we also realized that in the end, we have to rely on our own resources. Therefore, we need to be ready for any emergency, and prepare our teams and our people for a future of excitement, opportunity, and danger. As crises evolve and become more complicated, so must our approach to response, recovery, and resilience. We have to adapt to the world's constantly changing conditions—reassessing the effectiveness of traditional methods and making the necessary adjustments. Let's bring in more actors and equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive—if disasters level up, we step up. Let us embrace our new future with all of its complexities and possibilities.



RENE "BUTCH" MEILY

President

Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation

Let's bring in more actors, and equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive.

When I think of being a humanitarian, I think of a song that I learned as a boy. And whose lyrics I still take to heart. To run where the brave dare not go, to right the unrightable wrong, be willing to march into hell for a heavenly cause, and the world would be better for this. This is our quest as a private sector, as civil society, as government, and as humanitarians. And we seek no greater reward but to see our people better off and living in a safer and more resilient world.



ASEC HERNANDO M. CARAIG JR.

Civil Defense Deputy Administrator
Office of Civil Defense

Shifting the power in local communities does not necessarily mean that they have to stand on their own without support. It simply means we have to become more innovative and ingenious in unlocking the inherent power of local communities.


On behalf of Undersecretary Ricardo Jalad, please allow me to convey his message for everyone this morning:

This year's theme, "Our Localization Agenda – Shifting the Power for Change," highlights the value and significance of engaging all levels and sectors of society in the effort to build national resilience. Truly, the Covid-19 pandemic has tested both the mettle and the fabric of our nation. Never before have we as a society been forced to adjust and adapt to new ways of living, working, organizing ourselves, in order to ensure our safety against this disease.

As communities, our interactions had to be different from the usual and the word shift has taken a whole new meaning. As you all know, the Philippine Preparedness Partnership or PhilPrep was established to create an environment that will enable and strengthen national leadership in the humanitarian action of the tripartite sectors namely the government, civil society, and private sector.

The past years we have witnessed the success of our joint efforts in various situations requiring humanitarian support and intervention. Our collaborative works have given birth to exemplary initiatives that are indeed relevant, effective, and efficient. Our partnership, which focused on capacity-building, humanitarian coordination, and knowledge sharing ensured the sound decisions and rights-based actions are made, and this promoted business resilience in a lot of communities.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Still, because of this pandemic, we in government, civil society leaders, and the private sector had to redesign our approaches to empower the local actors in contributing to the collective push towards our unified goal. Humanitarian actions should be as local as possible and as international as necessary. By actively involving local communities in the DRRM processes, we can expect a vast improvement in the resilience of people. These also ensure that programs and projects will be able to target and address the right issues.

It is high time to shift DRRM power to our local communities in this effort. Now is the right time to equip them even more to face the rigors of DRRM in this changing world. By doing so, local stakeholders will have the necessary tools, information and capability that could help them enhance their abilities to manage their respective institutions or communities. The PhilPrep needs the active participation of local government units, local civil society organizations, and local micro, small, and medium enterprises to continue driving local humanitarian actions.

With the help of the national government's substantive engagement with local communities, people, and local CSOs, our initiatives will be able to gather complete ideas and knowledge on the actual needs of these affected citizens. Fully functioning and capacitated Local NDRRMC will not just allow local governments to enhance their disaster-related efforts but will also significantly contribute to our goal to achieve sustainable development.

In conclusion, shifting the power to local communities does not necessarily mean that they have to stand on their own without support. It simply means we have to become more innovative and ingenious in unlocking the inherent power of local communities. DRRM remains committed to this principle. And we will support and guide all our communities as they built safer, climate change adaptive and disaster resilient. Thank you and I wish you all very illuminating discussions. Good day to all.



SISIRA MADURAPPERUMA

Director, Preparedness for Response and Recovery
Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

Be visionary. But more importantly, be realistic. It's not going to happen in a couple of years, but keep your patience, continue to educate—I can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Thank you so much for inviting ADPC to be part of this very important National Humanitarian Summit in 2021. I've been part of the humanitarian transformation process in the Philippines, in that sense, individually, personally, as well as institutionally as ADPC. I'm very glad and honored to be a part of this process. I'd like to acknowledge the presence of senior dignitaries from OCD as well as all other stakeholders, those who are part of this process.

To begin with my speech, I was looking at some of the statistics, and some of the data, some of the findings from various reports. I'm not going to make a presentation, but I'm going to call your attention on the findings from various reports. When I look at the global humanitarian assistance reports since 2015, 16, 17, 18, 19 and so on, one of the striking facts is that at the global humanitarian summit several years back in Istanbul we all discussed, argued, agreed, disagreed and said that by 2020 the direct humanitarian assistance should reach the local organizations with up to 20% of the global humanitarian funding. And in 2018, it was around 3.5%, although the target was 20% by 2020. I mean, along with Philippine partners, ADPC, and many other international and local organizations who are engaged in this advocacy process of increasing that and maybe accelerating that target. And in 2019, when it went down further, it ended up with 2.1% from 3.5% in 2018.

What does it mean? Have we failed in our advocacy? Or have we failed in our capacity-building processes? What went wrong in that whole process? Instead of increasing to 20%, it kept reducing further. This is something that I like to keep in the background while I'm talking. I'm sure this kind of figures, these statistics will continue to come clear in this discussion. But then what could we do? What should we do? Do we continue to complain, or should we do things differently?

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Some of the key messages that I like to bring into the table today is to basically brainstorm some of the key concepts: perhaps processes, perhaps practices. When we look at localization, I would request you all to know what you mean by localization. It doesn't matter what others say. But it really matters what you mean by localization. There are different definitions, there are western-related definitions, there are NGO-related definitions, there are government related definitions, there are individual-related definitions, when it comes to localization. You may want to brainstorm and agree upon what you mean by localization in the Philippine context. Maybe the global definitions may not fit there. Maybe you want to adapt it further, maybe you want to improve it further. Is it a process of which local, subnational, and national humanitarian actors namely government, civil society, NGO, the private sector, media, academia, etc. taking the lead role? In a collaborative manner, to plan for disaster preparedness, humanitarian response and recovery, through mobilizing internal and external humanitarian funding. This is what we call as ADPC, as APP. But you may want to look at what you mean by localization in your context and then bring your own value into it.

The second message: know your role. Be a visionary but be realistic as well. More importantly, be realistic. This humanitarian ecosystem is pretty old, it has been there for the last several decades. It's not going to change in a year. We have seen this since the world humanitarian summit or global humanitarian summit—we have seen there was no change for the last 6 years. And in fact, humanitarian funding is just one indicator. The humanitarian funding coming into the local organizations has reduced in the last 6 years. So, be realistic. It's not going to change overnight, it has been there for the last 6, 7 decades. So, in that sense, are you advocating for completely nationally driven process? Would that be realistic? Would the international humanitarian donors fund only you? Or are you going into another extreme? In the past 5 decades, it has been completely international. Are you advocating for completely local? Or are you finding a middle part where you are leading and there is a role for international actors also? Whether we like it or whether we don't, it can be a compromising ground. Because at the end of the day if you are targeting international humanitarian funding, whether we like it or not, some part of it will go to their own humanitarian organizations, whether it's international NGOs, whether it's part of the UN system, or other international organizations. So, what is the most realistic role and the play that you can make out of this scenario? That is what you have to define, I cannot define that. Nobody else can define that, apart from Filipinos, those who are part of this process.

The third message: identify the value that you are going to bring into the table—as local organization, as national humanitarian actors. What is the value, what is that unique selling proposition, if I used that word, because I am in economics, I always look at the value point of view. What are you going to do?

Are you going to continue to complain or are you going to sell your unique value proposition? I would go into the second part, instead of the complaining part. Identify your unique value and highlight that in various forms, be it national, be it regional, be it global. Bring your voice through your unique value proposition or selling point. Also, understand your limitation. Having thousands of civil society organizations, local NGOs, local governments and so on is a value. It's a benefit. But when it comes to donor's point of view, it's also a challenge. Because donors will not go into contract management morality where they start issuing thousands of contracts—it's not possible. We've been working with multiple donor organizations, you name it like USAID, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Almost all humanitarian donors we've been working with over the decades. Their teams are small, sometimes their humanitarian teams are like a couple of people, maybe less than ten. So, it is impossible, for them to cover the entire globe, not only the Philippines. It is not possible for them to issue thousands of humanitarian grants before or after disaster. It's practically not possible.

In that case, what is the approach? Are you going to network? Are you going to make a coalition? Is the PhilPrep kind of arrangement the solution for that kind of issue? Because you have to come as coalitions and that will reduce the administrative burdens of donors and it shows the real power of the local partners rather than a scattered one. And also, understand the accountability side. This is something that I've seen as one of the main limitations. Basically, when I say this to our partners, they become very agitated. They're like, we feel we are more accountable than the international because we are best in the country, best on the ground. The international actors, they fly in and fly out, while us, we are here, we are more accountable. No. What I mean accountability is not just by doing so, but also maintaining the standard. Maintaining the reporting system. Maintaining the processes. Reporting. Your accountability might be very high, but unless you have written procedures, unless you have reporting protocols, unless you are very clear on what the donors and external partners are looking for, your accountability will not be taken in the right manner. So, this is perhaps where some of the international organizations have a value addition or a niche over you cause they have operational manuals, and skills. They have the reporting standards. These are very very important aspects of accountability. And you will spend very little resources on that, and you will spend most of your resources on real response. Whereas I have seen international organizations, they spend little resources on real response, and spend more resources on accountability, reporting standards, skills, creating manuals, and so on. And so, I would like to highlight that.

The next message, know your partners. Organize yourselves as I mentioned earlier. Come as coalitions whenever possible so that your power becomes real power. And also

know your north star, what is your north star? What is your long-term mission? What are you trying to achieve?

Once you know your north star, it would be much easier to sail towards your north star. This is one of the main challenges I've seen in most of the local organizations. And then also the humanitarian transformation. As I've mentioned, it's a long process, it will not happen overnight. But you have to identify various levels. My suggestion is that, identify individual champions. Engage with the individual champions. Those who can transform humanitarian ecosystem in the Philippines. They can be coming from various levels, various sectors. I don't know. You need to identify individual champions, those who can make this change. The second, strengthen local humanitarian organizations. Organization is very very important for system transformation. You need individual, you need organization, and with the contribution of individuals, with the engagement of organizations, the system transformation might be much easier. More straightforward.

My last few messages. Think long, like 2030 perhaps? Don't think about 2021, 2022, it's too short. We have seen from 2015 to 2021 that nothing has changed much although we wanted 20% of global humanitarian funding. Don't expect it too. Think about 2030, which is one of the key milestones of the Sendai framework, SDG, and many other global frameworks. So, keep that as your milestone. Understand what other changes, changemakers, or change factors, or theory of change; maybe I'll highlight some for you: policy enablers, do you have the right policy for supporting localization in your country? If not, start processing on that; partnership and stakeholder coordination: should you elevate the PhilPrep? Should you be part of other cluster systems, if you are not already part of those? Partnership and stakeholder coordination would be another changing factor.

Capacity building and enhancement, you've been doing so many training on disaster management, humanitarian response perhaps you might need capacity building on how to write a proposal? How to write a proper progress report? How to maintain accountability standard? How to maintain HR? There are many other operational aspects, not the technical aspects. Look at what are those capacity building requirements. Knowledge sharing and consolidations -- processing, curating, disseminating knowledge and results learning, learning from other countries. Bringing those to other countries and so on and so forth.

Innovation. When we look at disaster risk management and humanitarian sector, it is quite odd. The community-based disaster risk reduction management practices that we have seen for the last three decades seems to be the same principles and approach.

Why don't you bring innovation? Why don't you bring new things that you can do, perhaps more cost-effectively? And maybe encourage other partners to apply new technology? New ways of doing, new ways of community mobilization, new ways of engagement, new ways of humanitarian response.

Innovation needs another change factor that you can bring into the table. And the whole concept of restructuring. Transformation. Maybe adaptive might not work now, we might need restructuring. Maybe disruptive changes to the ecosystem. Humanitarian transformation.

Last but not least, sustainability. No matter how you do, if you continue to depend on international humanitarian funding, sustainability might not be there. How you are going to tap into the national budget. How you are going to tap into the resource mobilization at the local level. How you are going to bargain and negotiate with donors through matching funding, for example. Go as PhilPrep, say we're going to put 200,000, can the donor put another 200,000 from their side? It's matching funding. Maybe go to the national budget in OCD and discuss with them and see whether they can contribute to some of the capacity building components so that you bring resources from international humanitarian organizations who are at the other aspect of the coin.

So those are my key messages. My last message is that this is doable. But you need to have the patience, you need to be smart, you need to be visionary, but more importantly you need to be realistic. It's not going to happen in a couple of years, but keep your patience, continue to educate—I can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

LOCALIZATION AGENDA IN THE PHILIPPINES: SHIFTING THE POWER TO LOCAL ACTORS



We need to start thinking differently about shifting the power. This is not a movement for autonomy towards isolation and non-cooperation. Let us all work together to drive localization and shifting the power forward.

LOREINE B. DELA CRUZ

Executive Director

Center for Disaster Preparedness

We have renewed interest in localization agenda, and shifting the power, all around the world. Citizens are organizing themselves in new and creative ways. We have contributed to it, and we are a part of it.

Localization and Locally-led Development

Localization

Localization, while may not be totally new, is a space and opportunity accorded to be at the forefront of humanitarian responses in every home country. This message has provided the inspiration and conviction for national and local actors on the occasion of the world humanitarian summit in 2016 to make headway and help chart the course of humanitarian action.

In essence, localization is not just about empowering national and local actors to take the lead, but to let them act for the benefit of the communities who are greatly affected by disasters, including situations of armed conflict. Localization means people-led action to ensure timeliness and effectiveness of response. This is not only limited to funding being influenced by local organizations. But on building their capacities to be resilient and even reforming the system so as to put the people in the center of humanitarian action.

A national platform is important for the advocacy towards helping to transform the humanitarian aid system and its corresponding architecture.

This means that it is incumbent upon national and local actors to have clarity of the endgame if they are to endeavor on this exciting but challenging arena of work. As such, it is becoming obvious that a clear-cut agreement on the endgame has to be drawn and fleshed out culling from the experience of empowering national and local actors. It is important to clarify the main goal of humanitarian aid, whether it is to achieve sustainability or long-term development, or just to address the immediate needs. For CDP, the goal of humanitarian action should always be linked to the greater development agenda, bearing in mind varying contexts. The humanitarian and development divide needs to be bridged and interlocked.

Locally-led Development

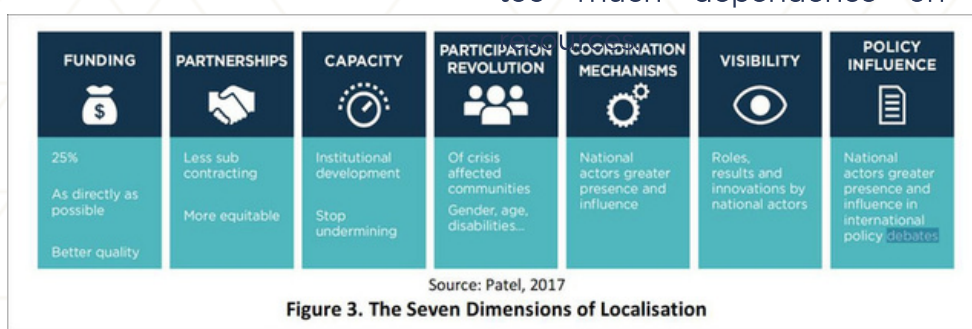
What then is “Locally-led Development” for us? This is when actors from the Global North no longer control all discussions and funding. It is also when white people not telling people of color what needs to be done; more of listening before doing, and reflecting after doing. Communities take the lead of their development without any external prescription or interference. INGOs are a relic of the past. People see their fingerprints on solutions, they are a part of the solution, and they feel ownership and responsibility for continuing to build better societies.

They are enabled to realize this. In short, a local organization leads and implements the development work, receiving direct fund from international donor agencies.

Localization Agenda

The Localization Agenda is an effective, cost-efficient, system-wide collaborative framework and mechanism that is set in place to operationalize a shared humanitarian agenda and sustain humanitarian action built on existing opportunities, enhancing the central role of government and local actors at different levels. As a community, it is a mechanism set-up to facilitate the continuing collaboration and linkage with a system-wide framework in a decentralized manner.

Funding or Donor-Support-one way of looking to address fiscal limitations can be the implementation of a more flexible funding arrangement for local actors. This could allow for the formulation of locally-defined and context-specific initiatives sans the limit of donor limitations, which will hopefully increase aid relevance and reduce bureaucracy, provided that proper mechanisms are in place. This will also involve an effective mobilization of resources available at different levels of government. The general direction is moving away from too much dependence on international



On partnerships, this should be less subcontracting and more equitable. The national actors are capable of and are even better placed to challenge their own governments as they understand political dynamics and who to confront and how to orchestrate action. Even if there are difficulties in conflict situations for local actors to operate and respond impartially, this still does not negate the importance of collaboration and partnerships.

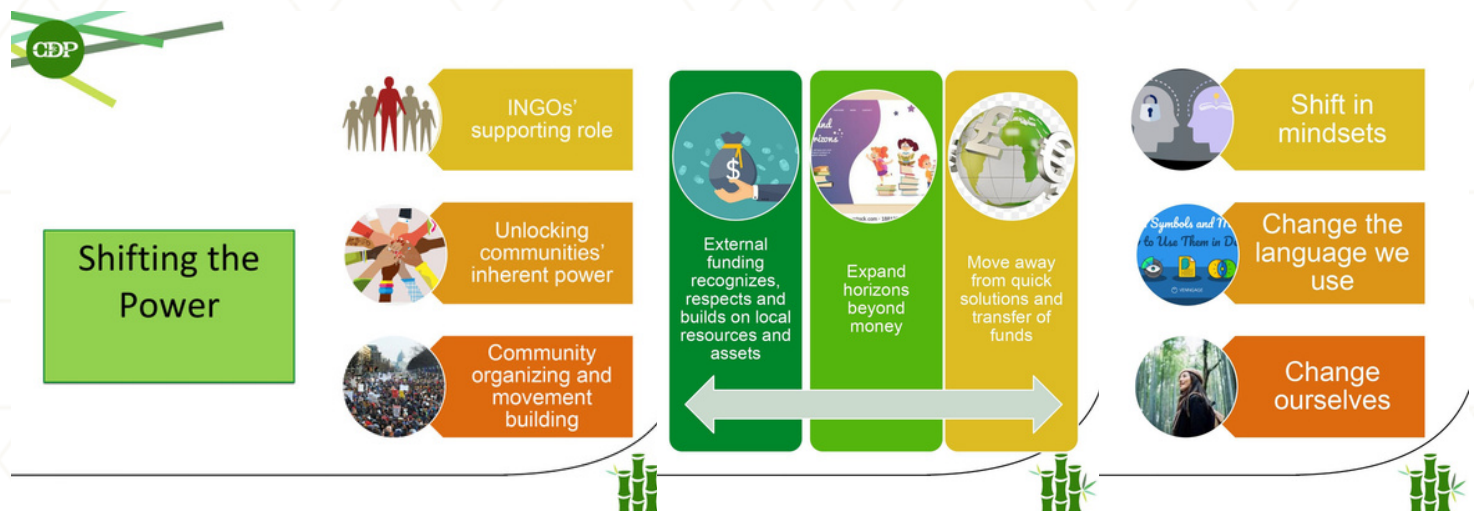
Localization Modeling

There are different types of modelling the localization. National and local actors initiatives gathering together and capacitating fellow national and local actors like the experience of Balik Lokal. There are similar initiatives that include local government units together with civil society organizations like the experience of Consortium for Humanitarian Action and Protection (CHAP).

And of course, there is the more recent tripartite partnership with the APP and PhilPrep initiative.

The Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP) is established through a partnership between Asia Disaster Preparedness Center and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for improving the preparedness and emergency response to disasters in Asia by strengthening humanitarian leadership and technical capacity of national governments, local humanitarian, and private sector organizations. At the local level, as a country partnership in the Philippines of APP, PhilPrep provides a strengthened leadership of national and local actors in humanitarian preparedness and response. The tripartite partnership of the Office of Civil Defense from the government, Center for Disaster Preparedness for the CSO component, and the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation from the private sector, provides an example of collaborative partnership that demonstrate positive collaboration with access to resources, including an enabling policy environment. Works on the capacity-building of sectors, initiating adherence to international standards adapted and implemented at national and local levels, and promoting adaptive and flexible programming in humanitarian emergencies.

Shifting the Power to Local Actors



Shifting the power comes with the move of asking INGOs to take a supporting role rather than a leading role in response by providing technical assistance and resource mobilization support as part of their joint commitment to tackle the imbalance between international and local actors, which is heavily skewed in favor of the former, despite the frontline roles played by the latter. It is creatively finding ways to unlock the inherent power of communities in determining their own development course, however they define it. Letting the language of beneficiaries and recipients be a thing of the past. It is also moving away from building capacity as defined by external actors and requirements towards community organizing and movement building. Where capacity equates to relevance, rootedness, and constituency.

It ensures that external funding recognizes, respects, and builds on local resources and assets.

There is a need for shift in mindsets to recognize the capacity needs we have. Power can only be taken by those who are ready. The poverty mindset of some CSO leaders, which operates in that we wait for the government to help us.

Let us also change the language that we use so that it enables new ways of working and thinking, rather than constrains them. And challenge the dominance of English.

Let's change ourselves too, we need both humility and boldness. And to be ready to challenge our own power and to listen to and work with others.

The Way Forward

Driving Localization and Shifting the Power Forward

We need to start thinking different about shifting the power. It's important to see the government as an actor that can help civil society. This is not a movement for autonomy towards isolation and non-cooperation.

Different actors have different capacities and roles to play and finding the best point of convergence allows us all to leverage each other's efforts. We can't continue doing the same things and expecting different results. We must understand that when power is really shifted to the community level and people own and contribute to their own development, the outcomes are better and more long lasting.



This is just reversing the way things are being done by giving emphasis on the important role of national and local actors. Efforts must be made to strengthen local capacities and let them lead the action in the local context. Let us all work together to drive localization and shifting the power forward.

“Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, it never will,” – Frederick Douglas, Civil Rights Leader.

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON LOCALIZATION

There are also pathways to improve localization. Coming from a regional perspective, the most important one is to keep in mind that the locally led humanitarian action should be the chosen field whenever possible.

EDWIN M. SALONGA

Country Program Manager
Asian Disaster Preparedness Center



To give a view of localization on the regional perspective, I have compiled experiences from Asia gathered by the AHA Center of the ASEAN, Save the Children, and from the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, where I am working now. Localization, as a whole, we want to really empower local actors who are on the ground, and this is a long process. This involves recognizing, respecting, and strengthening the independence of leadership and decision-making of local actors in humanitarian and disaster response.

While we are supporting local actors from the international, regional level, we need to provide autonomy and independence to the national and local actors to determine their own paths towards development.

Local actors involve national actors, subnational organizations, local authorities, local communities, and local civil society organizations.

Why is localization important? Localization recognizes the problem with the structure and architecture of aid. This includes finances and decision making, which is driven and determined by those not directly affected by the crisis. Shifting the power from the international organizations to crisis-affected communities on financial resources and decision-making. We also want to bring about greater transparency, complementarity, and coordination between those who have traditionally held the purse strings and those proximate to the crisis.

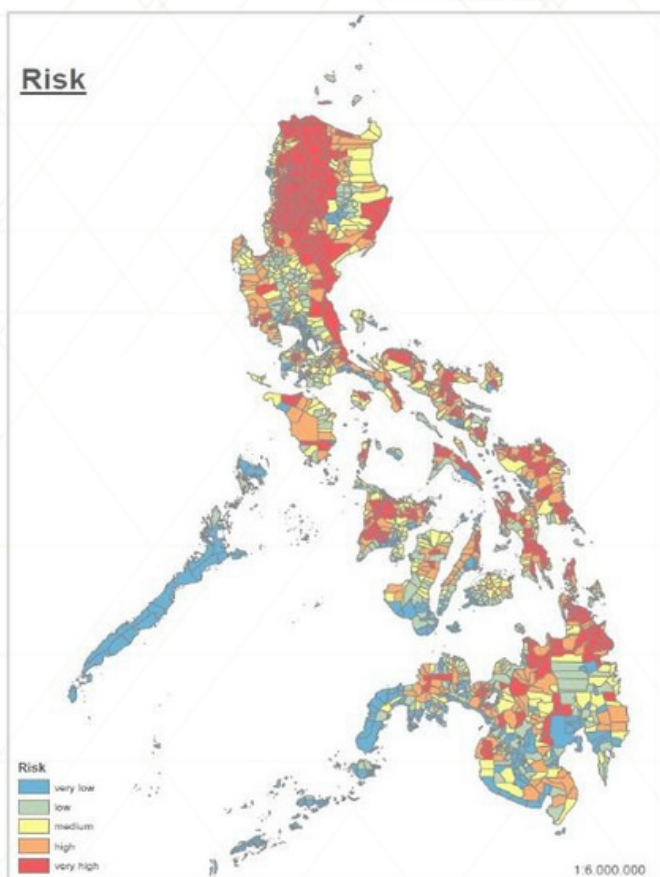
The reality of our context right now is that there are people with resources, and they determine where these resources will be utilized. And those people and organizations who really need the resources need to jump hoops to access these. In localization, we also want to improve humanitarian response in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and relevance.

Locally led humanitarian response is faster and more cost effective. Local actors are able to provide more relevant and appropriate aid because of their understanding of the local context and ability to effectively communicate with crisis-affected populations. Rather than dividing affected populations into sectors or clusters, local actors can also understand the needs and aspirations of the community allowing them to give a more holistic response. While we

recognize that in humanitarian response, that people would need material goods such as first aid and relief, but we do not discount the fact that there are also psychosocial services that they need and other non-financial, in-kind needs.

While we understand that localization is needed and beneficial not only to local actors but also to local communities, there are still many challenges to resolve. The first is restriction by donors, which includes vetting, reporting systems, and branding—emanating largely from low tolerance to risk by donors. When donors transfer resources to local actors, they want to make sure that these resources are being used effectively and efficiently.

With that, organizations cannot build much capacity, since they need time to do that, and they aren't given an opportunity by the donors to prove their worth. The second challenge is lack of direct funding to local organizations. It is not the only requirement, but it is a necessary requirement for local organizations to be able to continue working on the ground. There is also lack of trust and communication that diminishes the quality and efficiency of response. There are many checks and balances, which are necessary, however when there are too many, humanitarian response takes much longer. In that way, instead of the funding going directly to response, it goes into monitoring and evaluation, or cheques—which are again, important, but we need to balance this with the actual needs of the community. Also, there is a limitation related to capacity within



local organizations. We must learn how to strengthen our local organizations, because if we are to rely only on the big ones, someone will always need to channel resources. Smaller organizations will not be given a chance to also grow and increase their capacity. Finally, the last challenge is the issues on adherence to humanitarian principles. Right now, we are trying to highlight discussions on the core humanitarian standards of neutrality, impartiality, and local independence by local organizations. Hopefully, through our efforts, dissemination of knowledge products, and with the tools and guidelines available to local organizations, we will be able to adhere more to humanitarian principles, when we conduct our own humanitarian interventions.

There are also pathways to improve localization. Coming from a regional perspective, this is our idea of how we can support local organizations. The most important one is to keep in mind that the locally led humanitarian action should be the chosen field whenever possible. This means that instead of international actors going into our local communities, it should be local actors who are given an opportunity. International organizations will just be doing supportive roles. Next, there must be adequate funding to state and nonstate actors in affected countries. While we are providing support to the government, which is the state and the duty bearer, we should understand that they cannot do everything by themselves. We also need to provide resources to nonstate actors. Finally, we must have stronger partnerships between

international and local actors, with an emphasis on strengthening local capacity. Funding is not always the needed resource, sometimes it's technical expertise so that they can grow on their own, and later on they can access resources on their own.

So what is our current reality? In the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, major commitments were made to the localization agenda under the Grand Bargain agreement. Since that time, we really have achieved tangible impacts in certain countries and responses, and there's already political momentum that is crucial in attaining our commitments. However, we still have a long way to go in achieving the 25% of all humanitarian funding going "as directly as possible" to local and actors by 2020.

While the channeled funding is increasing, it is still very low at around 2-3% currently. We are behind schedule, and we are behind target.



**LEAVE
NO ONE
BEHIND**

The Call to Action during the last World Humanitarian Summit was "As Local as Possible, as International as Necessary". What we want to do, is to provide support to local communities and local actors. International and regional organizations should only play a supportive role. In doing so, we must not forget to "Leave No One Behind" by

Regional Perspective on Localization



- **Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP)**

- **Localization:** Process of which local, sub-national, and national humanitarian actors, namely governments, civil society and non-government organizations, the private sector, media, academia, and relevant stakeholders take a lead role, in a collaborative manner to plan and implement priority actions in disaster preparedness, humanitarian response and recovery through mobilizing internal resources and external humanitarian funding



eradicating poverty in all its forms, ending discrimination and exclusion, and reducing the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals and of humanity as a whole.

To this end, this is also what we do in the Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP). We also have our own definition of localization, aligned with other definitions. APP is present in developing countries in South and Southeast Asia: Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Lao PDR. In the Philippines, of course there is PhilPrep, which organized the 2021 NHSS. The PhilPrep is comprised of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP), and the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), which is a tripartite partnership for the government, civil society, and private sector to come together and work on localized humanitarian action.

Regional Perspective on Localization



- **Philippine Preparedness Partnership (PHILPREP)**

- Office of Civil Defense (OCD)
- Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP)
- Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF)



The APP also has Regional Technical Working Groups to highlight localization such as inclusive approaches, private sector engagement, and nexus between emergency operation centers, early warning systems, and risk analytics.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought on the urgency of localization through its severe impact on personnel mobility within and between countries due to prevailing restrictions. It hampered humanitarian aid because it put on hold capacity-building efforts for local actors due to lack of internet connectivity in certain communities and the inability to train in person. At the same time, it also accelerated our reliance on local organizations, instead of external support.

Keys to Resilience Building

- **Leave no one behind:** Account for the needs of all and specially the different vulnerable groups of society, which might include people with disabilities, minorities, children, or women.
- **Integrated nature:** Resilience is not a condition but a transforming and evolving state, responsive to current and future circumstances and trends.
- **Partnership based approach:** DRR and resilience building require alliances with local stakeholders by promoting inclusiveness, comprehensive and meaningful participation that ensures a sense of ownership towards the implementation of plans and actions.

- **Multilevel governance:** Clear division of responsibilities, and appropriate competences and resources among different levels of government are critical for DRR and resilience building.
- **Accountability:** Approaches to resilience should ensure that efforts to reduce risk and alleviate certain vulnerabilities do not generate others.



This we all do to support our national aspiration in achieving safer, disaster resilient, and climate change-adaptive Filipino communities towards sustainable development. With all of these actions that we are trying to do, and with the summit providing us with the platform to converse with one another and plan towards improvement of our own organizations and communities, I am hopeful that this national aspiration will be achieved.

ADAPTIVE AND FLEXIBLE PROGRAMMING

The Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in humanitarian action (ALNAP) is a global network of NGOs, UN agencies, members of the Red Cross/Crescent Movement, donors, academics, networks, and consultants dedicated to learning how to improve response to humanitarian crises. We count Center for Disaster Preparedness in the Philippines as one of our valued members.

What I'm going to talk to you about today is the issue of flexibility and adaptiveness in humanitarian action and disaster response. Flexibility is an organization's ability to change in response to new learning or changes in their external environment.

Flexibility is important and feels like something we do quite frequently in disaster response. We often react to different events and changes when we're delivering disaster response. This is a very common form of flexibility called the Reactive Cycle in which we identify a change and act on it. But, there are smarter, more strategic ways to be flexible.

There are two main strategies that organizations can use to be flexible. One of those is anticipation, something many of you are familiar with. In Anticipatory strategies, you plan options for response in advance, in order to facilitate a faster change later on.



I think we could reasonably suggest that a more flexible response and a more locally led response are likely to go hand in hand.

ALICE OBRECHT

Head of Research and Impact
Active Learning Network for Accountability
and Performance in Humanitarian Action

But there are some changes we face in the operating environment or in the community that we cannot anticipate. For this we need Adaptive management. These are approaches that support an organization to take in new information and learn or analyze this during implementation in order to make changes based on this learning in an appropriate timeframe. In anticipation, we already know what the solution looks like.

is that anticipation identifies different potential approaches upfront, and so you already know the different pathways that you might proceed with. Adaptive management is focused on a more iterative process of acting, learning, and then adapting and changing. An example might be if you're based in Manila and you want to go to your favorite restaurant, you might be able to map

The strategic importance of organisational flexibility



Whereas in adaptive strategies, we are facing more complex problems or uncertainty in our context. Adaptive approaches allow us to take information, process it very quickly, and find the best approach.

We see how in the anticipatory or adaptive cycles of behavior, organizations aren't just acting and then identifying the change, they're not just reacting without thinking. Instead, they're monitoring, learning, and reflecting, and they're using that reflection to inform their action.

Another way to think about the difference between anticipatory and adaptive strategies

out different potential routes based on different scenarios. Maybe one of the major roads has been closed for roadwork, or maybe there's extra traffic because of an accident. You might have many different routes that you can take, depending on the situation in the day and you can plan those in advance. Whereas if you're trying to find your way through a forest or through the wilderness, and you don't have an exact path, you might use something like a compass, which gives you a general direction to help you know if you're going north or east or west. But you have to continually look around you, check your compass, and adjust your path as you go.

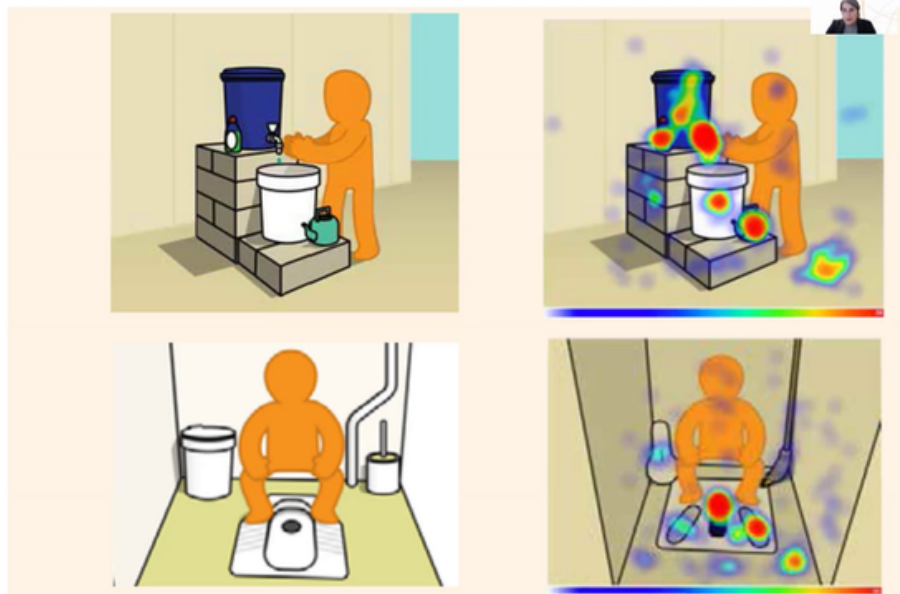
Why is flexibility useful? Is there evidence that they actually improve performance? There are three main benefits that ALNAP has seen in our research on flexibility and adaptive management. The first is that we can identify faster responses to changing circumstances. Organizations that use anticipatory and adaptive strategies are able to have a faster response in early onset disasters, or when situations and contexts change. We've seen

see the world through the perspective of that particular activity or program approach. We are going to miss out on finding more appropriate, tailored solutions for the actual problems that we are facing.

We've seen organizations use adaptive approaches to consult with communities. For example, in this particular case of getting community input into the design of a latrine.

More relevant & community-driven solutions

'If all we have is a hammer, then we are only going to see nails'



Source: Bourne/ALNAP 2018: User Centred Design and Humanitarian Adaptiveness; drawing from David Hallangen, Save the Children UK & Eclipse

this in the recent and ongoing responses to Covid-19. Organizations that are more flexible, were able to shift more quickly and adapt what they were doing when Covid-19 forced a change in operating circumstances and a change in need.

Adaptive approaches in particular can also support more relevant and community-driven solutions. One of the research participants that we spoke to said that "If all you have is a hammer, then you are only going to see nails", in other words if we only have one tool, one thing that we can deliver, one activity or one program approach, then we're only going to

And to use that feedback to adapt and to change programs to make them more relevant for crises affected people. In one sense, you can't be truly accountable to communities if you are not willing to adapt. Because you need to be open to taking on feedback and changing what you do based on their inputs.

Finally, flexible approaches are really useful for solving more complex problems. We've seen this in context where humanitarian programs are attempting to work in more conflict sensitive ways or trying to engage more deeply with communities to look at

issues such as resilience and protection. For more complex problems within communities and situations, we really need adaptive approaches because we will not understand fully what that problem is, or how best to solve it at the beginning. We're going to be learning along the way and so we therefore need to keep our plans and programs open to change based on that learning.

What are some examples of working adaptively? What does this look like in practice? When we look at the program level, there are three different ways that adaptive programs have been set up. The first is an iterative, single stream where you have one activity/theory of change that is implemented, and regularly reviewed and adjusted over time based on new learning. Other programs try to take a more complex structure such as a portfolio approach where little is known on what will work best, and multiple iterative theories of change, or potential solutions, are run simultaneously. These potential solutions are reviewed. Activities that don't work are discontinued and the activities that are working are continued and expanded. Portfolio approach might best be used for larger, more complex problems such as building resilience or thinking about future adaptations and mitigations for climate-related disasters. And finally we have the experimental approach, which is similar to portfolio, where you try multiple solutions at the same time, but it's a bit more structured. You might use an experimental approach where you have one particular modality. Say, cash-based assistance, for example.

But you have questions about how to best design and implement cash-based assistance in that particular area. How frequently do you make the payments? Do the payments go to the head of household? Or to individuals? How much should they be? You can try different designs for your cash-based program, and then stop at a certain point to assess the monitoring and evaluation data that you're collecting. Then, make a decision about which design to discontinue and which design to continue with.

So, those are some program design examples, but we've also seen adaptive approaches used at a more collective level in consortia or multiple actor platforms. They were able to work together, share resources, so that when disasters happen, the organizations that are best placed to respond are able to get the resources and information that they need from the other agencies. There are a few examples of these that we saw in our research and it's a primary example of the kind of added value that a platform like the Philippine Preparedness platform can play in enhancing the flexibility and adaptiveness of response in the Philippines.

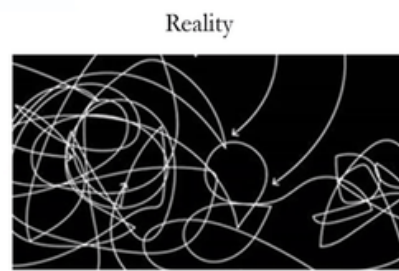
I want to conclude my short remarks here on drawing the linkages between flexibility and locally led humanitarian action. One of the challenges that we've seen to flexibility in the formal humanitarian system is that there is a huge mismatch between the ways in which many international humanitarian agencies commonly plan their work and the reality in which they are operating in.



Plans

Logframe

	Means of Verification	Indicators	Assumptions
1. Overall objective			
2. Purpose			
3. Outputs			
4. Activities			
5. Inputs			



So we tend to plan our work through logical frameworks or very linear plans where the emphasis is on predictability and control. Often times, reality is much messier, which is why we need to be able to change, to flex, and to adapt. Sometimes the systems that these organizations have created for planning or for accountability purposes make them less flexible and to change when they need to.

I think we could reasonably suggest that a more flexible response and a more locally led response are likely to go hand in hand. In the first place, one of the key findings about adaptive working is that they rely on decentralized decision-making. If we talk about an international organization, it really relies on them decentralizing control and decision-making to country teams or even to field teams in order for adaptations to take place as close to the community as possible.

Local organizations work very closely with the community, so they are really well-placed to be identifying and implementing adaptations. Moreover, I don't think it's a wild

assumption to say that flexibility and adaptation is really built into the DNA of most local organizations. As local organizations become further embedded in international ways of working through partnerships and grant agreements, they may be asked to take on ways of working that are more similar to international organizations. For example, using similar log frame or linear-based planning and accountability practices. And while these do have value, they might bring with them increased bureaucratization and therefore potentially less flexibility. It's important for local and national agencies to think about how they can retain their strengths of flexibility and adaptation in these partnerships.

Finally, a central issue that connects to locally led humanitarian action but is particularly important for flexibility and adaptive management is that we really need good M&E. When we have good, flexible M&E, this can help build the case for why adaptations are needed to improve performance and how they contribute to better aid for crises affected populations.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND CONTEXTUALIZATION FOR THE 14 BASIC SECTORS

This agenda of localization, I would say, is really the core advocacy of the 14 basic sectors. This Shifting the Power for Change agenda has been there since the crafting of this law.

To contextualize this sharing, these are the policies that supported the position of the 14 basic sectors in our governance system. The RA 10121 (DRRM Law) provides a comprehensive, all-hazard, multi-sectoral, inter-agency, and community-based approach to disaster risk management. RA 8425 (National Anti-Poverty Commission Social Reform Agenda) refers to the continuing process of addressing the basic inequalities of Filipino society through a systemic, unified, and coordinated delivery of

socioeconomic programs and packages. It promotes a multi-dimensional approach to poverty alleviation: economic, social, ecological, and governance. And finally, the RA 11291 (Magna Carta of the Poor), which helps to strengthen the RA 8425, was created to uplift the standard of living and quality of life of the poor and provide them with sustained opportunities for growth and development through an area-based, sectoral, and focused intervention to poverty alleviation. This ensures their right to adequate food, decent work, relevant and quality education, adequate housing, and highest attainable standard of health.

We need to trust that the people, the communities, the local actors have capacity, and we need to trust them while providing the necessary support from national and international agencies within a framework of equitable and complementary partnership.

REGINA SALVADOR-ANTEQUISA

Executive Director, EcoWEB
Sectoral Representative, NAPC-VDC



We all know that with every disaster, even with how much the government and stakeholders are doing in addressing poverty, it would always negate and slow down the development and poverty reduction that we are aiming for. We see the importance of really harmonizing, coordinating, and integrating all our approaches so that we could attain sustainable development and the resilience of communities.

There must be a Multi-Dimensional Approach to Poverty. One is the Social Dimension, which can be addressed by providing access to quality basic social services and facilities including education, health, housing and other basic services. Another is the Economic Dimension, where asset reform and access to economic opportunities such as ownership, distribution, management, and control of natural and man-made resources must be given to the basic sectors. Third, sustainable development of productive resources, which ensures effective and sustainable utilization of the natural and ecological resource base, with increased participation of the basic sectors

which must be ensured to address the Ecological Dimension. And finally, under the Governance Dimension, democratization of the decision-making and management processes, which enables the basic sectors to effectively participate in the processes that affect their rights, interests and welfare that must be achieved.

The sectoral agenda of the NAPC-VDC involves strengthening People's Participation in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring. The institutionalization of an inclusive Community Based DRRM (CBDRM) and CCA towards a more resilient community must also be strengthened. Human assistance standards based on universal norms must also be adopted.

In pursuit of these sectoral agendas, we were able to come up with a 10-point recommendation during the 2018 national basic sectors DRRM summit for improving the DRRM CCA policy and programming.

10-Point recommendations during the 2018 national basic sectors DRRM summit for improving the DRRM-CCA policy and programming:

1. **Strengthen climate risk proofing agriculture and food production and provide support for risk transfer programming** to benefit the farmers, fisherfolks, small cooperatives, workers in the informal sectors and other vulnerable sectors;
2. Provide **safe resettlement and support for early warning systems** to benefit the vulnerable communities of fisherfolks, urban poor and informal sectors **with access to sustainable livelihoods and basic services**;
3. **Address impact and root causes of armed conflict and human-induced disasters** affecting the Bangsamoro and Indigenous Communities;
4. Make the policy more **rights-based and socially inclusive upholding the international and Philippines laws on the protection of the rights of the victims (survivors) of the disaster and calamities, the internally displaced persons (IDPs)** especially among the vulnerable basic sectors of **children, PWD, senior citizens, women** during crisis and emergencies;
5. **Program humanitarian, DRR and CCA more peace-enabling and culture-sensitive** recognizing the Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSP) and diversity of faith, religion and cultural practices;

10-Point recommendations during the 2018 national basic sectors DRRM summit for improving the DRRM-CCA policy and programming

- 6. **Make the DRRM-CCA policy, programming and data management more socially inclusive and empowering** enabling active participation and representation of the vulnerable sectors of the Persons with Disabilities (PWD), Senior Citizens, Children, and Women in the DRRM Councils and in the DRRM budgeting processes.
- 7. **Strengthen the capacity of communities for building their resiliency** to both natural and human-induced hazards by institutionalizing Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRRM) programming; People's participation in the planning, budgeting/financial policy (people's plan) including in planning for socialized housing for victims of disasters;
- 8. Enable a **whole of government approach** in effecting a needs-based, responsive, culturally-sensitive, peace-enabling, empowering, effective and efficient DRRM-CCA.
- 9. Enable a **whole of society approach** in DRRM-CCA programming and in building resilience of communities;
- 10. Make DRRM-CCA policy **coherent to sustainable development goals: Integrate Ecosystems-based approach** in programming.

Through the OCD we were able to receive a DBM allocation of 300M for the CBDRRM capacity development of 1,400 members of the 14 basic sector assemblies. In our goal to provide capacity development on CBDRRM for the 14 basic sectors, we were also able to complete the contextualization of the CBDRRM modules into the 14 basic sector needs through the help of CDP and PhilPrep.

To ensure that humanitarian assistance standards based on universal norms are adopted, we held a Multi-stakeholder

Localization Dialogue Process to really understand what people have to say on the ground. From the dialogue process we were able to learn that communities are calling for a balance in the power within partnerships, participation of the affected population where they are treated as partners and not as recipients, capacitation of grassroots organizations on technical and management roles, adequate and easy access to funding by grassroots organizations, coordination between all local actors and strengthening local humanitarian leadership, aid must also



not be politicized, and ensure the participation of communities in the whole project cycle.

We have made many advances and yet there remains some continuing sectoral challenges. There is the increasing vulnerabilities and needs and the shrinking resources to support the needs of the affected and the most vulnerable in this Covid-19 pandemic. The poor remain vulnerable to multiple hazards and disasters. The Anti-terror law resulted in the red-tagging of some humanitarian groups, including some members of VDC. And there is still a huge demand for sectoral advocacy work especially in this pandemic but we have limited technical and financial support to the basic sectors to enable a more effective policy advocacy.

So on shifting the power, where are we now? Shifting the power is already supported with policy in the Philippine setting through RA 8425 (Social Reform Agenda with the 14 Basic Sectors), RA 11291 (Magna Carta of the Poor with Basic Sectors and CSOs and LGUs), LGC of 1991 and the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling aimed towards full devolution of power to local government with structures represented by CSOs, and the RA 10121 (DRRM Law).

But certainly, our systems, practices and programming need to demonstrate more will and commitment to make localisation and shifting the power enable local leadership to effectively result to resilience of communities and protection of rights and upholding the dignity of people vulnerable to crisis and disasters.

This needs change of mind set! Need to trust that the people, the communities, the local actors have capacity, and we need to trust them while providing the necessary support from national and international agencies within a framework of equitable and complementary partnership!



CAPACITATING COMMUNITIES THROUGH ENABLING LOCAL INNOVATIONS

Through this summit, humanitarian actors reaffirm the value of community leadership through the shifting of power and unlocking the inherent strength of communities.

The Pinnovation Academy Project is a project that seeks to institutionalize Filipino innovations or Pinnovation in disaster risk reduction. Pinnovation Academy is being implemented through the collaboration of the CLIP (Community-led Innovation Partnership with Start Network, EHLRA, and Asia Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN), with funding support from UKAid. At the onset, the CLIP clearly defines what community-led means: empowerment,

involvement, ownership, localization, among others. These words do not only refer to concepts and frameworks, but most importantly, to actual community practices.

Our role as humanitarian and development actors is to ensure that the community leads the entire innovation process, from risk assessments, ideating, advocating, testing, pivoting, monitoring, evaluating, sustaining, and replicating. These are bigger tasks that most community partners feel both excited and overwhelmed. Excited, as most of our community partners, both old and new, want to learn and learn more. The core of community leadership, albeit a combination



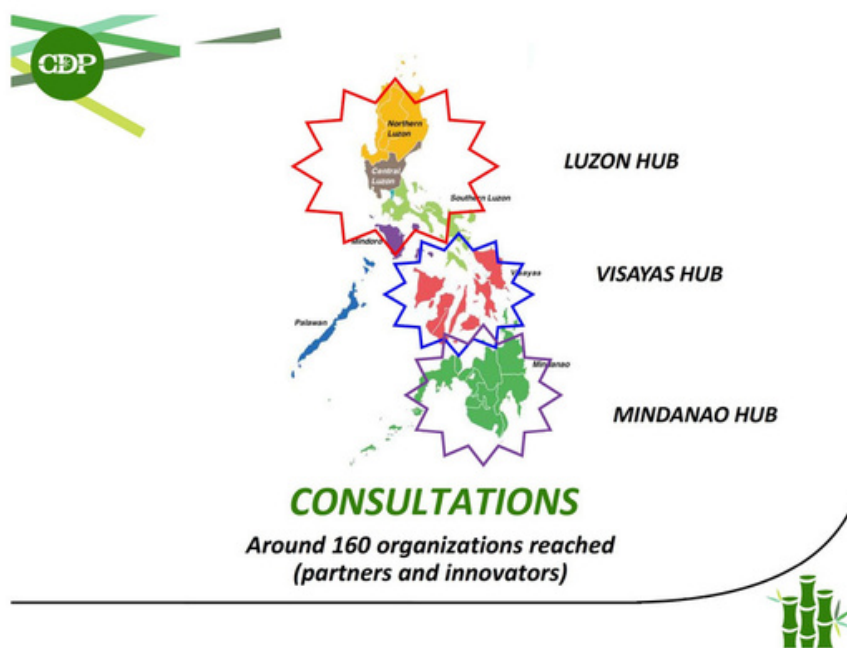
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GEANETTE GALVEZ

Program Coordinator, Community Services Program
Project Manager, Pinnovation Academy
Center for Disaster Preparedness

of many factors, would always point towards learning through active engagement, collaborating for new solutions, working with inclusivity and diversity, relying on local strengths and resources, and having an enabling environment for local knowledge to flourish while being open to innovations.

machines, etc. It can also mean a community solution to improve a present system, service, or product. In fact, in some areas there are already innovations. What the community needs is how to link their innovations and good practices to the concept or framework of community led DRR solutions.



However, for some, the tasks are also too big that they feel overwhelmed, doubting their capacities that restrain their potential. Socioeconomic factors would also come into play like life-sustaining priorities, especially during the current pandemic crisis. We recognize this hesitation as real and valid. At the same time, we do not limit ourselves. As humanitarian actors, it is our duty to support, encourage and inspire our local innovators and work within their present capacities, gradually levelling up based on their awareness and readiness. A common challenge is how to break the inadequacy where innovators feel they do not know how to innovate. Innovation does not confine itself to high-tech applications, gadgets, new

Innovation is also giving birth to a new way of thinking that challenges the old system of doing things, making it flexible and adaptive.

The Pinovation Academy conducted a series of community consultations reaching around 160 organizations across the country. These are partners, mentors, and innovators. After the consultations, the project embarked on thorough mentoring sessions, with 1-3 mentoring sessions per day per hub. Each hub has representatives from each of the three major islands of the Philippines: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. This painstaking effort resulted in capacitating 80 organizations.

The innovators, both diverse and inclusive, represent the vulnerable sectors of women, youth, and children, LGBTQI+ members, indigenous peoples, persons with disability, farmers, and fisherfolks. Multisectoral organizations have also been involved: faith-based, cooperatives, environmental organizations, civil society organizations, and non-government organizations. These 80 innovators went through the journey of familiarizing themselves in community innovation and linking the innovation process to community-based DRRM processes. Alongside these focused mentoring sessions were learning exchanges with past and present DRR innovators. Inputs and video presentations of innovations and overcoming challenges inspired new innovators that despite many difficulties and challenges, Filipino ingenuity thrives and will continue to thrive in the communities.

Like the bottom up DRRM approach, community-led innovation is now coming out of its shell. Local innovations are giving power to the people through leadership in vital decision-making processes, in the identification of community risks, and in the ownership of risk-informed local development solutions.

Our partners are always there, colleagues and friends from civil society organizations, and non-government organizations, the supportive local government units, the academe, and the private sector. The partners helped in any way they can to advocate for and encourage local innovations. But we let the community-led innovation process take

its course. We are there to support and provide technical assistance, but it is the community people that define and determine their innovation pathway to development.

Technical assistance provided involved orientations on innovation processes, ideating, inputs on the Philippine innovation ecosystem, trainings on participatory community risk assessment with DRRM-CCAM basics, trainings on proposal development, and workshops on problem and solution canvass. For shortlisted innovators, there is also project management, financial management and due diligence training. Information and education materials and knowledge management products were developed and shared with the partners and innovators as we are planning to produce an innovation process manual that would encapsulate key processes, systems, and mechanisms on community-led innovation.

Submitted proposals for the Pinnovation Academy came from the 67 innovators, with 24 innovations for the Luzon hub, 23 for the Visayas hub, and 20 for the Mindanao hub. The shortlisting of 30 innovators that will undergo the screening process towards the selection of the 15 innovators for seed funding is ongoing.

The Pinnovation Academy does not end in the awarding of grants. The goal of the community-led innovation partnership and the Center for Disaster Preparedness is to help institutionalize local innovations in DRRM beyond the project's lifetime.

Pinnovation Academy as a national hub for community-led innovations is the platform for institutionalization and learning exchanges of innovators, partners, and mentors. It is a venue for conversations on challenges, needs, and opportunities for innovation. This will be strengthened through advocacy within government units and national agencies, and surely within the private sector as well. Sustaining local innovations need the support of local stakeholders who believe in the power of the community to determine their own pathways to development. It is our duty to unlock this power and at the same time provide an enabling environment where local ingenuity thrives. An ordinance or a resolution for local government units, a memorandum for national government agencies, a slice of development in DRRM fund, a part of corporate social responsibility, a shared technical expertise, an opening for additional funding, a collaboration for knowledge-sharing—these initiatives will go a long way towards institutionalization, the center of which is the advocacy to empower the communities through local innovations.

This is how Pinnovation Academy realizes this shifting of power. Letting local innovations become a potent platform to unlock the creative and innovative power of the community towards self-determined development and meaningful social change. Innovation does not only refer to innovators and enablers, but also to their environment. The question is, are we providing enough infrastructure, policies, laws, regulations,

systems, and mechanisms to encourage and institutionalize Filipino innovations?

It would be good to bear in mind that we have a role and responsibility to sustain it. As we put our partner communities at the center of our development efforts, and therefore in having such mindset, we will endeavor to find ways and means to make innovative development solutions prosper and not dissipate, as this is a very important development intervention.

The communities have responded to the Pinnovation Academy's call, "Be a Pinnovator Now." It remains our duty to continue this journey with them and we invite all of you to join us. Let us build a community-led innovation academy, let us continue to empower our communities. *Mabuhay ang mga Pinoy Innovators! Mabuhay tayong lahat!*



EDUCATION ADAPTATION IN THE COVID CONTEXT

I am grateful to have been invited to speak in this very important occasion, the 2021 National Humanitarian Stakeholders' Summit. We were invited to share about how we as a youth organization were able to adapt to the situation and address the challenges brought about by the pandemic.

We all know how difficult the pandemic has been for everyone. News of disease and death became our daily reality, and the tally only increased every day. It is said that the Philippines experiences the worst of both worlds: the harshest lockdown restrictions were imposed on the country, yet it was insufficient in controlling the spread of the virus. It is only getting worse, we've been through several waves of lockdowns, and we still don't have a good handle on the issues brought by Covid.

These harsh lockdowns have also been hard on the economy. Our economic performance has been one of the worst in the world, with the country's GDP has been dropping to -2% in 2021. In April 2021, around 4.14 million Filipinos were jobless and 7.45 million were reported to be underemployed. During this economic crisis, many have lost their livelihood, poverty and hunger worsened, many people were severely affected, and even frontline health workers were unable to receive adequate support.

To add to this already difficult situation, the government used the pandemic as an excuse to borrow money, the utilization of which is still unclear up to now. Citizens have found the handling of this pandemic to be disastrous, inept, and rife with corruption.

We cannot wait for the pandemic to be over, for everyone to be completely vaccinated, before planning and implementing actions and solutions to ensure that quality education can be received by all.

ROSANNA V. VILLEGAS

NCR Coordinator

Youth for Nationalism and Democracy



Of course, this situation affects education as well. The economic and health problems brought by the pandemic have worsened the situation of education, which already had its fair share of inadequacies before Covid. When school opened this year in October, which was already delayed by four months, students were unable to participate in online classes due to their lack of gadgets and access to the internet. Over 800 schools closed down, 4000 schoolteachers lost their jobs, and 2.6 million children and youth were left behind as their parents lost their jobs or became underemployed.

Equity and inclusivity have been long term issues in education. Many youth and students, especially those who belong to the marginalized sectors, are unable to study. The number of out of school youth is increasing because of poverty, inaccessibility, and because they are not truly provided with adequate support, especially through budget allocation.

Now that the classes have been moved online and many students are unable to participate, young people, particularly young women, and girls, have become more prone to sexual abuse. In order to access education, young people were forced to go through exploitative measures to earn the financial means to participate in distance learning.

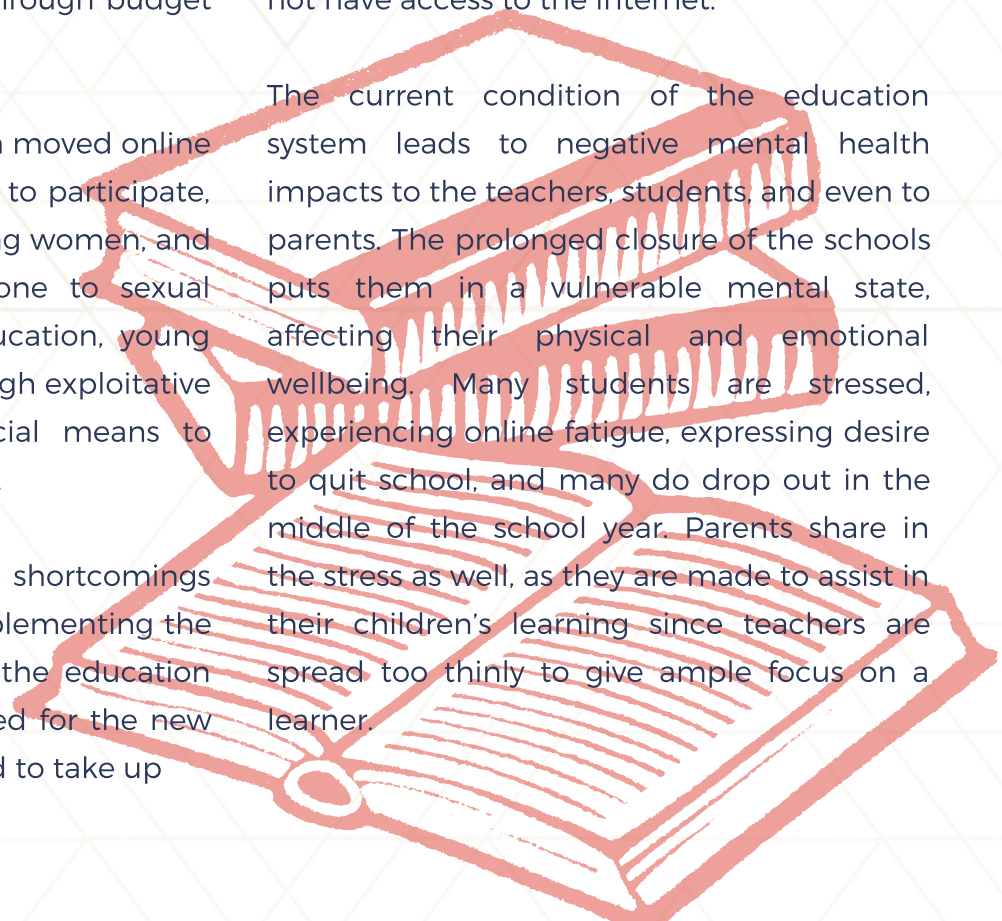
These incidences highlight the shortcomings of the education system in implementing the new learning modality. Since the education system is inadequately prepared for the new education normal, teachers had to take up

most of the burden. They had to prepare their own equipment (laptops, tablets, etc.) and resolve their own access to the internet. Many teachers in the public sector have very heavy workload, a significant part of which are non-teaching assignments.

This situation also brings to question the quality of education that the youth are receiving. Since for many of them, their parents are unable to help them in the new learning mode and they lack the equipment and internet access needed to join classes, they find it difficult to really take on the lessons.

There's a "digital divide" or the lack of access of students to technology and gadgets which hinder them from receiving education; 6% of households did not have electricity, 53.5% did not have radios, 21.1% did not have televisions, 79.7% did not have computers, and 84.3% did not have access to the internet.

The current condition of the education system leads to negative mental health impacts to the teachers, students, and even to parents. The prolonged closure of the schools puts them in a vulnerable mental state, affecting their physical and emotional wellbeing. Many students are stressed, experiencing online fatigue, expressing desire to quit school, and many do drop out in the middle of the school year. Parents share in the stress as well, as they are made to assist in their children's learning since teachers are spread too thinly to give ample focus on a learner.



Another major issue is the availability of and capacity for providing learning support at home, and physical availability of parents who may be daily wage earners and need to be at work. At very young ages, students are forced to join online classes without the help of their parents or their teachers. Therefore, younger students who still need supervision are not learning effectively.

The pandemic has resulted in not only a health crisis, but also a learning crisis. The education system was unable to provide the standard of education that should have been provided to our students. And this will only get worse because education is not given priority in terms of budget. The Department of Education received a Php 21.9 billion budget cut in 2020, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) budget was cut by Php 13.9 billion, and the budget for the state universities and colleges (SUCs) was reduced by Php 7.6 billion. Moreover, budget wasn't adequately set aside for the learning facilities, gadgets, and textbooks that the students would need.



Given this bleak circumstance, you might wonder whether there is still hope in overcoming the crisis affecting the education system. However, we as young people are very active and are always looking for opportunities to do our part.

We recognize that the collective action of youth in response to the pandemic is essential. There are many ways that different youth organizations have contributed on this throughout the lockdowns. For our organization, we strove to give a voice, make a stride, and determine what could be our role in this situation where we could not even leave our own homes. Despite this, we tried to step out of our comfort zones to try to be of help to our fellow youths.

Sagip Kabataan

We worked on three youth-led programs during the pandemic lockdowns. The first one is Sagip Kabataan which is a youth-based action support project initiated by the Youth for Nationalism and Democracy (YND) and Teatrong Bayan, along with university students that extended help to around 500 stranded students in selected universities in Metro Manila who were unable to go home to their provinces. These students were in lockdown in their dormitories, receiving minimal support from the government, and were unable to return home because of travel restrictions.

To help these students, we reached out to the school administration and the students we knew. From there, we tried to work out the number of students who were stranded in

their dormitories. We worked with three universities that we could reach at the time, and these were the University of the Philippines Diliman (UPD), Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP), and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Muntinlupa (PLMun).

We were all stranded at the height of lockdowns, but it was heartening to know that we were able to help fellow youth and students despite the similar situation and difficulties that we faced. We had to be creative in making this idea work. Since there was no public transport available, we rode our bikes to the student dormitories to gather the necessary data despite the distance. We drafted our plans and identified the partners we could work with. We decided to hold a donation drive. Through the drive, we received help from the private sector, we were even able to work with actress Bea Alonzo who personally cooked food packs for the students, we received facemasks that were sewn by women needle workers. We also set up a cultural platform to engage youth in the donation drive which we called “Tugtug Patak Patak!” It was a space for young people to share poetry and songs that they composed while they were in lockdown. The concert was able to garner enough funds for three batches of donation drives for the students. Truly, not even the lockdowns could confine the spirit of youth.

Youth-Led Action Research

Another one of the projects that we have worked on is called the Youth-Led Action



Research. We conducted this project in partnership with Education Network Philippines, a civil society network engaged in policy, advocacy, and partnership in different educational institutions in the country. We were also able to work with ASPBAE, a regional network that focuses on student empowerment. We have already done Youth-Led Action Research back in 2016, but during the pandemic we were able to adapt it. We documented the impacts of Covid-19 on the wellbeing and mental health of the marginalized youth and communities. We wanted to equip and empower community youth with knowledge and strategies on how to understand their situation and eventually come up with coping mechanisms to the challenges of the pandemic. We also want to strengthen their capacity to help their fellow youth and integrate youth voices in the local, national, and regional policy advocacy work in education. Unlike most formal studies, the researchers involved in this are the young members of the community themselves.

We capacitated these youth by training them on how to properly conduct research. The research has been very relevant because we utilize our findings to develop concrete actions. One such action is “Kalambag! Sa Online Classes, Handa na ba Kayo?” an online forum where the youth could speak about the issues and struggles that they face during the pandemic, while taking online classes, and while being in lockdown.

and internet connectivity. It is also a space for learners whose home environment is not conducive for learning. Learners whose parents and guardians do not have the capacity or are unable to provide adequate support and guidance in their lessons due to their work can join the learning hub as well.

The KCLH beneficiaries include 60 students from Pio del Pilar Elementary School, Aldana



Kaiskwela Community Learning Hub

The third program, that is still ongoing in response to the pandemic, is the Kaiskwela Community Learning Hub. The Kaiskwela Community Learning hub is a learning facility that provides a safe and conducive environment for learners with educational materials, necessary tools, devices, and equipment, as well as volunteer tutors who can guide and assist learners in their learning. The KCLH is however not intended as a substitute for formal education.

The learning hub caters to learners who have no access to educational materials, devices,

High School, EARIST, and PUP Laboratory High School. The community learning hub was made possible through key partnerships. One of which is the Office of the Vice President who assisted in working with the local government and provided necessary trainings to capacitate the volunteers. There is also the Local Government of Brgy. 425 Sampaloc Manila, who provided the learning facility, internet connectivity and extended facilities like restrooms and washing areas. We were also able to link with the private sector through Junior Chambers International, Manila who provided school supplies renovated the learning facility, provided

laptops and desktops for the learners and tutors, and even installed a solar panel for the learning hub. Teachers from the Pio del Pilar Elementary School were also partners who assisted us in delivering the learning modules to the students, preparing lesson plans, and determining competencies that we needed to refine in teaching the students. Even the parents and guardians of the learners are also our partners who have formed the Kaiskwela Parents Association and help us by identifying other potential beneficiaries, and making sure that we follow the most recent health protocols of the community. And finally, we have the Kaiskwela Volunteers who are really the heart of the program. We are there for the day-to-day operation of the learning hub, we pay for transportation from out of our own pocket and pack our own meals to support the learners at the community learning hub. We gathered so many stories, anecdotes, and learning moments from this experience.

Youth for Nationalism and Democracy Campaign Advocacies

First, we would like to call for the promotion of the digitalization of education in the new normal. We are going to have to learn how to live with Covid-19. We cannot wait for the pandemic to be over, for everyone to be completely vaccinated, before planning and implementing actions and solutions to ensure that quality education can be received by all. Therefore, the education must quickly adapt to the current situation, which is likely to go on for a longer term. When we say digitalization of education, we mean that all the requisites for distance learning should be



provided. Learners should be given access to the internet and the accompanying facilities for connectivity, free data or Wi-Fi should be provided for impoverished communities, and budget must be allocated to make this happen. For academic output performance, revisions must be done to the course design to ensure that they are tailored to the current mode of learning. Teachers must be retrained and provided with the necessary equipment and allowances to capacitate them in teaching in this new paradigm.

Of course, our campaign for the welfare of youth continues through upholding Student Rights and Welfare (STRAW) and the Magna Carta of Students, which encompasses the essential rights of youth and students. We continuously encourage young people to find ways on how they could contribute to society. Therefore, we are also promoting the Youth Agenda, where we uphold the students' rights for free association, autonomous student governance within schools, and an autonomous student publication.

And lastly, we stand for Academic Freedom. There will be no true learning and democratic education if academic freedom is only written in the constitution and not truly upheld in practice. This freedom needs to be safeguarded, because the youth are one of the targets of certain detrimental laws and policies. One such law is the Anti-Terrorism Law, through which young people have been red-tagged or are under the threat of being branded as such simply for speaking about the current situation of the education system, conditions in society, and calling for policies to address these issues. We call on everyone, from the academic institutions, LGUs, and even from CHED, to uphold Academic Freedom and abolish all laws which threaten it.



LOCAL INITIATIVES FOR ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOOD

Through my presentation I would like to introduce and discuss who the Filipino fisherfolks are, what our role in society is, the issues we faced during the pandemic, and how we face calamities brought by the changing climate.

The Philippines has a total of 220 million hectares of sea area, including the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). We also have 900,000 hectares of freshwater, which includes lakes, rivers, and reservoirs that are also part of the country's fisheries. Our waters are seven times bigger than the total land area of the Philippines (30 million ha).

There are around 2400 types of fish and aquatic creatures in the country and 95% of

which can be eaten. About 35-40% of this have commercial value, such as fish on the more expensive side like *lapu-lapu*, *tanigue*, and *talakitok*. We also had 450 thousand ha of mangrove area in 1920, which dropped to about 100-130 thousand ha in 2017. Moreover, we have large coral reefs and extensive aquatic plant resources. All of these make up our natural resources, they form their own ecosystem and sustain themselves within this environment without need for our human intervention. Our waters are also rich in mineral resources; we have natural gas, oil, and scientists continually discover new resources there. These resources are part of the West Philippine Sea and the Philippine Rise, which are currently in international dispute. These waters are rich in untapped



Establishing and strengthening our sector through cooperation and collective action at all levels is also a step we actively take. Through these, we can effectively determine which initiatives to begin to bolster our sector and in turn ensure the food security of our nation, which is part of our duty as fisherfolks.

PABLO ROSALES

National President

Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Mangingisda
PANGISDA-Pilipinas

resources which we should conserve and protect.

There are three subsectors in the Philippine fisheries. The first are the municipal fisheries, that we artisanal fisherfolks belong to. About 2 million registered fisherfolks are called artisanal fisherfolks, who fish in the waters about 1-15 km away from the coastline, with fishing equipment that weigh no greater than 3000 kg. Fishing can be described in two main ways or types. One is called the active fishing where fisherfolks look for fish and follow the fish to catch them. The other is passive fishing, which involves leaving fishing nets and fishing lines underwater to trap fish. There are over 24 main fishing areas spread across Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, like the Manila Bay and the Lingayen Gulf, to name a few. These areas are where artisanal fisherfolk commonly reside, who make up almost 80% of the capture fisheries.

The second subsector is the commercial fisheries. Under this, there are small-scale commercial fishers with fishing vessels weighing 3.1 to 20 gross tons, medium-scale fishers with 20.1 GT to 250 GT of fishing vessels and equipment, and the large-scale commercial fishers that have vessels of 250.1 to 1000 GT and above. The commercial fishers operate outside the municipal waters, about 15.1 km from the coast up to the country's EEZ. The Handliners are considered commercial fishers, and their operations can reach the West Philippine Sea and the Philippine Rise. These are fisherfolks who bring their small fishing vessels aboard a large vessel, travel to further areas like the West

Philippine Sea, then spread out in smaller fishing boats to catch fish like tuna.

Many of the small and medium-scale commercial fishers illegally operate within the municipal waters. These illegal commercial fishers include trawls, a type of fishing where the net is dragged on the seabed destroying and catching everything on its way. There is also *buli-buli* which is a type of net that you spread out to enclose a section of water and then you slowly drag it tighter until all the fish within the scope of the net are caught. Large or small, the fish are caught, and anything in the way of the net while it is being tightened gets destroyed.

The third subsector of Philippine fisheries is aquaculture. This involves fishponds, which could be made of dirt or concrete, fish pens made from bamboo and nets, or fish cages made of metal, buoys, and nets. Aquaculture needs large capital to build the ponds, purchase fish fry and feeds, up to the selling of the fish. Growing seaweeds, mussels, and oysters also belong to this subsector.

In the global context, the Philippine Fisheries ranked 5th in fish production, ranked 10th in aquaculture production of fish, and we are the 3rd largest producer of aquatic plants. This data shows just how rich and productive our marine and freshwater resources are. However, the current condition of the major fishing areas of the country is that all major fishing bays are heavily exploited including the Manila Bay, San Miguel Bay, Honda Bay, and Illana Bay; 10 of the 13 major fishing grounds in the Philippines are already

overfished. We may have high rankings in fish production internationally, but this is the reality and the current state of our fishing grounds.

If we look at the scale, the amount of resources, our international contributions to fish production vis-à-vis the state of our fishing grounds and our local fisherfolks, it makes you wonder who really profited off from our resources. Fisherfolks were the poorest among the basic sectors in the country, just behind the farmers in 2014. At present, we have switched places with the farmers and are now the 2nd poorest sector.

The situation of our artisanal fisherfolks truly reflect the actual condition of our fisheries—over-exploited and overfished. Illegal operation of commercial fishing vessels within the municipal waters is prevalent, and their destructive methods of fishing continue destroying the fish habitat and resources.

Fisherfolks face uncertainty in having safe homes and communities to reside in. Since fisherfolks primarily live near large bodies of water due to their livelihood, they are very vulnerable to hazards. Aside from this, they are also subjected to evictions due to various development projects, the privatization of coastal areas and the conversion of the coast and waters to different use.

The oceans also remain to be the dumping site for waste, chemicals, and garbage by establishments, large hotels, and even the surrounding communities.

Fisherfolks receive inadequate to entirely no



support from the government. This is clearly reflected by the impoverished state of our fisherfolks, their small fishing equipment, their fishing methods that are falling behind efficient standards. Some fisherfolks even use Styrofoam to use as makeshift boats just to catch fish for their family.

So what measures have the government undertaken to address these issues? The RA 8550 or the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 was passed into law to protect and rehabilitate the Philippine fishing grounds. It took a long time of lobbying and push from the fisherfolk sector to have this law passed. It is under this law that destructive fishing methods are recognized as unlawful. It is also this law that states commercial fishing cannot be conducted in municipal waters.

In 2014, the European Union issued a Green Card to the Philippines due to illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing (IUUF). This alarmed the government, which is why the Fisheries Code was quickly amended. The issuance of the Green Card from the EU



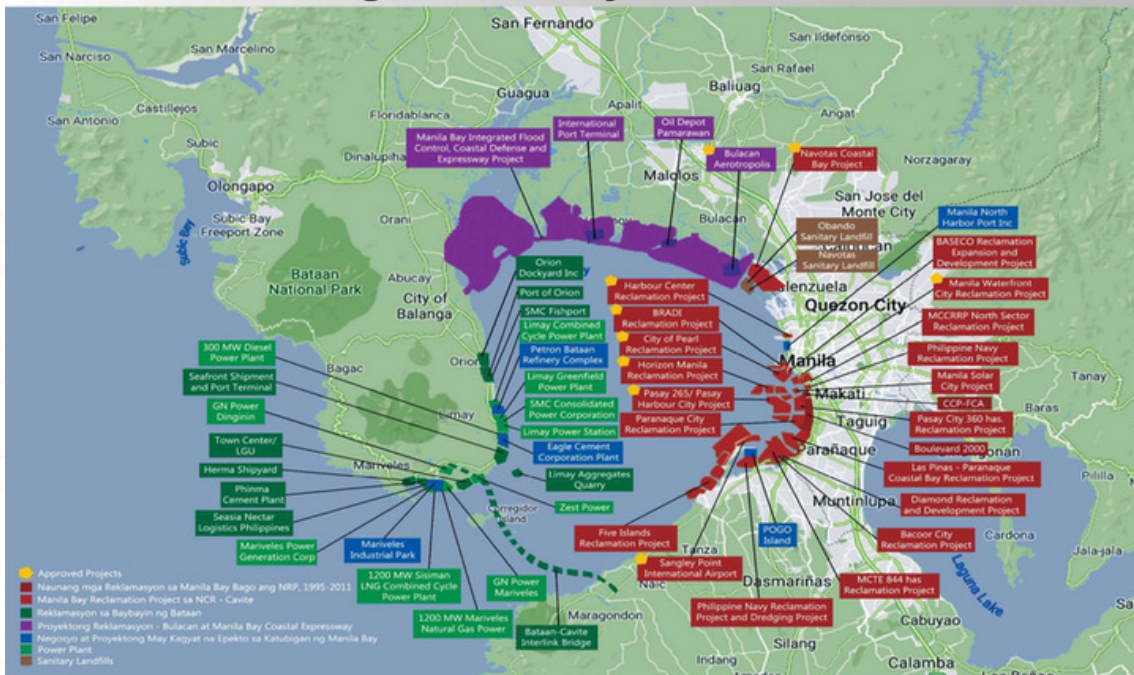
meant that if the Philippines does not successfully combat IUUF, the EU would not import fish products from the Philippines because they would endanger their citizens by providing them with food that came from illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. The following year, in 2015 RA-10654 was passed into law to amend RA 8550. The amendment raised the fines particularly to target commercial fishers and all those caught in IUUF and other violations. In spite of this law, illegal fishing continues to this day. Commercial fishers still use prohibited fishing methods and operate illegally within municipal waters.

The government has also put together the National Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (NFARMC), the Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (MFARMC), Local Development Council (LDC), and NAPC-Basic Sector to invite the participation of fisherfolks in making plans and policies for the fisheries sector.

Another program that the government has implemented that is impacting the fisheries sector is the Build, Build, Build program. The Build, Build, Build program sees to the speedy reclamation of municipal waters, removing fishing grounds for the fisheries sector. The communities living in coastal areas are also being evicted for infrastructure development projects under this program. The government has also opened municipal waters for offshore quarrying in order to collect sediment for the reclamation projects. Offshore quarrying is very destructive for our waters, it destroys habitats and fishing grounds.

The government has also failed in protecting the West Philippine Sea and the Philippine Rise and continually allows violation of the rights of Filipino fisherfolk by China. We all know the story, Filipino fisherfolks are being displaced from our own Exclusive Economic Zone by Chinese vessels. China unceasingly asserts claim to our waters and without repercussions from the Philippine government. This is a blatant violation of the rights of fisherfolks to sustain their livelihood and to utilize resources in our own EEZ. Aside from violating the rights of Filipino fisherfolks, this encroachment by the Chinese government is also alarming because it can serve as a precedent for China to acquire other territories.

Ang Manila Bay Reclamation



Salot sa Kabuhayan, Pangisdaan at Kalikasan

This is a map which shows just how many reclamation projects are planned for the Manila Bay. This means that there are many fishing grounds that the fisherfolks are going to lose. Many of these reclamation projects are already underway like the reclamation for the new Manila International Airport and the reclamation along the coasts of Bataan, NCR, and Cavite. These reclamation projects encroach on the space where water should be and are now inviting more disasters in the form of flooding.

Artisanal fisherfolks have suffered marginalization in the country for a very long time. The pandemic and the extended lockdowns only served to worsen their pre-existing condition. During the lockdowns, fisherfolks were not expressly forbidden to fish. Because their livelihood involved food provision, they were allowed to continue

fishing and were considered frontliners. Unfortunately, fisherfolks were not truly able to continue their livelihood during lockdowns. In Bicol, they were not able to sell their catch and the fish only ended in spoilage. And many fisherfolks experienced this, they could only sell within their community since the lockdowns prevented them from going to the town centers where the fish could have sold for better prices. With circumstances like this, it was impossible to make a living from fishing. Any money they put into going out to catch fish would be wasted if they could not sell their catch outside their communities to earn some profit. It was less costly for them to just stay at home and try to stretch whatever money they have made before the pandemic hit.

Government aid was not enough to help fisherfolks get by. Moreover, aid was very

delayed, and in some cases, fisherfolks did not receive any at all. There was also no clear government program that was set up to support fisherfolks during the pandemic. There was no plan whatsoever on how fisherfolks could be assisted economically and how our livelihood could be sustained. At one point, we called for the LGUs to purchase the catch of the fisherfolks to ensure income. The government could then deliver the fish to other areas to provide food. Nothing came out of this; the plan was never executed.

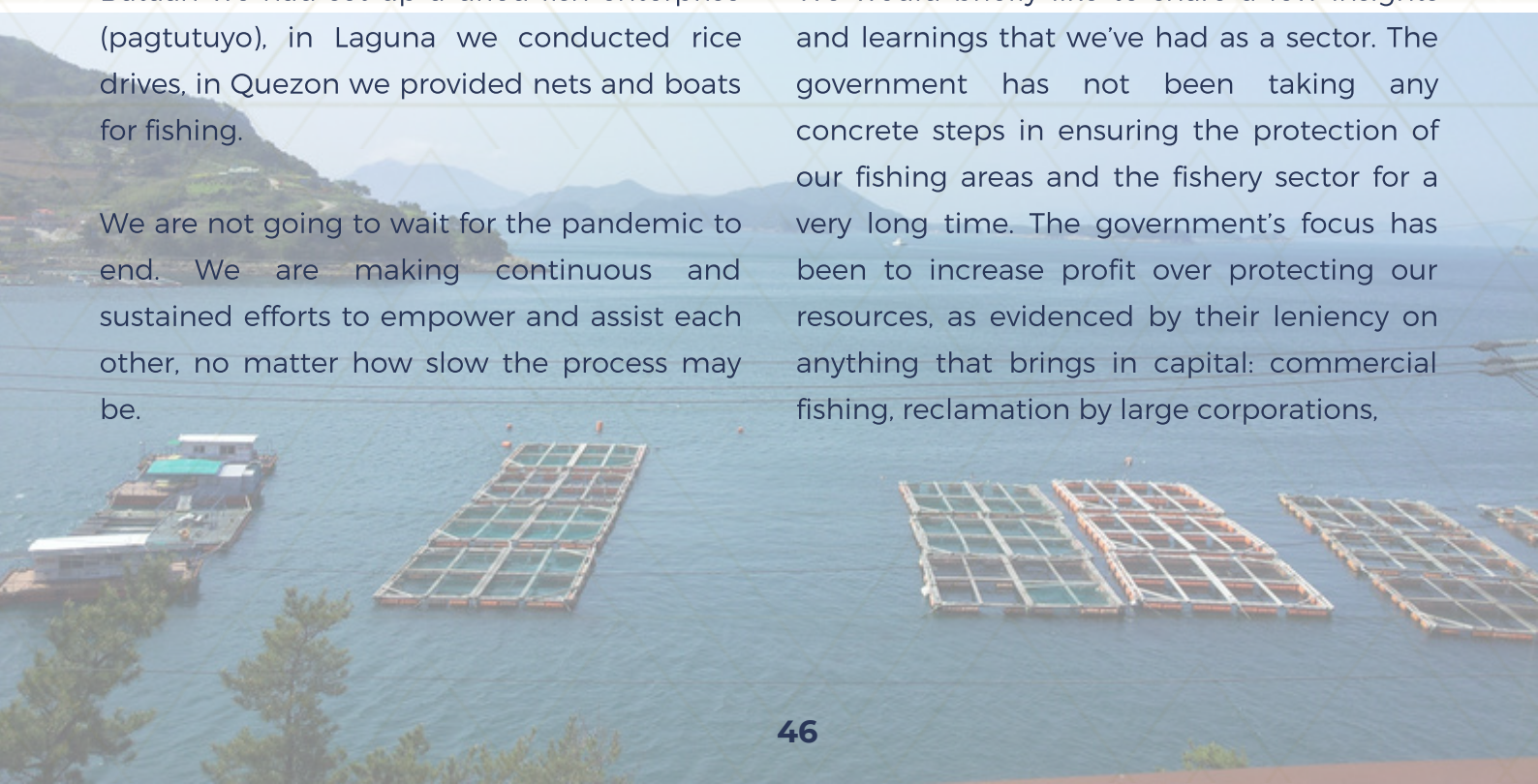
Since the sector received inadequate assistance from the government, PANGISDA, as an organization, took on initiatives to address issues brought by the pandemic and assist their fellow fisherfolk, whether they are members of the organization or are part of the community. PANGISDA looked for donors and formed linkages with key partners to provide small livelihood projects for the fisherfolks. We were able to set up livelihood projects in Bataan, Parañaque, Laguna, and Quezon to help fisherfolks get back on their feet or at the very least, ease their burdens. In Bataan we had set up a dried fish enterprise (pagtutuyo), in Laguna we conducted rice drives, in Quezon we provided nets and boats for fishing.

We are not going to wait for the pandemic to end. We are making continuous and sustained efforts to empower and assist each other, no matter how slow the process may be.

We also garnered support from NGOs, INGOs, Senator, and the Office of the Vice President to provide relief goods to fisherfolks who were not able to receive aid. We continue forming partnerships with people we could work with concerning the pandemic issues. We are glad and grateful to be part of this summit and that we were given a platform to share our situation as fisherfolks. Hopefully, we could build linkages here through the exchange of ideas and opinions that would eventually solidify into avenues for cooperation, and together we could come up with ways to uplift each other.

As an organization, we continue to hold capacity-building trainings and try to understand our socioeconomic conditions. Establishing and strengthening our sector through cooperation and collective action at all levels is also a step we actively take. Through these, we can effectively determine which initiatives to begin to bolster our sector and in turn ensure the food security of our nation, which is part of our duty as fisherfolks.

We would briefly like to share a few insights and learnings that we've had as a sector. The government has not been taking any concrete steps in ensuring the protection of our fishing areas and the fishery sector for a very long time. The government's focus has been to increase profit over protecting our resources, as evidenced by their leniency on anything that brings in capital: commercial fishing, reclamation by large corporations,



construction of large factories and infrastructures that end up polluting our waters, and the establishment of resorts in beautiful coastal areas that result in the prohibition of fishing and the fisherfolks in the area.

Protection of municipal waters and ensuring that fisherfolks can sustain their livelihood in our seas has been set aside and instead, essential waters, territories, and coastlines have been given to foreigners, businessmen, and the private sector. Fisherfolks have been deprived of their fishing territories, in the interest of capital.

Large bodies of water, which is our source of livelihood, are the dumping ground for waste from mines, factories, industries, establishments, piers, and communities.

As members of the fishery sector, we have identified duties and advocacies that we need to take on for our sector. We strive to establish unity in our sector, and create linkages with NGOs and the private sector to protect the environment and the rights of all involved in the fishery sector as well as to ensure the food security of the Filipino people. Through the strengthening of our sector, we can push for the overall advancement of our industry. Together we must protect our hard-earned rights and programs that have been passed into law. This includes protecting our communities and prohibiting all illegal and destructive fishing methods.



We must understand and learn about the issues within our sector, what is holding us back from development, and find solutions for our sectoral improvement. In line with this, we must oppose the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) which has been an unequal agreement that has been severely detrimental to fisherfolks. Imported fish and other fishery products are cheaper than our own local produce, resulting in the loss of income for Filipino fisherfolks. Finally, we must be at the forefront of fighting for the rehabilitation and protection of fishery areas and ensure the security from eviction of fisherfolk communities along coastlines.

MSME LOCALIZATION INITIATIVES

MSME Resilience: Collaborative Strategies and Innovative Approach

The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation is an alliance of businesses dedicated to building the disaster management capabilities of the private sector in the country. Currently, the PDRF works on all pillars of DRRM, from preparedness, to response, and recovery.

The PDRF is geared towards MSME disaster resilience. Enterprises and the MSME sector is one of the hardest hit by the pandemic, and even before the pandemic, this sector is already vulnerable to disaster. A single disaster can wipe out MSMEs.

With partners, the PDRF has been able to continue and strengthen their advocacy in business continuity plans for MSMEs. The National MSME Resilience Core Group is made up of various actors (PDRF, CSOs, Private Sector, and Government) that collaborate to address the main challenges that MSMEs face.

Private Sector-focused initiatives: Sikap MSME Resilience hub - business continuity or business recovery tips; Mentorship Programs for MSMEs; Development of tools and training materials on Disaster Resilience, guidebooks on public service continuity, business continuity comics and apps.

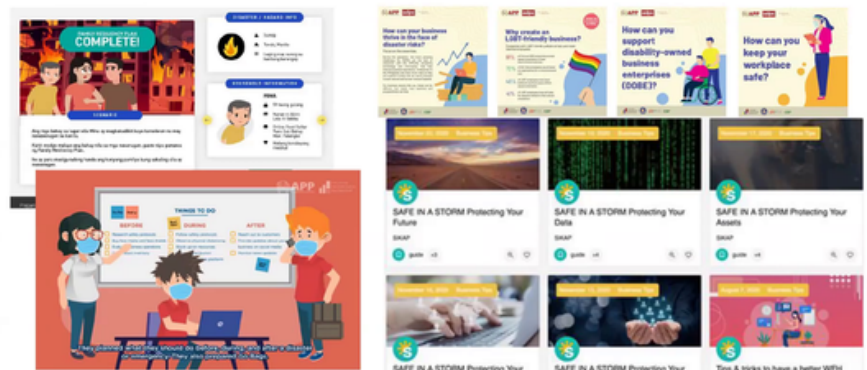


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ABIGAIL C. GUIANG**

Senior Business Continuity Program Officer
Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation

www.pdrf.org

MSME Disaster Resilience Training in the New Normal E-Learning (Synchronous and Asynchronous) on Business Continuity Planning for MSMEs



MSME LOCALIZATION INITIATIVES

Real's Food Products manufactures and sells native delicacies and products in Puerto Princesa, Palawan. Our vision is to be the leading producer/supplier of best quality, nutritious and affordable food products in the local as well as in the international market, with the great help of God by protecting the environment thereby opening more opportunities for those in need. We intend to provide the best quality, healthier, and delicious, food products in the market without damaging the environment and to make a difference in the lives of people in need through the ways of Christ.

Our ultimate customers are the ones who are health conscious, especially the middle and upper age. We identified them as the local and international tourists. Since we are experiencing the crisis of Covid-19, our

business model will be shifted to local customers within our locality.

Eventually, to cope with the lockdowns, we have also made our products available online and over food delivery apps. Our successful adjustment to the difficulties of the pandemic created job opportunities for the local community, which is essential in these trying times. The ingredients for the products are locally-sourced, from farmers in our community. These are raw materials and very easy to produce like coconut, banana, and taro.

We have attended trainings and seminars as well as created and innovated new products to help the business adapt. We share the knowledge and experience we have gained with fellow MSMEs in their community and their employees.

We never stop, we keep on moving. This is a major but temporary business set back. We just have to keep the faith, keep on praying and we will surely bounce back from this pandemic.

HOPE JOY M. PALERMO

Owner/General Manager
Real's Food Products



There's a lot of challenges in adapting our products to our business. Shifting our business models is not easy. Since we are in the island of Palawan and a tourist destination, our businesses here is very affected by the pandemic. It's been 1 year and 6 months, but I thank the Lord that He always sustains our business. Shifting and innovating new products and offering it to a new customer base, like now in our locality, is very interesting. We must be creative, innovative, and resilient in all we are doing. "If there is a crisis, there is an opportunity," and that is what we do.

We never stop, we keep on moving. This is a major but temporary business set back. We just have to keep the faith, keep on praying and we will surely bounce back from this pandemic.

We will overcome, we will survive. It forces us to be more creative, to be more innovative, to really plan the business. So, think of it that way. Have faith that God will see us through.



DUTY BEARER SUPPORT AND RESPONSIBILITY IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Today we have gathered nuggets of wisdom on how we can take part as humanitarian actors from different sectors and levels of governance to make a difference for the betterment of our nation and to alleviate the suffering of our fellow human beings.

I hope that this last presentation would be the last piece of the puzzle in achieving the goal of this summit -- which is to strengthen the drive and guide the localization initiatives in the country as we move forward. This of course relates to our ultimate goal of reducing suffering by ensuring or realizing climate and disaster resilience, and sustainable development.

Who are the duty bearers? According to the human rights-based approach, duty bearers

are those actors who have a particular obligation or responsibility to respect, promote and realize human rights and to abstain from human rights violations. Through the ratification of different rights treaties, the government automatically assumes the principal role of guaranteeing universal human rights. The government must take all necessary procedures to guarantee citizens rights. However, the government, its agents, along with non-state responsibility holders are considered duty bearers for realizing the rights of the people it governs. Originally, only those in government are considered to be duty bearers. But the term has expanded to include non-state actors. Now, we are all rights holders and duty bearers.



The rights holders must claim their rights from the duty bearers. On the other hand, the duty bearers must fulfill the obligations of their respective positions and corresponding duties to the rights holder.

ATTY. TECSON JOHN S. LIM

Director, Capacity Building & Training Service
Office of Civil Defense (OCD)

RELATIONSHIP OF DUTY BEARER & RIGHTS HOLDER



Generally, the relationship between duty bearers and rights holders is a reciprocated relationship. The rights holders must claim their rights from the duty bearers by participation in different platforms given by or provided for by duty bearers. And through these platforms, voice their interests, claim their rights, and hold duty bearers to account for their realization and enforcement of such rights.

I was listening to the message of Ka Pablo (Pablo Rosales) earlier, about the rights of fisherfolks. And he is right, the fisherfolks must fight for and protect their rights. And in turn, the government must give opportunities for issues to be aired out, like what we are doing right now.

On the other hand, the duty bearers must fulfill the obligations of their respective positions and corresponding duties to the rights holder. To better make their legal obligations or responsibility to fulfill their

rights, they must provide the rights holders with the right knowledge, build capacity or support to claim what they are entitled to. So as to ultimately become duty bearers themselves.

For DRRM, our primary platform as established under RA 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, is the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC). The law created the NDRRMC, and granted it with the overall policy-making, coordination, integration, supervision, monitoring and evaluation functions, on all things connected to disaster risk reduction and management. The NDRRMC is not made up of only one agency, it is a council chaired by the Department of National Defense Secretary, and vice-chaired by the secretaries of DOST, DILG, DSWD, and NEDA. But most importantly, the civil society organizations and private sector are now also involved in the decision-making processes in



45 Members

Chairperson:
Secretary, DND

Vice-Chairpersons:
Sec, DOST – Prevention & Mitigation
Sec, DILG – Preparedness
Sec, DSWD – Disaster Response
DG, NEDA – Rehab & Recovery

Executive Director:
OCD Administrator

Departments
Government Agencies
Financial Institutions
Quasi-Government Agency
Leagues
Civil Society Organizations
Private Sector



DUTY BEARER SUPPORT AND RESPONSIBILITY IN LOCALIZATION



policymaking as well as in operations, to give the whole of society approach life.

As we go down to the operational and tactical levels of NDRRMC, we can see that we have many duty bearers from different levels and sectors. We also have Response Clusters during disasters, following the international humanitarian response system. There are clusters for education, health, international humanitarian assistance when it is needed, logistics, management of the dead and missing, social protection, and others, which are led by different national agencies. Of course, it is not just these national agencies, there are many sub-members under every response cluster. We in OCD, our primary role is to be the operational coordinator as we run the emergency operations center, or the NDRRMC Operations Center.

Through the collaboration of CSOs and various stakeholders, the DRRM Network was formed taking some of the burden of

responsibility from the government and giving it back to different levels. Through the DRRM Network, localization was embedded into our DRRM system such that there should be formed in every region Regional DRRM Councils, in every province, Provincial DRRM councils, and in each level, there must be a DRRM council all the way down to the Barangay DRRM committees.

We've managed to set up councils and committees at different local levels. Our challenge now is to capacitate our barangay DRRM or community based DRRM systems, that we must all work together on.

Going now to *localization* itself. So how does everything play in localization? Localization from our point of view as the government is a devolution, balancing the power, and being people centered. It requires a multi-sectoral approach in program implementation that will now allow comprehensive and holistic analysis of risks or issues and form it into

actionable activities and programs that is contextualized or target-specific to a population or area or sector.

The issues in one area may not be the same as in another. Our last speaker is based in Palawan, and that area experiences a different set of hazards and are experiencing different conditions. And even within one province, different sectors would have different concerns; fisherfolks, farmers, business sectors, would each have different issues. And this is why the NDRRMC really needed to be multi-agency and multi-stakeholder, because it will be dealing with various concerns.

For us duty bearers here in the humanitarian sector, the following are the things that we can do to help our rights holders in DRRM. First and foremost is coordination and collaboration. Localization means involving not only just the local governments, but the communities. We must always work together, to get in touch with each other, whether it's national organizations or its local counterparts. We need to help each other, particularly the barangays or the people in the grassroots through proper lines of communication. Know the emergency contact numbers, get in touch with them, and get involved with their programs. We should understand each other's programs. We are here in NHSS to understand what programs and actions all of us are doing so that we can integrate them.

To fulfill our duties, we must adopt appropriate legislation or establish proper

policies that would allocate resources and place systems to assist in service delivery. In our development of policies, we must involve everyone. We developed our updated National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan together with the updated National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Framework to be locally grounded and contextualized, as well as globally aligned and responsive. This was done through painstakingly, really reaching out to the different communities and sectors through their representatives.

Of course, in further opportunities that we need inputs from different sectoral representatives, please join us. Capacitate yourself as well, so that you are well informed when you join the table. I was amazed by Ka Pabs' presentation earlier, he was able to discuss the history of the laws even up to international treaties and all the issues that the fisherfolks experience in relation to these. This is what we need—for the sectors and everyone to understand their own rights. But of course, we must also understand where the people we are talking to are coming from so that we can come up with the proper policies. It is sometimes not about getting what we want but creating a compromise. Because there are many factors involved, and it is important that we understand each other.

Aside from policy development, we also have plan development. There are local disaster risk reduction and management plans, public service continuity plans, contingency plans, response plans. All of these we must learn and understand. Once again, plan

development must be contextualized for each area because it is the members of the community who understand the best course of action. In both policy and plan development, it is important to work together to come up with a common plan, agree to it, and implement it together.

Earlier, we were talking about localization, now let us discuss the need for organizational and community resilience. To better provide services for our people, we must make sure that our organizations themselves are prepared for any eventualities or are also well versed in national policies. Formulate your public service or business continuity plans, prepare go bags for your employees, organize your disaster control groups, and prepare your own plans for your organization. We cannot fulfill our duties if we ourselves are not safe and ready to provide our services.

We must also strengthen our family and self-resilience. Localization involves and has to go down to the smallest unit of our society, which is the family. We have to make sure that each member of our families is resilient themselves. The chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

What do I mean by being resilient? We must understand hazards. Understanding hazards includes knowing what are the possible causes of disruption, emergencies or disasters that can possibly happen in our respective areas of abode. Understanding your environment will help you better prepare and give you a clear picture on the roles and responsibilities you as a duty bearer as well as

a rights holder would need to provide for yourselves and your people. When understanding hazards, we should also collaborate with specialists. After understanding hazards, we also have to be prepared. Prepare your go-bags, know where the evacuation centers are. We must be part of the solution and not part of the problem. To do so, we have to prepare ourselves as well.



Allow me to share some of the things that we have been doing. Which I hope that we can all connect to. The NDRRMC, the OCD, and our member agencies and partners like PDRF and CDP, have been conducting a series of information, education, and communication campaigns (IEC). Though we are limited by the pandemic on face-to-face interaction, we can nevertheless do provide information and education to our people. We have created localized IEC materials to provide information about our mandates, services, and assistance that we provide. We also have other forms of IEC, such as online videos, community-level campaigns.



When it comes to promoting disaster awareness, we also utilize social media. It is easily accessible to everyone. Localization entails upgrading the context of IEC platforms in public. We also have the DRRM knowledge center, a one stop shop, for DRRM and CCAM knowledge resources. And of course, as I was mentioning, we have capacity-building. For humanitarian actors it is important to capacitate our rights holders. And for rights holders, it is important for us to capacitate ourselves.

And finally going back full circle, when we talk again about rights holders and duty bearers, if we can be more accountable in fulfilling our obligation through localization, we can respond better to the people's needs. We can avoid cultural missteps, and we can make our services more relevant and engaging. While duty bearers have to be accountable and provide the services to the rights holders, it is also important for the rights holders or beneficiaries to perform their social and legal responsibilities to the state. We have to have a clear picture of what we want to happen. We must open our minds and hearts and determine where we can fit into the bigger picture.

It is important that we all work together and communicate with each other. As a learning insight, "Alone we can do so little and together we can do so much – Hellen Keller" and "I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things – Mother Theresa". It is only together that we can achieve the climate and disaster resilience that we all dream of and having a sustainable Philippines that will now lead us or at least provide us all with comfortable and safe lives.

SYNTHESIS AND CALL TO ACTION

In summing up what has transpired, this is the short version of the whole presentation.

In the morning, we talked about the different frameworks for localization. We began by defining what localization means for us. Like what Sir Butch (Rene “Butch” Meily) said, “In the end we have to rely on our own resources so that we can be ready for all emergencies.” In localization, we on the ground are the ones who will be taking action. As Asec Caraig (Asec Hernando M. Caraig Jr.) shared, it is important to have tripartite action between the government, private sector, and civil society organizations. Mr. Sisira (Sisira Madurapperuma)



MAYFOURTH D. LUNETA

Deputy Executive Director
Center for Disaster Preparedness

Know all the actors, all these actors must have meaningful interaction. We are facing many challenges, whatever the difficulties may be, we must overcome them. Don't give up, despite it being frustrating and tiring. Actions towards resilience must be realistic and sustainable.

and Mr. Edwin (Edwin S. Salonga) shared about the international and regional perspectives of localization. We need to be visionary, but at the same time be realistic. We must be accountable by maintaining standards, protocols, and processes. We must leave no one behind, by eradicating poverty in all forms and empowering the basic sectors. By doing that, you are truly shifting the power back to the communities. If the communities are provided with enough resources, they'll have more capacity to respond, prepare and mitigate for any eventuality. Ms. Loreine (Loreine B. Dela Cruz) shared the essence of shifting the power, which is to build communities to be resilient by putting the people at the center of humanitarian

action. People-led action to ensure timeliness and aptness of providing response. Communities take the lead in their own development without interventions from outside. Different actors have different capacities and roles to play and finding the best point of convergence allows us all to leverage each other's efforts.

Following the discussions on the frameworks of localization, we talked about different techniques to shift the power. One is adaptive and flexible programming (Alice Obrecht), where it was discussed that currently humanitarian actors practice reactive or anticipatory flexibility. We plan for options for response in advance in order to facilitate change quickly. However, there are changes that we cannot anticipate. Therefore, we can utilize adaptive approaches. Through adaptive management, changes can be made during implementation based on new learnings and information. By being flexible, we can have faster response to changing circumstances, more relevant and community-driven solutions, and we may be able to solve complex problems.

Another technique we must use to facilitate the shift in power is innovation. We know that we have limited resources, therefore we must come up with creative solutions to the DRR problems that we encounter. Ate Chie (Geanette Galvez) was able to share with us a number of these creative solutions which was achieved through the establishment of the Pinnovation Academy. Through the Pinnovation Academy, a series of community consultations reaching around 160 organizations was conducted across the country. The community leads the entire innovation process, giving birth to a new way of thinking that challenges the old system of doing things, making it flexible and adaptive.

We were also able to hear from local stakeholders how they were able to take action during the pandemic, how they were able to contribute to each of their respective sectors. Ma'am Nanette (Regina Antequisa) gave a comprehensive discussion on the capacity building and contextualization of the 14 basic sectors. In her discussion, she shared that with every disaster we face sets back our poverty alleviation interventions. That's why harmonizing interventions within all sectors and levels is essential. Participatory processes are essential in identifying tangible solutions. The basic sectors must be involved in the projects and interventions that are done to capacitate them. The rights and dignity of people should always be placed at the center.

Coming from the youth sector, Rosanna (Rosanna Villegas) shared that they organized to extend help to stranded students in selected universities in Metro Manila who were unable to go home to their provinces because they lack the means through a program called Sagip Kabataan. They also conducted a Youth-led Action Research wherein youth documented the impact of Covid-19 on their wellbeing as marginalized youth and members of poor communities. This was done to equip and empower community youth with knowledge and

skills to understand their own issues. And finally, they established the Kaiskwela Community Learning Hub - a learning facility that provides a safe and conducive learning environment for learners.

From the fisheries sector, Ka Pabs (Pablo Rosales), talked about the plight of the fisherfolk, discussing the marginalization and lack of adequate support and interventions to the artisanal fisherfolk, which ensure that the sector remains as one of the poorest in the country. Despite this, they organize and continue to fight for their rights and uphold their duty to provide food security for the country. During the pandemic, their organization, PANGISDA, organized livelihood projects for members to help them cope with the pandemic. They continue to build linkages, conduct collaborative efforts and coordination to determine apt collective actions to address the situation of the fisherfolk.

Ms. Hope (Hope Joy Palermo), is another example of a local stakeholder who adapted to the crisis in order to survive. Her business is Real's Food Products which manufactures and sells native delicacies and products. Their main market used to be local and international tourists buying "pasalubong". During the lockdowns, there were no tourists to market their products to, they had to shift to marketing their products to the locals. Eventually, to cope with the lockdowns, they have also made their products available online and over food delivery apps. Their successful adjustment to the difficulties of the pandemic created job opportunities for the local community, which is essential in these trying times. Ingredients for the products are locally-sourced, from farmers in their community. They have attended trainings and seminars as well as created and innovated new products to help the business adapt. They share the knowledge and experience they have gained with fellow MSMEs in their community and their employees.

Of course, these stories from our local actors are initiatives that we must continue to support and empower.

On the other hand, we also got to hear the side of the duty bearers from OCD. How do they meet the needs of their rights-holders? Duty bearers have many responsibilities, after all, and these responsibilities can be challenging to bear. Earlier, we heard many questions and concerns from our stakeholders and participants. And according to Director Tecson (Atty. Tecson John Lim), indeed we must ask these questions. In order to truly shift the power, we must make community and grassroots concerns known to the duty bearers so that together we can come up with fitting solutions. The OCD is also already involved in many DRRM efforts from preparedness and mitigation, response, and to recovery. And these efforts can continually be improved with inputs and participation from different sectors.

With these engaging and relevant discussions that we have raised throughout the day, what now are the actions that we should take?

KILOS

para sa tunay na localisasyon

ACTION

for true localization

KILALANIN

(Get to know). Know all the actors, especially in the basic sectors that make up our community. We should continue to fortify collective growth of communities in order to allow more effective local humanitarian action through self-sufficiency and wide ranges of actionable options. Know the community and uphold them, in order to manifest the local context of the projects we implement.

Never forget that the members of the community are not the only actors. There are partners in the private sector, in the government, and civil society organizations, and they all have a role to play in shifting the power.

SULONG

ang makabuluhang interaksyon. *(Advance meaningful interaction).* After getting to know all the actors, all these actors must have meaningful interaction. There must be a give and take among all the actors. Everybody should be accountable; we are responsible for the services we provide. Each and everyone's individual action must complement the others'. Everyone has a part in shifting the power.

LAGPASAN

ang mga hamon sa pamamagitan ng diskarte *(Overcome the challenges we are facing through resourcefulness).* We are facing many challenges: there are many existing frameworks that might no longer apply, there are collaborations that might not be working, or the very hazards and environment are the challenge itself. However, whatever the difficulties may be, we must overcome them. Together, we must find new and relevant frameworks to address new and developing issues.

WAG KAYONG SUSUKO

(Hey, don't give up). You might lose heart as you keep asking for power in the form of funding, resources, mechanisms, or participation in whatever projects you are trying to implement. Don't give up, despite it being frustrating and tiring. Optimize the processes and develop our organizations.

SUSTINIDO

(Sustainable). Actions towards resilience must be realistic and sustainable. How can we make it sustainable? It must be mainstreamed, there needs to be a continuous collaboration between the duty-bearers and stakeholders. And for there to be constant collaboration, we must continue to look for local resources, whether in the form of funding, policies, manpower, etc.

**Kilos is a Filipino word which means to take action.*

CLOSING REMARKS

To our distinguished participants, DRRM partners, contemporaries, representatives from the different sectors and levels of governance: national government agencies, local government units, the academe, civil society organizations, the private sector, corporations, human rights advocates, indigenous people's rights advocates, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

On behalf of the administrator of the Office of Civil Defense and Executive Director of the NDRRMC, our beloved undersecretary Ricardo B. Jalad. Allow me to start by congratulating and thanking the Philippine Preparedness Partnership or PhilPrep for organizing this year's National Humanitarian Stakeholders' Summit and of course the honor of closing this event.

This partnership, together with the Center for Disaster Preparedness representing the CSOs, the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation representing the private sectors, and of course OCD representing the government has once again shown great efforts on improving coordination and collaboration in this humanitarian ecosystem through this event. Likewise, we would like to recognize the role of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center for establishing the Asian Preparedness Partnership as a unique platform in maximizing humanitarian networks to better



ATTY. TECSON JOHN S. LIM

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After all, we are only as strong or as resilient as our weakest link. We can only be truly resilient as a nation if we are all resilient. That is a duty that falls upon each and every citizen.

prevent and mitigate, prepare, respond, and to rebuild people's lives from disasters.

I'm sure it is that which now led us to this occasion, a summit that showcases the actions and gains in our country's localization and shifting the power's initiatives. In the world humanitarian summit held last 2016 that aimed to generate commitment to reduce the suffering and deliver better service for the people caught in humanitarian crises and to demonstrate

support for a new agenda for humanity, it was emphasized that humanitarian action should be as local as possible and as international only when necessary. Or in other words, a country should aim to be self-sufficient in providing humanitarian actions within its own domain.

It is thus incumbent upon us to then work together in empowering people's lives and communities and giving them the opportunity to be part of the solution. To pursue the localization agenda of our country, we all need to start changing paradigms and instill the understanding that we must all be part of the solution to solve our nation and our respective problems. And that we need to collaborate and support each other to do so.

As I was mentioning, even for disaster victims, it is important that we do not call ourselves victims, but as survivors. Why survivors? Because it is more empowering. We should veer away from the victim mentality. Each one of us has their own strength, and we must all tap into this strength, to shift that power.

Let us learn to listen to the needs of the various sectors and communities, learn how to agree to disagree, and not to take things personally, so as to allow us to work together. Like Mayfourth shared earlier, even though it may be frustrating, we must never give up. Which stood for O in KILOS, "*O, wag tayong susuko* (Hey, let's not give up)".

It takes time to build partnerships, and it takes time to build coordination. But with

sustained efforts backed up by open minds and hearts, we can. I believe that we can do so. Promoting localization requires us to advocate for activeness and inclusivity of local communities in DRRM and CCAM planning and implementation so as to be true to the principles of leaving no one behind, as well as the right to self-determination.

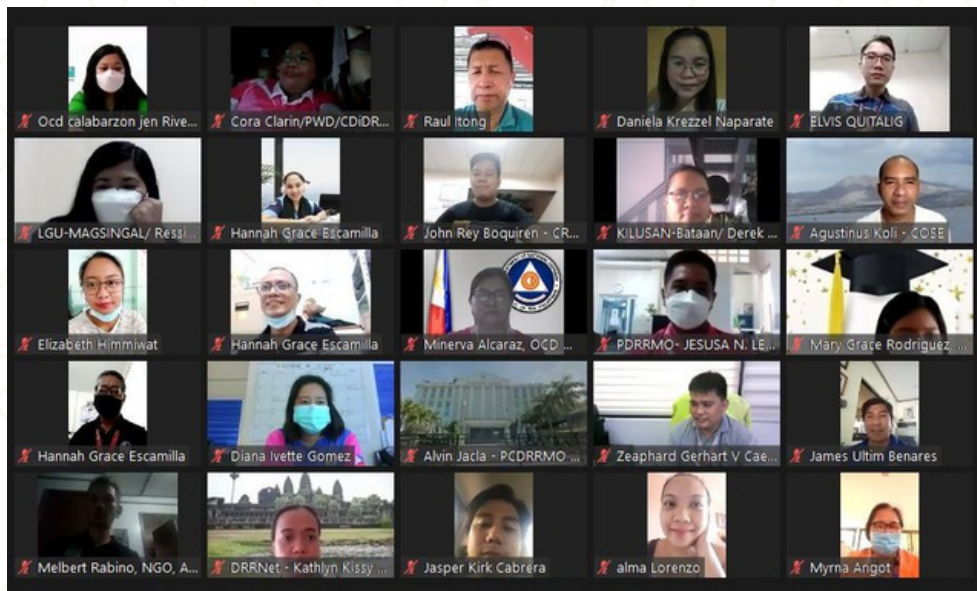
In this pandemic, localization assists us by ensuring that public health messages are consistent, context and evidence based, and most importantly, understandable. As well as ensuring our respective committees are safe by enforcing minimum public health standards and adherence to quarantine protocols within the same. It really is up to us, the spread and preventing the spread of the virus is also because of us.

As for the even bigger threat than this pandemic, which is of course climate change, it is within our localities and communities that adaptation actions must take place. Through innovations and *diskarte* (resourcefulness). It is the members of the community who know and understand their own context and circumstances. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to empower communities to undertake community-sensitive actions to adapt to the changing climate.

Now, as for climate change mitigation, which we should not forget, which now includes environmental protection, let us also be part of the solution by consciously changing. Or help them be part of the solution by consciously, purposively changing their ways

ANNEX

Photos of Participants and Organizers



Photos of Participants and Organizers



Photos of the Filipino Sign Language (FSL) Interpreters



Ms. Aimee Gabrielle, FSL Interpreter



Ms. Ember, FSL Interpreter