Philippines Case Study

Urban Disaster Response

2019

GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR URBAN CRISES

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The authors would like to thank all the interviewees who generously gave their time to share their experience in the interviews. Without their participation, this case study would not have been possible.

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The Global Alliance for Urban Crises (the 'Alliance') is a global, multi-disciplinary and collaborative community of practice. The Alliance acts as an inclusive platform bringing together local governments, built environment professionals, academics, humanitarian and development actors, working to arrive at systemic change in the way we enable cities and urban communities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to urban crisis.

Launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, the Alliance is guided by the Urban Crisis Charter, which outlines four main commitments made by its members: 1) Prioritize local municipal leadership in determining response to urban crisis that is aligned with development trajectories and promotes the active participation of affected people – with special attention to the participation of women – and other key urban stakeholders; 2) Adopt urban resilience as a common framework to align human rights, humanitarian and development goals; 3) Manage urban displacement as a combined human rights, development and humanitarian concern; and 4) Build partnerships between city, national, regional and global levels across disciplines and professions, as well as ensure the involvement of local government and professional associations.

About this Document

This document is part of a series of knowledge products produced through the Alliance Working Groups, with financial support from EU Humanitarian Aid. The series are key steps in driving an agenda of change, when it comes to: 1) developing a better shared understanding of the complexities of urban crises; 2) strengthening engagement between local governments and humanitarian and development actors in particular; 3) developing a systems approach to protracted urban displacement; and 4) building urban resilience in the face of crisis. In addition, the Alliance also supported the development of an Urban Competency Framework, an HPN Good Practice Review, and a case study on urban disaster response in the Philippines.

Members of all Alliance constituencies in different geographic regions and a broad range of experts, have been engaged through joint consultations, and directly informed and contributed to the content of the Knowledge Products. Visit www.urbancrises.org to access the entire series.

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GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR URBAN CRISES

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Summary

The Republic of the Philippines is a middle-income country that is fast urbanizing. It is located in a geographically high-risk position regarding natural disasters – typhoons, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and landslides frequently occur and result in loss of life, damage to property and major disruption. In addition, there are areas where armed conflict periodically breaks out, again greatly affecting the civilian population and infrastructure.

This case study set out to present how Filipino emergency responders work following a disaster. One aim was to look at the correlation between the competencies and proficiencies presented in the Urban Competency Framework for Humanitarian Action (UCF) and what local skilled emergency responders felt were important attributes for responding to emergencies in the Philippines. This was achieved by conducting a desk study and interviews with key people from local organizations active in emergency response. Interviews were conducted with a range of responders, from senior members of organizations to grassroots responders working at the community level.

The desk study demonstrated that due to the propensity of emergencies in the Philippines, there is a well-developed response system with support from local and national government, NGOs, the Red Cross, the UN, religious institutions and the private sector. All of these organizations have mechanisms to allow skilled staff to respond to emergencies whether within their normal work location, or in other parts of the country, however formal emergency deployment rosters are not common. Preparedness plays a critical role in disaster management in the Philippines and has a high priority.

Interviewees stated that there is a good deal of similarity between urban and rural emergency response in the Philippines, possibly due to the relatively high population density in both urban and rural areas and the well-developed system of local government. Interviewees noted some challenges unique to urban response, including the diversity of populations within small sections of an urban area, the mobility of people in cities, the high number of organizations working in these areas during disaster response, and the potential impacts on centers of commerce and supply chains.

During the interviews it was clear that Filipino emergency responders are well trained and often have years of experience in their sectors. Training in coordination, information management and humanitarian standards/principles could benefit even those who are experienced, as these areas were noted as particularly challenging.

When asked about the competencies and proficiencies in the UCF, there was consensus with Filipino emergency response. No contradictions were recorded in any of the interviews. The timing of several activities was a possible disparity, in that many would be most effective if done as part of preparedness planning, as already happens in the Philippines. In drafting this report it was sometimes difficult to match an interviewee's response to a particular competency, suggesting there is overlap between proficiencies, or that they could be relevant to multiple domains. It was clear that some competencies were considered more important than others, which could be due to the Philippines context, or could indicate 'blind spots' in awareness and highlight a need for further sensitization.

On the basis of this case study, it seems that the UCF is a comprehensive tool for guiding urban emergency response and drawing attention to training needs. In order to be used effectively it may be that some competencies are prioritized over others based on the context, and that there is localization around the timing of activities.

Tables of acronyms

General acronyms

4W's	Who, What, Where, When
AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
CDP	Center for Disaster Preparedness
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standards
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
ECHO	European Union Humanitarian Aid
EOCs	Emergency Operation Centers
ERP	Emergency Response Program
GAUC	Global Alliance for Urban Crises
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery
HUCs	Highly Urbanized Cities
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICS	Incident Command System
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IMT	International Monitoring Team
INFORM	Index For Risk Management
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRR	Implementing Rules and Regulations
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LGU	Local Government Unit
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
NDRP	National Disaster Response Plan
NDRRMP	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan
LDRRMP	Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Plan
PAR	Philippine Area of Responsibility
PDRA	Post Disaster Rapid Assessment
PIHAC	Philippines International Humanitarian Assistance Cluster
RDANA	Rapid Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis
TLS	Temporary Learning Space
UCF	Urban Competency Framework for Humanitarian Action
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Philippines government department acronyms

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
APSEMO	Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
COA	Commission on Audit
DepEd	Department of Education
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DOH	Department of Health
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
DSWD	Department of Social Works and Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
MMDA	Metro Manila Development Authority
NDCC	National Disaster Coordinating Council (now NDRRMC)
NDRRMC	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
LDRRMO	Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office
OCD	Office of Civil Defense
OPARR	Office of the Presidential Assistant for Rehabilitation and Recovery
PNP	Philippines National Police
TESDA	Technical Educations and Skills Development Authority

Introduction

Basis for the case study

This report presents a case study of disaster response in the Philippines and assesses the proficiencies considered essential by local emergency responders against the Urban Competency Framework for Humanitarian Action (UCF). It was commissioned by RedR UK through funding provided to the International Rescue Committee from EU Humanitarian Aid (ECHO). It is part of a wider project for the Global Alliance for Urban Crises (GAUC) entitled `Developing the skills to meet the needs of urban populations in crises through the alliance of urban responders'.

The Urban Competency Framework for Humanitarian Action (UCF)
The UCF presents non-sector specific proficiencies for people involved in humanitarian action (you can download the full UCF at www.redr.org.uk/UCF). It aims to improve the effectiveness of urban humanitarian action by providing a guide to the competencies required. It is intended to be a tool for learning and to promote collaboration between stakeholders, including local authorities, international responders, civil society organizations and the private sector.

Defining urban

We all have a sense of what we consider to be urban or rural, however a universal definition is not readily available[1]. The UCF works on the premise that urban environments are commonly understood to have:

- high population density
- concentration of administration structures, such as government and hospitals
- presence of essential services and infrastructure (paved streets, water and waste systems, electricity, etc.)
- cash-based economy
- higher proportion of built-up areas
- diverse livelihoods and income opportunities (not only/ mostly agriculture)
- complex, interdependent social pressures
- defined municipal/administrative boundaries.

There will always be exceptions to these criteria; however they form the basis for understanding the context of the UCF and this study. The case study highlights what Filipino emergency responders consider to be `urban' and some of the unique challenges an urban setting brings.

About the Philippines

People and place
The Republic of the Philippines, commonly known as the Philippines, is located in south-eastern Asia (see map in Annex 1) between the Philippine Sea and the West Philippine Sea (also referred to as the South China Sea). The Philippine archipelago is on the Pacific Ring of Fire and has a tropical maritime climate, experiencing the north-east monsoon from November to April and the south-west monsoon from May to October. It is comprised of over 7,000 islands (many of which are not inhabited) that are commonly split into three geographical areas; Luzon in the north; the Visayas in the center; and Mindanao in the south. There is a total land mass of almost 300,000 square km with a current population of over 100 million people. The population density is ranked 39th in the world at 311 people per square km^2.

According to the World Bank, the Philippines is one of the fastest urbanizing countries in East Asia and the Pacific. In 2010, the urban population was 45.3%, or around 40 million people[3] (Philippines Statistics Authority). Metro Manila (a conglomeration of 16 cities and one municipality) has a total population of over 13 million people and is growing at a rate of 1.59% annually[4]. The economy of the Philippines is comprised of: services 59.8%; industry 30.6%; and agriculture 9.6%. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is low at US$8,300; however the rate of growth is high at almost 7%. Around one fifth of the population lives below the poverty line[5].

Governance

The Philippines is administered from the national capital Manila. There are 17 administrative regions in which there is representation and service provision from the national government. The local government administrative system of the Philippines is three-tiered, consisting of: 1) provinces and highly urbanized cities* (81); 2) component cities† (136) and municipalities (1,489); and 3) barangays (42,045)‡ , as the smallest administrative unit (See Figure 1)§ . Decentralization legislation adopted in 1991 resulted in the devolution of considerable autonomy and sources of finance to local governments. This is an important precondition for adequate service delivery, given the archipelagic nature and geographical dispersion of the country. The capacity to carry out this mandate varies considerably across local governments and regions, and fragility in some areas—particularly in the conflict-affected areas of Mindanao—has affected service delivery[6].

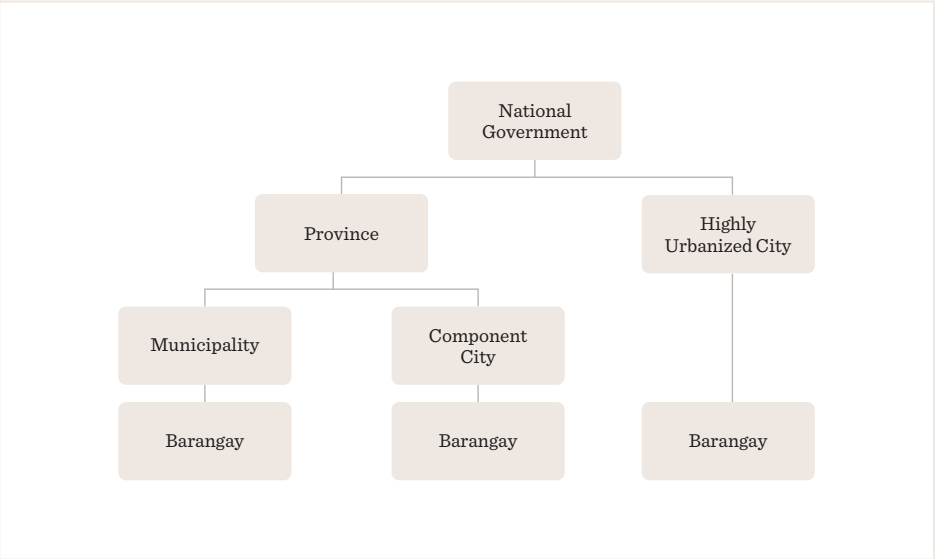

Figure 1. Philippines governance structure. (Source: Atienza, 2006[25])

Disaster risks

In the Philippines, disasters can affect any part of the country, vary widely in nature and can seem relentless at times. ThinkHazard!, a web tool produced by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) to highlight risks and promote Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), indicates that there is a high risk (the highest category) of flooding, earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, volcanic eruption, cyclones, water scarcity, and wildfire[7]. Based on the United Nations

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* Highly Urbanized Cities (HUC): Cities with a minimum population of two hundred thousand (200,000) inhabitants, as certified by the Philippine Statistics Authority, and with the latest annual income of at least fifty million pesos (approx. US$1 million) based on 1991 constant prices, as certified by the city treasurer.

† Administrative data as of 30 September 2018. From https://psa.gov.ph/classification/psgc/. Accessed on 10 December 2018.

‡ Component Cities (CC): Cities which do not meet the preceding requirements are deemed part of the province in which they are geographically located. If a component city is located along the boundaries of two or more provinces, it shall be considered part of the province of which it used to be a municipality.

§ Cities are classified according to average annual income based on the previous four calendar years.

Index for Risk Management 2018 (INFORM)[8], the Philippines is considered to be a `very high risk' country, ranking number 7 across the world in terms of hazards. Disasters can be complex, for example, in 2006, the Mayon volcano erupted, depositing ash that became a fatal mudslide killing over 1,000 people following high rainfall from a typhoon[9].

There were 58 disasters in the country documented on ReliefWeb between 2010 and 2018. The list includes large-scale emergencies such as Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Yolanda) in November 2013 which affected 14 million people across nine regions. Typhoon Haiyan was preceded by an earthquake in October 2013 that impacted 1.3 million people, and was followed by a tropical storm in the south of the country in January 2014 that affected over a million people[10].

Armed conflict has also disrupted life in the Philippines. In 2013, around 100,000 individuals were displaced in Zamboanga City when rebel groups held the entire city hostage for 17 days. Marawi City also faced a similar consequence when rebel groups claiming to be a part of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) started a firefight with government forces which began in 2017 and ended in 2018. This crisis went on for five months, displacing around 200,000 individuals, with a reported 1,200 deaths from both the militants and government forces. This was considered to be the longest and deadliest urban armed conflict in the history of the Philippines. The frequency, magnitude and variety of emergencies have resulted in a highly developed response system in the Philippines.

Case study objectives

This case study had two principle objectives:

1. Present the disaster response mechanisms of the Philippines
2. Consider whether the UCF represents the competencies and proficiencies demonstrated by local responders to urban disasters in the Philippines.

Interviews conducted for the case study aimed to engage with humanitarian responders in the Philippines to understand how disasters are managed in a disaster-prone country. The focus was on interviewing Filipino responders to understand local priorities; however international organizations operating in the Philippines were also invited to participate. The intention was to speak to a broad spectrum of people who have been involved in disaster response, from local and national government agencies, local non-governmental organizations, the UN and the private sector.

The hope was that interviewees would provide examples from their own experience that would highlight the critical proficiencies for effectively managing an urban emergency.

Methodology

A desk study was conducted to gather general information about disaster response in the Philippines. The desk study looked at local disaster response mechanisms with a focus on urban disasters, some of the key emergencies of recent years, and lessons learned.

Following the desk study, a list of organizations involved in disaster response was drafted, and organizations were approached to participate in one-to-one interviews. People were asked either to respond on a personal level or to represent their organization. Participants were invited from a variety of organizations, including national, regional and local government, UN organizations, non-government organizations and the private sector. The list of those invited is presented in Annex 2. Of the organizations approached, 13 were available for interview during the study period. Interviews were granted by:

- 5 x local government departments, 4 of which have a remit of emergency response
- 3 x local civil society organizations
- 2 x UN agencies
- 1 x private organization
- 1 x national government representative
- 1 x INGO

The timing of the study coincided with an ongoing response to a major typhoon which may have prevented some otherwise willing participants from being available.

An interview guide was formulated to support interviews (see Annex 3). The questions were drafted to provide background on the person/institution to understand their experience in disaster response. The questions then focused on the competencies highlighted in the UCF. The guide was not intended to be followed rigidly; however it provided a template for the interview which was conducted to allow further discussion on any area of interest.

Interviewees were not shown the UCF. The intention was to elicit unprompted responses to the questions, rather than leading participants into agreeing/disagreeing with the UCF.

Desk study

The desk study identified the key domestic policies and legislation relating to disaster response in the Philippines. The mechanisms for instigating emergency response, and the methods of coordinating were explored. The desk study also looked at some of the most recent and significant emergencies varying from natural hazards to armed conflicts. Some of the challenges faced by local responders to these emergencies are presented below.

Disaster response mechanisms in the Philippines

The Philippines is a middle-income country with one of the fastest-growing economies in the Asian region. It has a well-defined legal structure that is conducive to promoting accountability and transparency. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is well embedded in both local and national policies. DRR is also mainstreamed in programs, development planning and with different government departments addressing every aspect of disaster risk reduction and management[11].

Policies and legislation

Key policies relating to disaster management in the Philippines are the Republic Act 10121: National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Law (RA 10121) and the Republic Act 10821: Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act (RA10821). National disaster response plans are an integral part of disaster management.

Republic Act 10121 provides the legal basis and the mandate for the local government in its accountability pertaining to disaster risk reduction. The law has Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) which outline how national government agencies are expected to work unilaterally with each other; and how the national government down to the local government units (LGU) and vice-versa are tasked to perform DRRM responsibilities. It establishes the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (LDRRMO) at all levels: province, city and municipality. The Office is responsible for designing, programming and coordinating DRRM activities in the Local Government Unit (LGU) and in formulating a comprehensive and integrated Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (LDRRMP).

The Republic Act 10821, the latest law related to DRRM, mandates the provision of emergency relief and protection for children before, during, and after disasters and other emergency situations. It is the country's national policy to protect the particular needs of children before, during, and after crisis. This legislation, passed in 2016, requires all responders to undergo child-centered training, particularly those in the communities, schools and rescue. The IRR outlines necessary response activities in temporary learning spaces and schools, including the increased participation of children in DRR planning and post-disaster needs assessments.

In 2017, the use of the National Disaster Response Plan (NDRP) was agreed for Hydrological and Meteorological (Hydro-Met) hazards, Earthquakes and Tsunamis, and Consequence Management for armed conflicts. The NDRP prescribes how the disaster response will be conducted, as augmentation or assumption of response functions to the disaster affected LGUs. The NDRPs include identifying the roles and responsibilities of organizations/institutions during disaster/emergency phase. The NDRP is used by: the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC); Post-Disaster Rapid Assessment (PDRA); the Emergency Response Program (ERP) Core Group; National Response Cluster Leads and Members Offices; and, the National Incident Management Team, including all private and volunteer groups acknowledged by the NDRRMC.

The NDRP on Hydro-Met hazards was drafted in 2014 and revised in 2016. It is used by the different Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs) of various government agencies. In cases of Hydro-Met hazards, the activation of the NDRP is triggered by: (1) a result of the Emergency Response Program (ERP); (2) a declaration of the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 2; (3) Red

Alert Status and Level 2 Response Action; (4) a result of a Rapid Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis; and (5) as directed by the Chairperson of the NDRRMC. In cases of terrorism, the same process is followed as for Hydro-Met emergencies.

For earthquake and tsunamis, the activation of the NDRP is triggered by; (1) instruction from the Vice-Chairperson for Response based from the official reports from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) and/or an advisory from the NDRRMC; (2) PHIVOLCS provides a provision for an automatic activation to the Vice-Chairperson for Response, if the earthquake is equal or greater than Magnitude 6.5 or Intensity VI, and if the earthquake and tsunami is equal or greater than Magnitude 8.0; (3) red alert status and Level 2 Response Action; (4) RDANA results; and, (5) as directed by the Chairperson or Executive Director of NDRRMC.

Procedure

The highest policy-making body on matters of disasters in the country, NDRRMC, advises the president on efforts in disaster management undertaken by the government and the private sector. The NDRRMC is replicated at the regional and local levels, and these bodies function substantially like the NDRRMC, operating and utilizing resources at their respective levels[12].

The structure of the NDRRMC is replicated at the regional and local levels thus linking all disaster-related offices and LGUs which have specific roles to play in disaster risk reduction and management. At present, there are 18 Regional DRRMCs (RDRRMC) and each local government would have their own DRRMCs. The regional councils are tasked to coordinate, integrate, supervise and evaluate the activities of the local councils. They are also responsible for ensuring disaster-sensitive regional development plans and, in case of emergencies, convene the different regional line agencies and concerned institutions and authorities (RA No. 10121).

The LDRRMO is mandated to facilitate and support risk assessment, consolidate local disaster risk information and operate a multi-hazards warning system. In terms of capacity building and knowledge management for DRR, the law stipulates that the LDRRMO shall organize and conduct training and orientation, information dissemination, public awareness and ensure the maintenance and provision of human resources, equipment and facilities for DRRM. Based on RA 10121, in times of emergencies, the LDRRRM is responsible for responding and managing the adverse effects and in ensuring the recovery.

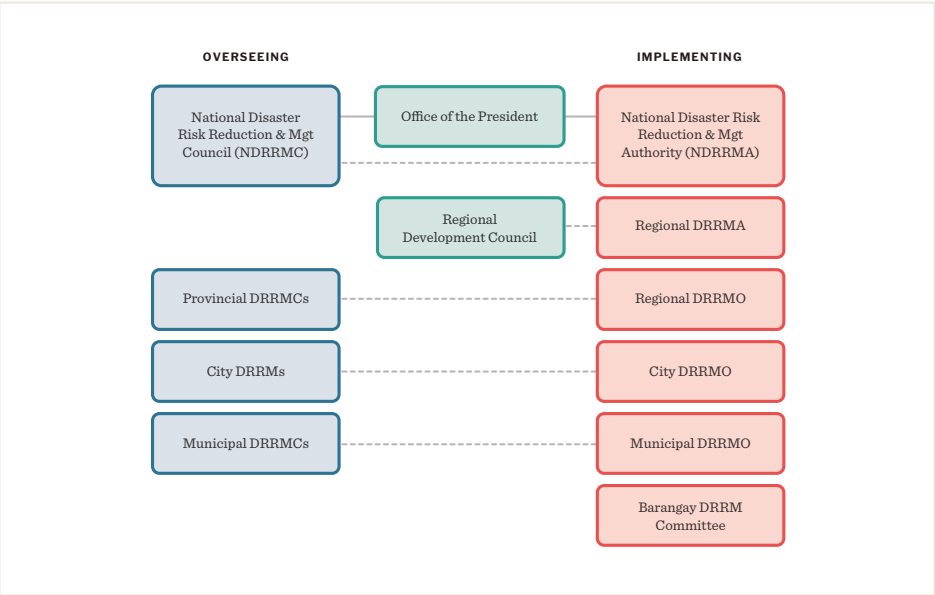

Figure 2. DRRMC structure from the national to the local government units (Source: NDRRMC)

RA No. 10121 mandates the LDRRMC to take the lead in preparing for a response and recovery from any disaster and its effects wherein the following criteria are observed:

- the Barangay DRRMC, if a barangay is affected
- the City/Municipal DRRMC, if two or more barangays are affected
- the Provincial DRRMC, if two or more municipalities and cities are affected
- the Regional DRRMC, if two or more provinces are affected
- the NDRRMC, if two or more regions are affected.

Figure 2 reflects the current structure of the NDRRMC. Based on the law, the NDRRMC and intermediary LDRRMCs support the LGUs that are in the frontline and have the primary responsibility of responding to a disaster. The NDRRMC and LDRRMCs set the coordination mechanisms and policies for the private sector and civil society groups.

Coordination structures

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) is mandated, through the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Law of 2010, to create an enabling environment for the government at all levels and a culture of continued accountability and communication with the people affected by a disaster. Chaired by the Secretary of National Defense and supported by the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), NDRMMC is responsible for creating policies, coordinating and overseeing DRRM activities, and monitoring and evaluation. The following departments then oversee the following thematic areas:

- Preparedness – Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)
- Response – Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)
- Prevention and Mitigation – Department of Science and Technology (DOST)
- Rehabilitation and Recovery – National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

The cluster approach in the Philippines is consistent with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) clusters through the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC now NDRRMC) Circular No. 5, Series of 2007. Originally, there were 16 clusters under the old Philippine disaster management system. When RA 10121 was enacted and the NDRPs were created, a Response Cluster was formed which commands 8 sector-specific clusters to facilitate coordination needed in the provision of the humanitarian assistance. The cluster approach proved effective in providing assistance to the affected population during response operations.

The objective of the adoption is to have a seamless coordination system with the international humanitarian assistance Cluster Groups during disaster response operations. Activation of the response cluster is determined by the NDRRMC, and its organizational structure is shown in Figure 3. Philippine response clusters recognize the international humanitarian cluster structures and consider international lead agencies as their co-lead; e.g. the Department of Education, UNICEF and Save the Children are co-leads for the Education Cluster, the Department of Health and WHO are co-leads for Health, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the IOM for Camp Coordination and Camp Management.

There is an established presence of international development and humanitarian organizations in the Philippines. Due to the growing complexity of disasters in the Philippines, international organizations have been providing humanitarian aid when the President calls for international assistance. In past emergencies, foreign responders worked directly with local governments without coordinating effectively with the national government. To address this concern and as a lesson learned during Typhoon Haiyan, the Philippine International Humanitarian Assistance Cluster (PIHAC) was created. PIHAC is the primary coordinating body and provides the institutional framework and mechanism for coordination of incoming and outgoing international humanitarian assistance and response efforts as a result of disasters, whether natural or human-induced[13]. The PIHAC is led by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and handles all international support including financial donations, international humanitarian workers, and in-kind donations.

Urban disasters

For the past decade, cities across the Philippines have seen the worst of both natural and man-made disasters. An overview of some of the most catastrophic urban disasters in the Philippines is presented below.

Typhoon Ondoy (Ketsana) - 2009
From 25 to 26 September 2009, Typhoon Ondoy struck south-west Luzon in the Philippines, causing torrential rainfall. Within 24 hours, 455mm of rain fell in Metro Manila. While Typhoon Ondoy was exiting the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) on 27 September, Typhoon Pepeng (international name: Parma) entered the PAR, affecting some parts of Luzon. A week after, Typhoon Quedan (international name: Melor) hit almost the same parts of the country. But it was Typhoon Ondoy which brought massive casualties in Metro Manila.

The National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC; now NDRRMC) reported that a total of 239 barangays in Metro Manila were flooded. Marikina City was most heavily affected by flood waters ranging from knee/neck high to rooftop deep. 37 main roads within the metropolis were unpassable. An estimated 993,227 families—or 4,901,234 individuals—were affected, with about 80% from Metro Manila. NDCC reported that 464 died as a result of the storm. In 9 Metro Manila hospitals, the Department of Health (DOH) recorded a total of 383 cases of leptospirosis just a few weeks after Ondoy caused flooding in Metro Manila, Calabarzon, and central Luzon.

Based on the report of the national government, in urban areas it is the poor who are concentrated in informal settlements in at-risk areas such as floodplains. The storms severely

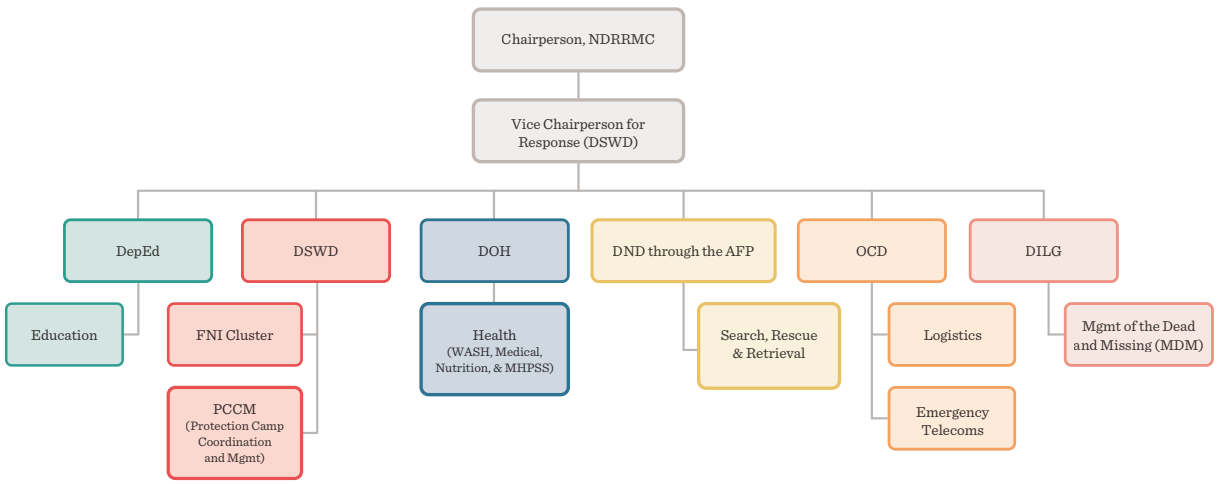

Figure 3. Disaster response coordination structure (Source: NDRP, 2018[26])

disrupted livelihoods in the affected areas, with about 170 million workdays—equivalent to about 664,000 one-year jobs—lost. Total income lost due to the disaster was in excess of US$1 billion, which particularly affected informal workers with family-based livelihoods.

Zamboanga City armed crisis and Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) - 2013
On 9 September 2013, troops opposing the national government from the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) arrived in Zamboanga City and tried to raise the Bangsamoro flag at the City Hall. For the next three weeks, the MNLF took almost 200 hostages, moving from one place to another and using the hostages as shields. The rebels also occupied several coastal villages, affecting more than 118,000 residents. When the state military was able to regain control by 28 September, official records showed that 245 people had died (20 soldiers, 5 policemen, 12

civilians, 208 rebels) and 273 were injured (177 soldiers, 17 policemen, 79 civilians). Damage amounted to approximately P2.5 billion (US$60 million) for infrastructure, social services, and in the productive (agriculture, tourism, culture, industry, trade, and service) sectors[14].

Two weeks afterwards, on 15 October 2013, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake shook the Visayas region, primarily hitting the province of Bohol, killing 220 and affecting 671,000 families or more than 3.2 million individuals. The earthquake toppled centuries-old churches and damaged 78,229 houses (15,933 totally; 62,296 partially), 41 bridges, and countless roads in the Visayan region.

While response was ongoing for the Zamboanga City armed crisis and Bohol earthquake, alert levels were raised for Category 5 Super Typhoon Haiyan. On 8 November 2013, Typhoon Haiyan made its first landfall over Guiuan, Eastern Samar. The typhoon was the deadliest event of 2013 in the Asia-Pacific, killing more than 6,000 people[15]. In the province of Leyte, Tacloban City accounted for about 2,678 of the total number of fatalities recorded in the region with many reported to have been killed by storm surge which caused widespread flooding.

The number of affected people rose to 14 million across nine regions, including four million people who remained displaced from their homes. The response was declared as system-wide level 3 (L3) by the Emergency Relief Coordinator. To this date, some 14,000 individuals are still living in resettlement areas in Tacloban City alone[16].

Marawi City armed crisis - 2017

On 23 May 2017, conflict erupted in Marawi City in the province of Lanao del Sur, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). This was between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and local non-state armed actors, including members of the Maute Group led by Isnilon Hapilon, an Abu Sayyaf leader who has claimed allegiance to ISIS. The incident resulted in the immediate evacuation of nearly the entire population of Marawi City, which had 201,000 residents in 2015. Most fled to relatives and friends' homes in nearby municipalities, with many arriving in Iligan City, Lanao del Norte province, 37 km to the north. By the evening of 23 May, President Rodrigo Duterte had declared martial law for the entire island of Mindanao to last 60 days.

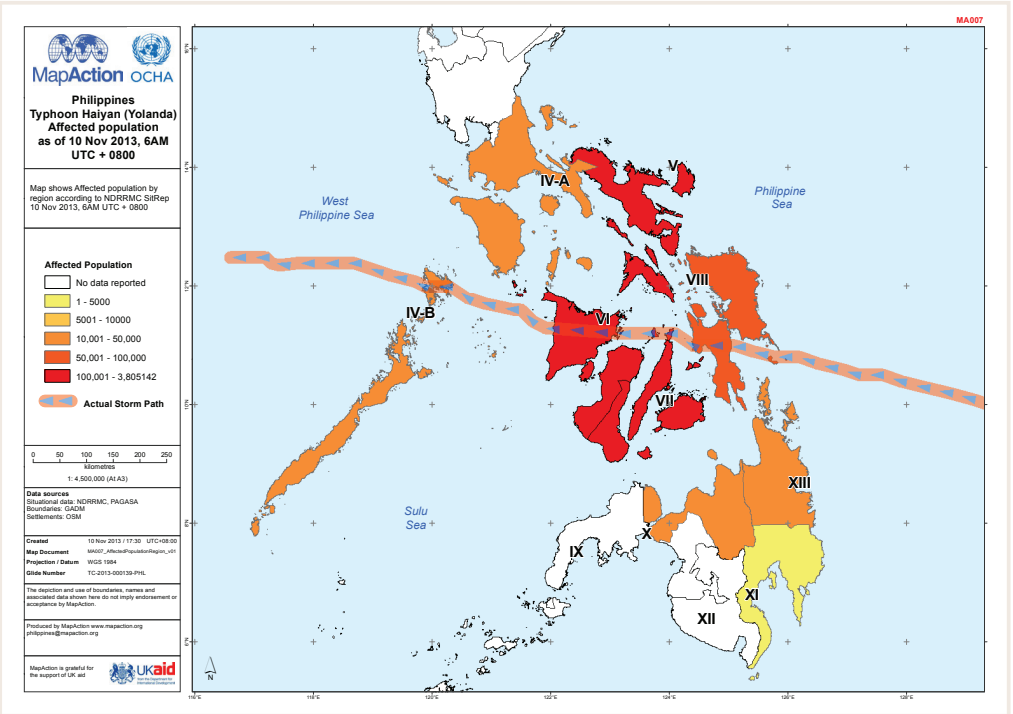

Figure 4. Affected population due to Typhoon Haiyan (Source: MapAction, OCHA, 2013[27])

This inter-city displacement, with people from Marawi City moving to Iligan City, has caused

challenges in coordinating the response and accounting for the services being provided to the affected population. Coordination hubs had to be created in both cities to ensure that the response was effectively coordinated, but there were further challenges to Iligan City as the host LGU in addressing and attending to the needs of the evacuees as well as the humanitarian actors.

Lessons from recent urban disasters

Strengthen and clarify coordination structures

After Typhoon Ondoy, the national government shifted focus from disaster coordination to disaster risk reduction. In 2010, RA 10121 or the NDRRMC Act was enacted into law based on the lessons learned from Typhoon Ondoy; this included strengthening the capacity of local government units to prepare, mitigate, respond, and rehabilitate after a disaster.

This structure was observed from 2010 until Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, when national agencies took over the coordination due to the scale of the emergency. This led to the establishment of the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Rehabilitation and Recovery (OPARR) in 2013. OPARR was responsible for harmonizing the initiatives and efforts of various government agencies and other relevant groups engaged in post-Haiyan rehabilitation, such as international organizations, private sector and foundations. For OPARR to perform its roles and responsibilities effectively, the office ensured coordination with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) and consultation with concerned local government units (LGUs). The office was expected to continue operating but due to lack of institutional funding, it was closed down and all its tasks distributed to other agencies.

These new structures and systems led to some confusion with how the Haiyan response should be coordinated and to where reports should be submitted[17]. The Tacloban City DRRMC structure was being observed, but since the national government took over the response due to the scale of the emergency and with international support overwhelming local actors, that local DRRMC structure was side-lined. Coordination was not consistent because the local government officials involved in the task force had other responsibilities related to implementing relief and response activities, on top of non-emergency responsibilities. Although city staff were working directly with their national government counterparts, politics strained the relationship, hampering open coordination between the national and local government, and with provincial government[18].

In a number of areas, local DRRM offices are still not operational. Some established the office for compliance purposes and therefore were not equipped with people with proper DRRM capacity or resources[19]. Furthermore, for cities which are situated near each other as in the case of Metro Manila, inter-local coordination was deemed as an important strategy in immediately getting staff support during emergencies.

Improving response skills and competencies

In the Philippines, several organizations provide training on DRR and disaster response. There has been a growing number of skilled Filipino humanitarian aid workers, most of whom are working with non-government organizations (NGOs). In contrast, some LGUs that are the frontline responders during disasters have very limited opportunities to undergo capacity building activities on disaster response. Similarly, regular government staff are sometimes expected to carry out disaster response work, which is not in their job description. It has been recommended that DRR training be provided on a regular basis across the country given the growing complexity of risks and hazards[20].

One of the points raised in previous emergencies was that local government staff are not disaster responders, thus, when a disaster strikes, most of them have difficulties managing both regular staff work and responding to and/or coordinating the response. Rodil (2016) recommended that the national government should explore how to increase local government capacity at different stages of the response following a disaster. The emergency phase may require emergency

Power Supply Cables, Manila Pixabay

managers for debris removal, relief distribution and medical response; while the recovery phase may require technical experts, project managers and communication specialists. Options could include providing funds for local government to hire dedicated emergency coordination and planning staff, or forming a surge or emergency management team to support a city during the response phase[21].

Accountability mechanisms or ethical guidelines for responders

One of the major findings in a study by the Centre for Disaster Preparedness (CDP) was that there was no accountability framework which government agencies could adhere to and use as a guide to render themselves accountable to people during and after disasters. There is no effective mechanism to challenge local officials who violate procedures or fail to deliver promised services. There are several laws concerning public officials, and cases can be filed against them, but in most cases, corruption is only informally alleged and litigation cases are rarely filed[22].

Some national agencies have tried to reinforce the use of Sphere Standards and Core Humanitarian Standards and localize these guidelines to the Philippine context. However, there is still no comprehensive national document or policy that clearly defines how disaster responders, whether foreign or local, are expected to perform their functional capacities, nor one that can make them accountable while delivering their services. Local policies are limited to the operational mandates of individual agencies and actors while doing disaster response. Section 19 of the NDRRM Act listed some prohibited acts, but provided no clear guidance on how to operationalize the monitoring and reporting of violations.

Challenges to resettlement in urban areas

Globally, resettlement and relocation are among the major challenges during emergencies and this is particularly acute in the Philippines, where some cities are relatively small and urban planning is not usually prioritized. Cities that were recently affected by major disasters had difficulties in relocating populations that were living in `no-build-zones' or had been living in illegal settlements. Urban poor communities who are dependent on government support end up living

for prolonged periods in temporary shelters. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) who previously lived in informal settlements may face eviction from their homes, as landowners take advantage of disasters to clear settlements and local governments declare `no build' or `no habitation' zones. Local governments may not appropriately consider the rights and needs of residents of such areas or alternatives to relocation that would allow them to remain in their place of residence[23].

After the Zamboanga armed crisis, some Badjao families who were displaced when their houses were razed by the fire caused by the insurgent group, opted to live in homes on stilts in the sea, despite efforts of the local and national government to move them to a different area within the city. Widely known as the `sea gypsies' of the Sulu and Celebes Seas, the Badjao are scattered along the coastal areas of Tawi Tawi, Sulu, Basilan, and some coastal municipalities of Zamboanga del Sur in the ARMM. Amongst themselves, they are known as Sama Laus (Sea Sama) and are found living on houseboats where they make their livelihood solely on the sea as expert fishermen, deep sea divers, and navigators.

Dependent on their livelihood as fishermen, some of these families decided to go back to where they used to live and do the same work. One year after the Marawi armed crisis, according to ICRC, authorities estimated that 65,000 residents from the affected area would be unable to return to their homes for the following two to three years. The transitional site in Sagonsongan, Marawi City, can only accommodate 6,000 of them[24].

Preparing for the `big one' (earthquake)

In 2004, a study was undertaken on behalf of the Philippines national government by a team organized by Pacific Consultants International, OYO International Corporation and Pasco Corporation, under a contract with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The study highlighted that an earthquake with a magnitude of at least 7.2 on the Richter scale may happen at any time along the West Valley Fault system, which would affect the entire Metro Manila.

The West Valley Fault system is a line marking the area where the different fault systems are located underground and are actively moving from where a big earthquake may originate. Eighteen documented earthquakes and those instrumentally recorded were selected for scenario modelling. Earthquake ground motion, liquefaction potential, slope stability and tsunami height have also been estimated.

Three of the models (namely, Model 08 (West Valley Faults M.7.2), Model 13 (Manila Trench M.7.9), Model 18 (1863 Manila Bay M.6.5)), were selected for detailed damage analysis because these scenarios show typical and severe damage to Metropolitan Manila. Model 08, as the worst case, indicates that 170,000 residential houses will collapse, 340,000 residential houses will be partly damaged, 34,000 people will die, and 114,000 people will be injured. These numbers have now significantly increased as the study was first carried out in 2004, and since then the population has increased.

Since the release of this study, several efforts have been made to regularly prepare and strategize in order to significantly reduce the potential risks and casualties should the `big one' happen. Simulations and training such as Urban Search and Rescue were conducted by the government alongside several partners. A decade later, risk calculations and maps were updated under the Greater Metro Manila Area Risk Assessment Project with the NDRRMC, Geoscience Australia and PHIVOLCS. Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA)'s Oplan Metro Yakal and its integrated earthquake contingency plan (Oplan Metro Yakal Plus) were formulated from the findings of the Metro Manila Earthquake Impact Reduction Study.

There has yet to be a significant earthquake as predicted, however, it is likely that if it happens it could be one of the most significant disasters ever seen in the Philippines.

Responses from interviews

This section details the findings of interviews with people involved in local urban disaster response in the Philippines. An overview of disaster response mechanisms, rosters and some of the key challenges in urban response is presented. A key aim of the interviews was to elicit ideas from the interviewees on the applicability and importance of UCF competencies in the Philippine urban disaster response. As mentioned previously, the UCF was not shared with interviewees to ensure their responses were unprompted.

Participation and profiles

Thirteen people were interviewed as part of the study. The participants came from a range of backgrounds and different levels of urban response, from those working at the grassroots local level, to those working at the highest national level, and from those working in implementation to those working in policy and strategy. Interviews were conducted with people from a variety of organizations (see Annex 2). Respondents or their organizations had been participating in disaster response in the Philippines for anything from 5 years to over 20 years.

Respondents had provided humanitarian assistance across multiple sectors including Coordination, Protection, Camp Management, Food, Psycho-Social Support, Shelter, Education, Health, WASH, and Disaster Risk Reduction. Collectively they had worked on a variety of emergencies including Typhoons Reming (2006), Ondy (2011), Haiyan (2013), Ruby (2013), and Nina (2016); an earthquake in Bohol (2013), the eruption of Mayon volcano (2017); and, the Zamboanga armed conflict (2013). The longevity and variety of experience demonstrated by interviewees gave a broad insight into urban emergency response in the Philippines; however the case study presents a narrative report not a statistically representative sample.

Rosters – processes for deployment

Several of the interviewees said that they had responded to disasters away from their normal place of work at the request of their organizations. At times staff actively asked to be part of the response, as they were aware that their skills and experience would be valuable. Ultimately the management team decided who should be deployed to an emergency based on the needs. Some of the respondents said that their organizations implemented a response roster, either formally or informally. This included having 'reservists' who are trained volunteers who can be mobilized at short notice.

International humanitarian cluster lead agencies such as UNICEF (Education, WASH, Nutrition and Child Protection), WHO (Health) and IOM (CCCM) have country offices in the Philippines, and they can be easily mobilized to support the government upon activation of the clusters. If the government requests additional support beyond the capacity of these country offices, they can request international support from regional and global offices and standby partners including RedR Australia and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), amongst others. UNICEF maintains a local roster for WASH response.

Interviewees from NGOs stated that in the event of a large disaster (e.g. Typhoon Haiyan), their organizations would bring experienced staff from their home location whilst boosting their workforce by engaging local staff. They also said that they have partner organizations that they support with capacity building and preparedness, and then work with in emergencies. In the case of Haiyan, some people felt that they were not as well prepared as they could be; the scale of the emergency was so large that it took even experienced responders by surprise in the first few days.

Government staff said that they could respond based on official requests for help and were then able to mobilize the appropriately skilled staff. It may be that they are asked to respond outside of their home area in the event of a large emergency. Government departments are willing to release staff if their specialist skills are needed.

Participants from the private sector did not have what could be described as a roster; however they were able to provide services in areas where they would not normally work and would hire people locally, especially as they have the resources to hasten the hiring process when needed.

Urban response and key challenges

The majority of participants stated that they did not feel they could always define what constitutes an urban disaster, as many emergencies affected rural and urban populations alike. This could be because of the highly urbanized nature of the Philippines. Other respondents had a clear definition of what they considered urban challenges, mentioning factors including:

- complex needs of urban populations including difficulties around resettlement, i.e. the lack of alternative spaces and problems with breaking up established communities
- the diversity of the population within a small area – differing family structures, cultures and modalities of living
- the mobility and dynamic nature of the population – the movement of people in the morning and evening and the variation of people present in any given area depending on the time of day
- the relatively high number of organizations and stakeholders active in an area
- the impact on centers of commerce and supply chains
- the need for technical skills when working with more complex infrastructure than typically found in rural areas, e.g. demolition of tall buildings that are unsafe.

Some interviewees felt that there could be a higher level of dependency on relief and response support in urban areas. In rural areas, it was common for people to be grateful for whatever help they received, and they would quickly become less reliant on support and would themselves begin to support others with their community. Conversely in urban areas it was noted that affected people needed more support for longer, and possibly had higher expectations on what should be provided. During the Typhoon Haiyan response, some people were thought to have moved from rural areas to the city as they felt that was where relief efforts were being focused so they would have more opportunity to receive support. One of the advantages of working in an urban area was the ability to reach large numbers of people relatively quickly.

The importance of engaging with the private sector was discussed by interviewees, to ensure that services are robust and can withstand a disaster, but also so they can participate in the response. The impact on business in an emergency was cited as a reason why the private sector could be motivated to participate in DRR and response. When normal business is disrupted they may look for alternative income streams, have a workforce and other resources to draw on, and be financial motivated to get things back up and running.

Training

The interviewees were asked if their organizations had codes of conduct or training to support staff who were not familiar with humanitarian response. Some said that their organizations provided comprehensive training in Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) and Sphere guidelines, however most said that training was focused on sectoral skills.

One local government body (APSEMO) had established a training institute in partnership with a local university that staff could attend, and where external organizations could request training. Another

respondent said that the Philippine Red Cross provided training in emergency response.

It was mentioned that there was often limited awareness at all levels of an organization regarding international humanitarian standards. Some responders felt that although they had a good grasp of their own sector they would benefit from training in coordination, information management and humanitarian standards.

Relevance of the UCF to the Philippines context

The competencies presented in the UCF were used as starting points for discussion with interviewees. The aim was to see if participants would discuss similar proficiencies to those presented in the UCF when giving examples of their experience of urban emergency response. The UCF was not shared with participants, to prevent them being prompted in their responses.
The proficiencies discussed in the interviews are highlighted as bullet points for each competency.

Working with diverse stakeholders and operating within complex governance structures

- Form strong partnerships between government, civil society organizations, religious institutions, the UN and the private sector, ideally developed in preparedness planning or during non-emergency circumstances
- Coordinate – having a willingness to cooperate
- Facilitate – not always doing, but supporting existing structures/ organizations.

Interviewees' experience

During the Typhoon Haiyan response it was not sufficient to work solely within your own cluster because there was overlap between organizations in different clusters, but it was impossible to keep track of all the responders. Inter-cluster coordination meetings became critical to promote working with other agencies to facilitate a rapid response, and so individual organizations didn't have to remember who was doing what. Clusters were also proactive at generating 4W's to help organizations map stakeholders, however it was challenging as organizations changed their plans depending on funding and capacity.

Local government responder

During the Typhoon Haiyan response there were some incidences in communities that caused tension. They explained that at times international responders especially would 'act like a boss', not respecting the Barangay Captain's authority and trying to proceed without consultation. Members of the affected population were looking for leadership, and also felt upset that they were not respected. There was a real risk that ignoring the local structures could limit the effectiveness of aid by limiting access to people in need.

Local civil society organization responder

These two competencies have been combined as they were frequently discussed together. The highly developed involvement of the national and local government in disaster response means that there are often existing partnerships between government, civil society organizations, religious institutions, the UN and the private sector. The importance of building and maintaining relationships between organizations before, during, and after response was cited as being a good way to improve response effectiveness.

Interviewees expressed the opinion that operating in an urban environment can add complexity to a response, given the number of people involved, and the activities of multiple institutions. Coordination and information management were highlighted by all respondents as being critical and complex in urban response. An appreciation of the political landscape was commonly cited as an important factor to success, as well as understanding the organizations already operating in an area. There were several respondents who felt that there was little difference between urban and rural contexts regarding these competencies. This may reflect the strong governance structure of the Philippines and the population density, even outside of what would be considered a typical urban area.

Many interviewees mentioned that facilitation skills were important, in that where there were existing governance structures it may be more effective to support what was already in place rather than try to duplicate or supplant it. There was a frustration expressed by some interviewees that there could be too much emphasis put on politics and that the task of saving lives should have priority. Understanding the political dynamic was thought to be crucial to successful programming.

Preparedness was repeatedly discussed in regards to these competencies and others. So many elements of humanitarian response could be facilitated by preparedness in advance of any emergency and reviewed post emergency. In terms of working with stakeholders and governments, the relationships

formed during preparedness laid the foundations for effective response. Stakeholder mapping with information on organizational strengths and sensitivities was promoted as a way to facilitate creating joint strategies and facilitating response.

Working in built-up areas

- Understand land availability, development restrictions and population dynamics
- Preparedness, including physical and population mapping
- Manage competing needs for resources, e.g. schools being used as evacuation centers.

One respondent highlighted the importance of disaster preparedness, saying that they had predetermined areas that would be suitable for the relocation of affected people, so it would be possible to respond quickly in an emergency. This approach allowed the relevant permission to be obtained in advance and thereby cut down the need for assessment and extensive discussion in times of disaster. An awareness of city plans and restrictions was discussed by some interviewees, in that urban areas often have very clear intentions for development, whereas rural areas can be more flexible in emergencies.

The need for building mapping in case of an emergency that caused buildings to collapse was also discussed, as it could be very difficult to establish where survivors might be in a densely populated area. Having knowledge of the neighborhoods in advance was said to be an important preparedness measure. Another issue mentioned was of areas becoming cut off within built-up areas as roads could be blocked by debris or flood water. Understanding access to areas was considered very important to allow all parts of the affected area to be reached.

Interviewees' experience:
Local Civil Society Organization

In the Philippines, it is common for marginalized people to live in some of the least desirable and most at-risk areas where they are conveniently located for accessing work opportunities, and people of a higher social standing do not want to live there due to the risk. Examples of this might be on the banks of rivers that are known to flood or the coastal margins. It can be difficult to get people who have the least to evacuate during an emergency, as they are really worried about losing their possessions because they could not afford to replace them.

This was the case in the preparation for Typhoon Haiyan. Despite receiving warnings prior to the Typhoon, many of the people living in the most at-risk areas around the coast did not want to leave their homes. The size of the storm, combined with storm surge that swept many houses away and left boats beached high up on the shore was unprecedented. Following the storm, people in the community said they would follow warnings in the future, but their anxiety about their homes and possessions remains.

Limited space for establishing replacement services in the short term was given as an example of the challenges of working in a built-up area. There may not be space to create a new school or health care facility within easy reach of the affected population. In addition, these services can be under immense pressure in emergencies with more people seeking medical treatment, and schools or other institutional buildings being used as evacuation centers. In the case of very big disasters, it can be that providing one service (temporary shelter) reduces the ability to provide other services (schooling). Careful planning to try and accommodate people in places that are not needed for other uses is important.

Adopting a holistic people-centered approach

- Link services to facilitate a holistic approach
- Consider long-term impact and improvements.

Partnerships between government departments are heavily promoted and supported in the Philippines during preparedness, response and recovery. Linkages have been made

Figure 5. Marikina City Rescue 161 Command Center (Credits: Marikina Rescue 161, 2018[28])

with development organizations, for example AECID and UNICEF in Albay, who promote preparedness and resilience, and are able to take more responsibility in transition out of emergency response. These organizations are more able to look at the longer-term situation than can be done by humanitarian organizations.

Providing assistance based on vulnerabilities and need

- Have an awareness of politics to avoid favoritism
- Promote assistance to marginalized groups
- Involve the community and its leaders in assessments.

Local responders and government agencies pre-emptively map at-risk groups as part of their preparedness planning. The vulnerability criteria can be determined in advance of the emergency so it is easier to implement during disaster response. This approach allows for discussion with people who will potentially be included or excluded during a calmer time, which allows for consensus to be reached and the plan to be enacted quickly in emergencies with less resistance.

The need for accurate disaggregated data produced at a local level was stated by respondents. The independent collection or verification of such data has been carried out by organizations to ensure that they reach the people who are most vulnerable. Preparedness was mentioned in terms of needs mapping for use in case of disaster response.

Respondents indicated that there had been issues in the past when the population in need was not aligned to the political leaders. This was a repeated criticism during the Typhoon Haiyan response where it was felt that the worst affected areas were slow to receive national assistance as there was a political divide. In some areas it was felt that international assistance was provided before help from national government. In an emergency the scale of Haiyan, it is difficult to say whether that was perception or reality, given the huge need for assistance. If international assistance had not arrived, the real or perceived disparity between politically aligned areas and those that were in opposition could have led to instability.

There were concerns raised that marginalized groups may continue to be underserved in emergencies, for example, people with disabilities. Although strategic plans may require the inclusion of vulnerable people, they can be hard to reach and accommodate. Long-standing issues of exclusion can be hard to challenge during an emergency, however it was thought that more should be done to address this issue.

It was felt that sometimes organizations cherry-picked the easier-to-access areas or populations as they could show results faster. There was an understanding that donor requirements mean it is attractive to international organizations to work in the least problematic areas or with populations that are cooperative, but it was pointed out that this may not always address the needs of the most vulnerable. Usually, the most-affected urban area where there is more media coverage receives more attention, and sometimes, more criticism for the quality of the response.

Promoting social cohesion

- Facilitate local response whilst avoiding favoritism
- Ensure coordination between organizations to avoid conflict.

The concept of `Bayanihan' is a strong part of Filipino cultural values. It roughly means 'community spirit' and embodies a willingness to help others. A typical example of Bayanihan

Interviewees' experience:
Local Government

Rescue 161 is an initiative set up by the local council of Marikina City which is part of Metro Manila. It was formulated by the Marikina Disaster Coordinating Council in the 1990's to provide a 24-hour disaster response unit and emergency medical services for the city. The team works with other government departments, including engineering and health, to determine at-risk areas and to identify specific needs.

There are 70 employees working for Rescue 161 who respond to calls direct to the service, or calls are routed from the national emergency services hotline (911). Members of the public are able to contact the team via social media (www.facebook.com/MarikinaRescue161) in real time, and can sign up for notifications.

The Rescue 161 team includes police and fire officers, as well as medical staff operating ambulances. Staff have their core skills and are trained in other work areas so they can respond to a range of emergencies or support colleagues with specialist skills. There are prepositioned resources located within the city that responders can access when they are mobilized. The team can respond to life threatening emergencies but also repair roads in areas prone to flooding, bringing together a whole range of services aimed at reducing the impact of a disaster.

The team operates on a daily basis, and in times of emergency they are able to increase their activities and work effectively together as they are familiar with the geographical area, the community, their own team and protocols. The proactive approach and focus on preparedness help deal with emergencies when they happen.

is people joining together to help relocate traditional bamboo houses in rural areas, however it is a value that many Filipinos have taken with them to the cities. There is a deeply entrenched feeling that it is important to help neighbors in times of need. There is an opposing cultural trait of `crab mentality' which refers to how crabs in a bucket will climb on each other to try and escape, or pull down others to try and get ahead. These competing cultural values have been named in the Philippines, but are commonly found in many countries. Organizations have to be mindful of promoting social cohesion in emergencies to encourage the Bayanihan spirit rather than push people towards the crab mentality.

Concerns were raised about groups that provided assistance in emergencies outside of the coordination mechanism, and the difficulties that could arise if people were given more or less than those around them. It was felt that co-ordination should be strengthened to prevent this from happening.

The ability to 'localize the response' was given as an important factor in promoting social cohesion and being successful in operations. Community engagement at the very beginning, to understand the dynamic and tailor the response accordingly, was discussed by interviewees. There was a feeling that due to the awareness of emergencies in the Philippines, much disaster response work was quite well led by the community and that communities felt listened to and included.

Facilitating widespread coverage of services and infrastructure

- Map stakeholder and service providers
- Engage with service providers and facilitate their actions

Interviewees mentioned the need for stakeholder mapping, in terms of both service providers and users. Co-operation between NGOs, local government and private service providers was frequently mentioned as being critical. Some respondents said that they have occasionally been frustrated by local staff who did not always appear to be as motivated as incomers and the private sector responders.

Long-standing inequalities in accessing services were mentioned during the interviews. The disaster response could not always tackle these problems, especially without significant investment. In some cases the provision of services was severely limited by lack of land tenure for residents. The land owner may have allowed informal settlement, however the installation of services would not be acceptable as that could be perceived as giving people the right to remain. This means that marginalized people continue to suffer from a lower service provision that their more secure neighbors.

As a lot of infrastructure in the Philippines is provided by private companies, it was clear to many interviewees that there had to be strong links to the private sector. Some respondents thought it could be a good thing that services were private as a lack of profit post disaster was a strong motivator to resume services as quickly as possible; the good economics of careful preparedness planning was also a key factor for businesses. Most of the interviewees felt that it was necessary to engage with the companies to ensure that they were able to continue their operations immediately after the impact of a hazard.

One interviewee made the point that, as the private sector is heavily involved in the provision of services, facilitation tasks might fall to other organizations during an emergency. The facilitation of services, e.g. by providing warehousing, clearing access roads and providing transportation,

Interviewees' experience:
International NGO

Following a typhoon over Northern Samar in the Visayas region, one NGO conducted a needs assessment. The first step was to contact the Barangay Captains to ask for population information and a list of those deemed vulnerable. The vulnerability criteria were provided by the NGO but the initial assessment was made by local officials. The NGO then posted the list of potential beneficiaries within the community and stated there was a one-week consultation period. A telephone number was provided and people were asked to call if they saw anyone on the list they didn't think should be there, or to inform the NGO if anyone was missing. This peer review empowered the community and meant that no-one was forgotten. The telephone was busy for that week! The NGO followed up any requests for change directly, conducting their own assessment. This approach meant that the local authority and community were very much part of beneficiary selection. Community meetings were run by the NGO to explain the process.

Interviewees' experience:
Local Civil Society Organization

One respondent gave an example of Barangay officials wanting to store relief goods at their homes. This was resisted to prevent any favoritism or political influence when it came to distribution. It was suggested that the aid organization has a responsibility to facilitate discussion between not only those in power, but also informal community leaders, to understand the dynamic and ensure that aid does not disrupt social cohesion. The 'do no harm' mantra often heard in disaster response needs to be quantified better to help responders understand their responsibilities.

were given as ways that co-operation can lead to a faster response.

Promoting resilience and sustainability

- Pro-active involvement of the private sector
- Training and re-skilling displaced people
- Long-term planning and improvements.

Local government institutions exist to assess possible relocation areas for people living in high risk areas, or who are displaced in an emergency. When discussing livelihoods, many respondents talked about farming and fishing, indicating the often blurred line between rural and urban emergencies.

One person talked about the need to move away from the provision of relief goods so as not to disrupt the local market further. Cash-for-work schemes had been used as part of emergency response, for example to help with clearing waste from the streets. Other interviewees talked about moving away from this approach to other ways of supporting livelihoods that would have a long-term impact rather than be a short fix. It seems that there may be space for both approaches.

Applying humanitarian principles in urban contexts

- Training on humanitarian principles to raise awareness
- Contextualization of international standards.

There was a general consensus that there was a need for training/ sensitization on humanitarian principles. People working at the local implementation level were less familiar with such standards than those in more senior positions of organizations, or who worked at the national level. It was noted that the disaster response approach in the Philippines does aim to follow such principles, without it being explicitly stated.

One organization (APSEMO) has a training institute in the local university which provides training in humanitarian operations. The institute also provides training for staff from other organizations. Another interviewee from a local NGO had received training from international partners and was therefore aware of humanitarian guiding principles. Several people mentioned sector-specific standards that they worked to, adapting them to the Philippines context.

Achieving results in complex, dynamic environments

- Delegation of responsibilities, with adequate oversight
- Provide support services to enable frontline responders.

The points raised by interviewees tended to be relevant to other sections of the UCF. This competency was not discussed extensively by the majority of interviewees.

One organization explained that they provide a support team in their head office to take some of the administrative responsibilities from the field team, allowing them to work more dynamically. Others said that their role was to provide monitoring and

Interviewees' experience:
Private Organization

Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 had a massive impact on livelihoods as people were displaced for a long time whilst areas of Tacloban City were cleared and rebuilding could take place. To kick-start rebuilding, local small- to medium-size businesses selling household items and groceries within their neighborhood were offered goods worth about US$600 by a private company. The goods were effectively on loan, with 50% being repayable after 3 months. This initiative helped small business owners who were too financially stretched to replace lost stock or invest in new goods after the disaster. Similar initiatives were offered providing solar lighting, tarpaulins and food immediately after Haiyan, which was particularly helpful in areas where cash-based programming was taking place, as it meant people had access to markets that otherwise may not have been available.

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) approached the private sector after Haiyan to ask what skills were in need and requesting that training be provided to re-skill people to encourage them to move away from high-risk areas (predominantly fishermen on the coast). A partnership was formed between the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the DTI and the private sector to provide the equipment, training and resources required.

One of the 8 ships washed ashore at Anibong District, Tacloban City during Typhoon Haiyan. (Institute for Housing and Urban Development, CC BY-SA 3.0)

evaluation for their own teams on the ground to ensure that activities were effective, and if not to talk about changes with the program teams. Some had a formal reporting framework, whilst others adopted a more ad-hoc approach.

Lessons learned were documented after several major disasters by either the cluster or individual organizations, and there appeared to be a willingness to look at improvements that could be made. One criticism of the Philippines approach was the hierarchical nature of many organizations, and the limited delegation of decision-making powers. Interviewees said that there needed to be a balance between management oversight and accountability, with the ability to make decisions and act. These two priorities sometimes were competing.

Maintaining high standards of behavior in pressured and dynamic environments

- Practice self-care with organizational support for well-being
- Promote accountancy mechanisms
- Prioritize monitoring and evaluation.

To be transparent and accountable, government organizations use a nationwide audit commission policy on the utilization of funds. Difficulties may arise however where donations are sent to LGUs directly as there is no way to track these funds. Donor requirements in accountability are followed, along with extensive monitoring and checking of distributions.

Interviewees' experience:
International NGO

Monitoring and evaluation was a very important element to maintaining standards. In one instance there was a monitoring visit to a school being built as a temporary learning space (TLS) whilst work was being carried out by a contractor. It was noted by the visiting engineer that standards were not being followed, which reduced the contractor costs but resulted in a poor quality building. The contractor became aggressive when challenged but the inspecting engineer's report was respected by the client (Department of Education) so the contractor was removed from the project.

Although the TLS was being built for the Department of Education, people with a background in education did not have the skills to review construction standards, therefore they worked with organizations that had experienced engineers and hired people specifically to carry out monitoring visits.

Professional conduct, self-care and well-being were raised as issues in Philippines disaster response. The MHPSS representative explained that they promoted rest, recreate, recover and reflect (the 4r's) as a method of self-care. Other organizations talked about debriefings following response, allowing a time for reflection.

Some organizations offer 'hazard pay' when staff are asked to participate in emergency response. The additional pay allows staff to cover the additional costs they might have from working different hours or being away from home. It is also a financial motivator to be involved in the response. Personal protective equipment and uniform were mentioned by interviewees as a way of keeping staff safe, and showed that the organization was taking responsibility for them. It was also a way to make people visible in the community, so that there was a connection between the person and the organization they represent, allowing members of the public to identify people working with them. Interviewees talked about accountability mechanisms that allowed comments to be received from the public, and also recording of calls to allow staff to receive further training if they did not demonstrate the required level of professionalism.

Operating safely and securely

- Work with communities to promote safety for all
- Use all communications methods available
- Be aware of the context and act appropriately at a personal and organizational level.

Safety and security demands are driven by the context of the disaster. There is a big difference between responding to a natural disaster as compared to armed conflict. Where organizations were familiar with the location and were responding to a natural disaster, there appeared to have been minimal consideration of safety and security. People are commonly expected to work unsupported if the situation is not specifically highlighted as insecure. Context analysis was considered to be essential to understand trigger points and areas where safety might be compromised.

Some interviewees reported that low-level crime, such as pick-pocketing and minor theft, was more

likely in urban areas. During Typhoon Haiyan, looting became a major security issue, particularly in Tacloban City, where big supermarkets were looted when people were running out of food. Programs managers also have to think more carefully about securing items prior to distribution or in depots, as it can be easier to sell on stolen goods in urban areas. Harassment was also said to be more likely in urban areas, with the anonymity of the city making people bolder.

The use of mobile phones, radios and social media is widespread in the Philippines, and coverage is generally good, even in remote areas. There is a priority on re-establishing communications after an emergency to gather information, inform people of support that could be available, and provide contact mechanisms for people working in the field.

Social media has been utilized extensively in the Philippines as a communication tool by emergency responders. Organizations use social media to inform people of what is happening in their area, and also to ask for feedback and reports of need. One interviewee explained that engaging people in this highly democratic way 'gave a voice' to people who otherwise might not be heard. The result was thought to be less tension within the community and so less risk to the safety and security or responders and to the population.

Hazard identification and risks, particularly relating to pre-existing problems, were discussed by some interviewees, and there was an emphasis on self-awareness of the situation. Programmatic awareness of social cohesion, participation, transparency and accountability were suggested as ways that safety can be promoted.

In some circumstances the armed forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippines National Police (PNP) have been called on to provide support to humanitarian responders.

Whilst organizations may not have dedicated safety and security personnel, it is a role that can be assumed by other team members when needed; for example logistics officers may have this additional responsibility. This competency did not seem to be a high priority for most interviewees, possibly because the majority of disasters are natural, during which the security risks are perceived to be relatively low.

Conclusions

The Philippines is a disaster-prone country, with a wide range of risks from natural to conflict related. It is highly urbanized, where even rural areas have many of the characteristics that commonly define an urban setting. There are many densely populated disaster-prone urban areas, with Metro Manila being the biggest.

In conducting the case study, it was possible to speak to Filipinos with extensive experience in responding to emergencies. . There is a well-developed system for emergency response and there is buy-in from local and national government, NGOs, the UN and private sector partners. In the Philippines, it seems that disasters are everyone's business, which is not surprising given their frequency.

It was clear that local emergency responders are well trained and are highly competent in their respective technical sectors. Interviewees felt there were gaps relating to international humanitarian principles, core humanitarian standards, information management and coordination. It was felt that people working in local government and those who become frontline responders may benefit from additional non-sectoral training.

There were several good initiatives that were highlighted in the interviews, including a coordinated response center in Marikina City in Manila, the use of monitoring and evaluation in construction projects, and the peer review of beneficiary lists in the community. There was discussion on the competencies that need to be developed in preparation for an earthquake in Metro Manila. Since most of the national government agencies and humanitarian agencies are based in Metro Manila, several plans and agreements are now being arranged to identify support response teams coming from other regions and areas.

The main difficulty people talked about in urban disaster response was overcoming pre-existing inequalities when an emergency arises, whether that related to service provision, land tenure or accessing the most vulnerable people. In the urban context, the flow of people was noted as a key challenge as people moved around the city for work, which could mean changes in those seeking assistance at different times of day. All the interviewees said that coordination was critical but could be extremely challenging, especially during a large response with many organizations involved.

One of the aims of the case study was to see if the competencies in the UCF matched the skills and experience that Filipino emergency responders thought were important. Since the UCF was not shared with interviewees, their answers were not influenced by it. Overall there was a good deal of agreement in what people thought was good practice, and what is stated in the UCF. There was a degree of confusion over the wording and crossover between some of the competencies, which meant responses from interviewees sometimes related to different competencies. The UCF itself is comprehensive—and possibly overwhelming at times—with some proficiencies being applicable to multiple competencies. In the Philippines, the ability to contextualize and prioritize the required competencies and proficiencies following consultation with local responders would likely be appreciated when using the UCF.

One thing that all the interviewees discussed was the importance of preparedness, which emerged as the critical element for all emergency responders, regardless of the sectoral focus or organization type. The UCF does not put a timeframe on activities; however it does not explicitly say whether some activities form part of preparedness planning, which could be an issue to address during a potential roll-out. To conclude, based on the case study, it seems that the UCF would be a fair reflection of the competencies and proficiencies that are considered to be critical to successful emergency response in the Philippines.

Recommendations

The UCF was developed to improve efficiency in emergency response, and the case study shows that it would be a welcome tool. A common observation by interviewees was a disparity in training for those based in national offices or the most senior positions versus people working as front line responders (who often have other 'day to day' tasks, and therefore less time available). It is suggested therefore that the UCF could be used as a 'self-assessment' tool for people to highlight their own strengths within the competencies and proficiencies, and by omission show where they may need further training/support. In this way front line responders may be able to really prioritize the training they feel would benefit them to work more effectively. The UCF would provide support for requests for particular training.

During the interviews, it was clear that there were 'blind-spots' in people's appreciation of some competencies, possibly because they had not encountered a particular situation before or had not been exposed to a way of working. The UCF could be used to challenge some of those areas, to determine if they are genuinely irrelevant to the individual/context, or if it is an area where they would benefit from further learning. The responsibility would lie with management to establish what their team's competencies should be.

The UCF could be used as a tool to encourage preparedness—local responders could use the UCF to determine what tasks would be best initiated or completed prior to any emergency response. It could also be used in developing job descriptions to ensure that organizations were able to cover all the competencies listed.

Limitations

As this was a case study conducted over a 4-week period, it is only a snapshot of disaster response in the Philippines. Whilst every care was taken to talk to people from a broad spectrum of responders, it is possible that some viewpoints have not been considered.

As mentioned, during the study period, several potential participants were not available as they were participating in a typhoon response, or were planning activities for next year. There is also currently a big push to establish a new government department on disaster resilience which meant that many government organizations did not have time to participate in this study.

Annexes

Annex 1 - Location map

Map Sources: UNCS, ESRI, Gov't. of USA.
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Map created in Sep 2013.

Annex 2 - List of participating organizations

Organization	Organization Type	Interviewee
Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office (APSEMO)	Local Government	Dr. Cedric Daep - Officer-in-Charge
Center for Disaster Preparedness	Local Civil Society Organization	Ms. Loreine dela Cruz –Executive Director
Department of Health, Cagayan de Oro City	Local Government	Engr. Carmela Roa - Sanitary Engineer IV Regional WASH Focal Point
Legazpi City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office	Local Government	Engr. Miladee Azur - Officer-in-Charge
Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Metro Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (MMDRRMC)	Local Government	Mr. Aldo Mayor - Chief of Public Safety Office
National Center for Mental Health	National Government	Ms. Thelma Barrera - Program Coordinator
Office of Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	United Nations	Mr. Mark Bidder - Head of Office
Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA)	Local Civil Society Organization	Mr. Benedict Balderrama - National Coordinator
Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF)	Private Organization	Veronica Gabaldon – Executive Director
Rescue 161, Marikina City Government	Local Government	Mr. Dave C. David - Officer-in-Charge
Save the Children	International Non-Government Organization	Ms. Anna Laylo – Incoming Resilience Advisor
United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)	United Nations	Mr. Paul del Rosario - WASH Cluster Coordination
Various	Local Civil Society Organization and INGOs	Alex Garduce - Community Mobilizer

Annex 3 - Interview guide

Note – There were some minor changes to the UCF between the inception of this desk study and the final version, which is reflected in the question headings.

This interview is part of the research being conducted by RedR UK for the production of the Urban Competencies Framework for Humanitarian Action (UCF). The UCF aims to expand the existing Core Humanitarian Competency Framework to include specific challenges related to working in urban areas.

A. General Questions:

1. Kindly state your full name, current designation and organization
2. How many years have you been with the organization?
3. How many years have you been responding to emergencies in the Philippines?
4. In what sectors have you provided emergency support? What was your role? Were you responsible for staff or volunteer management coordination?
5. Can you enumerate the emergencies which you have responded to in the last five years, and for which organizations (if not your current employer)?
6. Have you ever been deployed to an emergency outside of your area? How was this decided? Who made the decision? What are your competencies that were needed in the disaster? How did you/were you prepared for the the deployment?
7. Are you or have you ever been part of an emergency roster? Please share how you have become part of the roster.

B. UCF-related questions: In the context of the urban disasters that you have responded to, kindly answer the following questions:

1. Applying Humanitarian Principles in an Urban Context - In what ways do you think urban crises differ from those that occur in rural areas? What skills and experience have you found are important for working in urban areas? (You may cite specific examples per emergency).What challenges did you face in applying humanitarian principles in the response?

2. Working with Diverse Stakeholders. - Who were the key stakeholders during the response? What were you able to do to facilitate working with them? Did you have any lessons learned to make working with diverse stakeholders easier?

3. Operating within Complex Structures. - Can you describe the governance structure in the urban emergency that you worked in? Did you experience conflict between levels of government/ formal/informal structures? In what ways did you manage working with the existing structures?

4. 4Working in the Built Environment. - What difficulties did you encounter working in densely populated areas (e.g. land tenure issues)? Were there advantages (e.g. livelihood opportunities)? How did the geographical location and population density affect programming?

5. Promoting Social Cohesion - Were you aware of any social tensions within the area you were supporting? Did that impact on programming, how did you address tensions? What methods did you find effective to engage with different groups?

6. Prioritizing the at-risk population - How did you identify/prioritize at risk individuals/households/ sub-populations? Were there ways your programs effectively ensured impartial access to the most vulnerable? Did you meet with resistance to prioritizing particular groups and how did you overcome it?

7. Adopting a holistic people-centered approach - How did you promote long term sustainability as part of the response? Did you run multi-sector programs, or did you partner with organizations offering different support?

8. Facilitating Provision of Access to Services and Infrastructure - Which existing infrastructure providers did you engage with and how, e.g sanitation services, health care providers etc.? Were you able to support existing systems? What were the main challenges? Were there any pre-emergency issues that you were able to address?

9. Promoting Livelihoods and Sustainable Economy - Were you able to support the local economy? If yes, how? If no, why not? Was it possible to identify and pursue opportunities for livelihood creation?

10. Managing Programs in a Dynamic Urban Environment - Did you have to modify programming depending on where you were working? If yes, what changes did you make? How did you identify changes in the situation and how did you respond to those changes?

11. Maintaining Professionalism Amongst Complexity and Change - Have you or your colleagues encountered incidences of corruption and how were you able to respond? How have you promoted accountability to stakeholders and the population in need? If you have felt personally exhausted/unwell during the response how did you look after yourself?

12. Operating Safely and Securely - What were the main security concerns during the response? Were there any security concerns that stemmed from operating in an urban environment? How did you facilitate safe working? Were there any incidents that were beyond your control that impacted the response?

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