Locally-led Humanitarian Response:

Reflections on the Haiyan Response Experience of Local Development Organizations

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PDRRN   CHRISTIAN AID

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List of Abbreviations

ATM	Alyansa Tigil Mina
BANIG	Basey Association for Native Industry Growth Federation
BCM	Balik Calauit Movement
CARRAT	Christian Aid Rapid Response Assessment Team
CBDO-DR	Citizenry-Based and Development-Oriented Disaster Response
CBO	Community-based Organization
CCI	Coastal Core Incorporated
CDRC	Citizens' Disaster Response Center
CDRN	Citizens' Disaster Response Network
CERD	Center for Empowerment and Resource Development, Inc
CVA	Capacity and Vulnerability Analysis
DNCA	Damage, Needs and Capacity Assessment
FORGE	Fellowship for Organizing Endeavor, Inc
GDRO	Grassroots Disaster Response Organization
INGO	International Non-government Organization
IP	Indigenous Peoples
LGU	Local Government Unit
MAKADAMAY	May Kapansanan Laging Nagdadamayan
NBZ	No Build Zone
PDRRN	People's Disaster Risk Reduction Network, Inc
Philnet-RDI	Philippine Network of Rural Development Institutes
PHILSSA	Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies, Inc
PKKK	Pambansang Koalisyon ng mga Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (National Coalition of Rural Women)
PWD	People with Disability
RWAN	Rice Watch and Action Network
RBA	Rights-based approach
SOHS	State of Humanitarian System
UPA	Urban Poor Associates
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

Introduction

Christian Aid over the years has engaged its partner development NGOs in responding to major humanitarian emergencies in the country, including its partner-led Typhoon Haiyan response. With support from Act Alliance, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), Irish Aid (IA), Al Khair Foundation, ICCO, Muslim Hands, Roddick, UK Aid and the Department for International Development (DFID), local partners provided life-saving, rehabilitation and resilience building assistance to more than 41,200 households, or 206,000 men, women, boys and girls in 25 municipalities of the provinces of Leyte, Samar, Eastern Samar, Iloilo and Palawan. Despite limited humanitarian experience and notwithstanding challenges in accessing disaster areas and logistics, the local NGOs demonstrated commitment and leadership in humanitarian action and engaged in food relief, shelter assistance, livelihoods recovery, and provision of water, sanitation and hygiene. As most of its Typhoon Haiyan response ended in 2016, Christian Aid saw the opportunity to step back and reflect on its humanitarian engagement with its partner NGOs. It supported PDRRN, a local NGO that advocates and practices participatory and people-centered strategies and approaches in its development and humanitarian programs to design and conduct this learning research.

This report is organized into four (4) parts:

Part I presents major discussions on humanitarian partnerships, local humanitarian capacity and key arguments that support the localization of humanitarian response. It also presents a history of humanitarianism in the Philippines.

Part II discusses the main findings of the learning research using the five (5) elements of locally-led humanitarian response identified by Christian Aid partners as framework for categorizing and analyzing data and narratives of local humanitarian experience.

Part III provides a discussion of major gaps and challenges facing local leadership of humanitarian response.

Part IV presents the conclusion and recommendations towards strengthening locally-led humanitarian responses addressed to local NGOs, the national and local government units and international humanitarian agencies.

Executive Summary

In conceptualizing this research, the questions that Christian Aid and PDRRN wanted to ask were: What is a locally-led response? What are the elements that make a locally-led humanitarian action effective? The questions were asked at a period when there is growing resurgence in recognition of the important role that local actors – government, non-government and community-based organizations (CBOs) play in humanitarian response. The nature and dynamics of partnerships between local organizations and international agencies in humanitarian context is now a common subject of studies and documentation in light of recent calls for supporting local humanitarian capacity, reforms in the humanitarian system and a reorientation towards more localized response actions.

Purpose and Methods of the Learning Research

This paper builds on the experience of selected local NGO partners of Christian Aid in the context of their Haiyan response partnership. The research was envisioned to be a learning process rather than an evaluation of the local partners' participation in Haiyan response. It analyzed data and narratives to identify elements that could be built into a framework of "Good Locally-Led Humanitarian Response". It also builds on existing studies about partnership dynamics of local and international humanitarian agencies, but focused more on identifying positive contributions and good practices of the local NGO partners in the Haiyan response, and analyzed factors that are considered as gaps and challenges to effectively lead a response.

The research is highly exploratory and descriptive. It conducted interviews with a total of 54 officers and members of people's organizations, staff of local partner NGOs, LGU and Christian Aid in the Philippines. Field interviews were conducted in Leyte, Samar, Cebu City, Palawan and Metro Manila. The list of participating organizations and individuals are listed in Annex A.

Local actors

We use the term local in this research to refer to women and men from disaster-affected communities, community-based organizations, local government units (LGUs), and national and local level Philippine NGOs who engaged in Haiyan response. Local NGO is used in contrast to international NGOs (INGOs) and international humanitarian agencies even though these agencies are operating locally.

In an inception workshop, Christian Aid and partners identified key elements of what could be considered as locally-led response. These elements served as the framework for the research questions and analysis of data and narratives that were gathered. These elements are presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Proposed Elements of Locally-led Response

Element 1: Orientation	Operating framework when deciding, designing, implementing the response. This element refers to the factors that guide and trigger an organization's decision to respond, as well as the organization's approaches in designing and delivering services.
Element 2: Principles of effective locally- led humanitarian response.	This element refers to the guiding principles or beliefs that guide an organization in the delivery of services. Examples given by partners: response should be based on needs, gender and culture appropriate and determined by the affected population.
Element 3: Resources and capacity of local actors.	Refers to resources that an organization can deploy or utilize in times of crisis such as people, materials, technology, and other resources.
Element 4: Approaches or strategies that support locally-led response.	This refers to the specific methodologies and tools used by the partners at the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of the response.
Element 5: Collaboration strategies	This refers to either the framework or different modalities of collaboration taken by the partners in service delivery as well as accountability mechanisms that are operating in the context of the partnership.

Lessons Learned: Elements of Locally-Led Humanitarian Action

A. Developmental Perspective and Orientation

The development orientation of Christian Aid's NGO partners in its Typhoon Haiyan response contributed significantly in shaping the objectives and direction of the humanitarian program. The local NGOs' capacity for political and power analysis facilitated delivery mechanisms that avoided contributing further to power inequalities in the locality i.e. local politicians using relief for their own interest, relief benefiting only those favoured by power-holders in a community, empowering the men and women survivors to claim their entitlements. Having a strong development orientation enables the implementing NGO to consider factors that can contribute to "connectedness" of the response with recovery and longer-term goals.

B. Community Organizing as a Core Humanitarian Strategy

Local NGOs employed community organizing as a key strategy in designing and implementing humanitarian action. Community organizing has long been an important strategy of development work in the country and some of Christian Aid's NGO partners utilized it to ensure that the poor and disaster-affected men and women are visible in the different aspects of humanitarian action (e.g. targeting, identifying and delivery of assistance), aware of their basic rights (though training, awareness building activities) and engaged in claiming entitlements.

Through community organizing strategies, a locally-led response strengthens community structures and capacities in representing the needs and interest of poor and marginalized men and women survivors to the humanitarian system, and equips disaster survivors with knowledge, skills and tools to collectively engage with government and non-government actors in articulating their demands for their entitlements- not only for their immediate survival needs but also for longer-term vulnerability issues that resulted from the disaster (e.g., safe and decent permanent housing, sustainable income, right of women to access agricultural assistance).

C. Guiding Principles

The local partner's in-depth knowledge of the local poverty context helped achieve better targeting in terms of prioritizing the poor and marginalized men and women members of the affected community. A humanitarian response led and managed by local development organizations prioritizes poor, vulnerable and underserved disaster-affected communities for assistance, is responsive to the needs and interests of disaster-affected women and men, and avoids creating new vulnerabilities by utilizing processes that build on existing capacity. Locally- led responses also maximize positive Filipino cultural values of *bayanihan* (community self- help) and *pakikipagkapwa-tao* (solidarity).

D. Resources

National and Local NGO-PO Network

The existing network of community-based organizations and local and national level NGOs is an important component of locally-led responses in terms of immediately accessing disaster areas and establishing contact with disaster-affected communities. Owing to the geographical distribution of these organizations, humanitarian responses led by local NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) allow

for wider scale and breadth of humanitarian action. Because Philippine NGOs are connected – directly or indirectly - to each other through various network lines (via individual or organizational contacts), they have the capacity to immediately locate the response machinery in response sites despite not always having an operational base in disaster-affected areas. This network has been built over years of working together on various development and poverty alleviation programs.

E. Collaboration Strategies or Models

Several collaboration models resulted from the Haiyan response experience of Christian Aid and partners. These models can be further explored in promoting locally-led responses as they basically promote collaboration between and among NGOs and in the process strengthen the role of local actors in the humanitarian action.

- NGO-NGO collaboration. A partner with no physical presence in the disaster-affected area seeks another NGO (not necessarily a Christian Aid partner) to collaborate with.

- Sector-focused collaboration where Christian Aid partnered with an NGO which was not from an affected area but which could play a crucial role in providing logistical support to other partner NGOs.

- Solidarity relief: people to people response where a partner NGO purchased agricultural products and supplies from its partner farmers' organizations to be brought to affected areas.

- Learning circle: Christian Aid partners' peer to peer learning support on disaster risk reduction which can be continued as part of learning management during a humanitarian response program.

- Supporting local leadership of the government and non-government actors in humanitarian coordination that addresses the power

imbalance between local and international actors in the humanitarian system (in particular in the cluster coordination system).

F. Power and Gender Dimensions

The research found that deeply-rooted cultural values such as *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) and *hiya* (sense of propriety), can hinder the active participation of disaster-affected people especially if they are unaware of their human rights. However, there is a recognition that power

and gender inequalities will need long-term interventions to raise consciousness, transform social relations, and empower individuals and communities. This is the aspect to which locally-led responses can contribute significantly by setting-up mechanisms and processes in the community that can serve as platforms for challenging inequalitites and shifting power.

BCM women leaders making bead accessories
(© PHILSSA)

People's consultation in Barangays 89 & 90, Tacloban City facilitated by UPA
(© UPA)

Members of the Barangay Council and Shelter Committee lead the hauling of shelter repair materials in Mataloto, Leyte, Lyete.

(© PDRRN)

Construction of model house by local carpenters

(© PDRRN)

Distribution of food items to beneficiaries of Food for Work activity in Poblacion 2, Capoocan, Leyte

(© PDRRN)

SECTION 1

The Context of Locally-led Humanitarian Response

This section presents discussions from literature on humanitarian partnerships between local and international organizations and renewed calls to support local humanitarian capacity. There are three main arguments that support the localization of humanitarian response: (a) there are concrete evidences of local actors contributing significantly to achieving effective, timely, speedy and relevant humanitarian response; (b) the current centralized and top-down orientation of the humanitarian system undermines local humanitarian capacity; and (c) the current global humanitarian system is stretched to its limits and has become ineffective in responding to the increasing demand for humanitarian assistance.

The Context of Locally-led Humanitarian Response

A. Local Humanitarian Actors and the Global Humanitarian System

Local knowledge

There have been renewed calls for building local humanitarian capacity and supporting local actors in humanitarian action. When a disaster strikes, the first to respond are the affected communities themselves, LGUs, and whenever they are present, civil society organizations (e.g. development organizations, civic organizations, churches and faith-based organizations, etc). Every humanitarian crisis has shown that even before the first external assistance arrives, members of the family, relatives, government officials, members of civic organizations would already be mobilizing themselves into action- helping each other look for sustenance, repairing damaged structures, finding the missing, and at times, burying the dead.

Local actors are credited for their significant contribution to achieving effectiveness, timeliness, speed and relevance of humanitarian response. Their knowledge of local context and proximity to the disaster area "enhance the relevance and appropriateness of a response" where "partnerships…ensur(e) programme design that is contextually appropriate, culturally

sensitive, and responsive to needs and based on communities' own understanding" (Ramalingam et al 2013). This knowledge of local context and culture ensures that the intervention is responsive to the priorities and needs of the disaster-affected communities, thereby also strengthening accountability to the survivors.

Studies have also shown however that knowledge of local context and proximity to disaster area alone do not guarantee strong local participation in humanitarian action. In the context of Haiyan response, research has shown that having knowledge and understanding of local contexts could only be maximized "in partnerships where power was shared equally" between local and international humanitarian partners (Featherstone 2014). The research further found that with the need for speed and scale, the power to shape and direct the response was often "skewed towards the international non-government organization (INGO)", as INGOs were better resourced; and that knowledge and understanding of local context and culture was often overlooked.

Table 2 enumerates key contributions of local humanitarian capacity factors to specific humanitarian evaluation criteria and identified gaps as can be gleaned from existing reports.

Table 2: Benefits and Gaps: Participation of Local Actors in Humanitarian Response

Benefits	Challenges and Gaps
Relevance/Responsiveness: Local NGOs have better understanding of context which help improve assessment, design and delivery of aid; Local and national organizations are better able to find solutions to problems collectively faced by humanitarian actors (Ramalingam, 10).	Knowledge and understanding of local context are not useful "if power between partners is not shared equally" (Featherstone, 8).
Timeliness: Local organizations are among the earliest responders due to their proximity, although their response can be inadequate due to lack of experience in humanitarian response, technology, and access to funding and other resources.	Speed and coverage are prioritized by INGOs over partnership owing to their upward accountability to their donors.
Scale/Coverage: Some INGOs try to strike a balance between scaling-up in order to respond to needs (the humanitarian imperative) and the capacity of the partner NGO to deliver (Featherstone, 14).	Reconciling the humanitarian imperative with partnership approaches remains to be a continuing challenge to agencies that try to support both partnership responsibilities alongside direct delivery (Featherstone, 14).
Efficiency: Lower staff and overhead costs, as well as transaction costs owing to local NGOs' knowledge of local suppliers and markets (Ramalingam, 16).	"Lower overhead costs are offset by the additional costs borne by INGOs for their operational and technical support for partners" (Featherstone, 12).
Transition/Connectedness Pre-existing programs of local NGOs prior to Haiyan response (e.g. DRR programs) contributed in better assessment of the longer-term impact of response decisions and actions to the community (Featherstone, 16).	Several factors prevent connectedness of short-term response and long-term impact and challenges: • Influx of international humanitarian staff who lack understanding of local context • The demand for speed and scale • Local NGOs' delinking of development programmes from their humanitarian response • Failure by some organizations to find ways to support partner responses (Featherstone, 16)
Human resource: There are NGOs that have included internal capacity building on humanitarian work into their organization development program that builds commitment among the staff to stay with the NGO despite the attractive offer from other organizations (Featherstone, 12).	Migration of NGO/Government staff to INGO/UN agencies mainly for higher pay; this in turn depletes the capacity of the local NGO.
Cluster leadership: The government and civil society organizations have significant experience in managing disasters; existence of a law that establishes the country's disaster response system from national to local levels of government.	Lack of Philippine government capacity (local and national) to lead cluster coordination with the magnitude and scale of Haiyan, especially that the disaster "overwhelmed existing disaster management systems including local authorities and government departments tasked with disaster response" (Featherstone, 18). Limited participation of local NGOs in humanitarian leadership fora mainly due to limited capacity, lack of familiarity with the humanitarian architecture, inaccessibility of venue of cluster coordination meetings. Power dynamics between local and international agencies also contribute to weak local leadership and participation in cluster coordination.

The global humanitarian system

The humanitarian system is both expanding and failing. The State of Humanitarian System (SOHS) reported that for the period 2012-2014, humanitarian agencies responded to fewer emergencies; but those disasters actually affected larger numbers of people. The system has grown bigger, with approximately 450,000 professional humanitarian aid workers, 4,480 operational aid organizations, and a combined expenditure of $25B. But despite the staggering figures, the humanitarian system is failing to meet the global demand for humanitarian assistance (ALNAP, 2015).

The state of the system has been described by some sectors as "stretched to its limits", "provides inadequate levels of aid that is often inappropriate, arrives too late, and is provided without transparency or accountability to affected people" (Gingeric and Cohen 2015), while the SOHS report recognizes the system's "inherent structural insufficiency" to deal with the increasing "demand for humanitarian assistance and where the political climate in which it navigates becomes less favourable".

Reflecting the still dominant framework and strategies of the current humanitarian system, many humanitarian agencies are still faced with challenges in truly supporting local participation, local humanitarian capacity, and linking with development programs and actors. The SOHS 2015 in fact reported the following:

- Improvement in needs assessment but no progress in engaging local participation.

- More feedback mechanisms were developed, but there is little evidence of affected populations' input into project design or approach.

- Growing norm and tools for accountability, but under-investment in the capacities of local partners.

- The gulf widened between strictly humanitarian and multi-mandated organizations.

- Continued disconnection and friction (…) with longer-term development agendas.

- Little participation of and consultation with recipients and local authorities.

- Despite the rise of the resilience concept, no progress occurred in changing aid architecture to suit, or in phasing in development resources earlier in the response and recovery phases (ALNAP, 2015).

Rhetoric

As most studies have repeatedly stated, commitments for supporting local humanitarian capacity and reorienting the humanitarian system have largely remained at the level of rhetoric. Nothing much has changed since the release of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) Synthesis Report in 2007, which called for fundamental changes in the humanitarian system, particularly in addressing the power imbalance between international aid agencies and local actors (government, communities and NGOs), and recommended that aid agencies needed "fundamental reorientation from supplying aid to supporting and facilitating communities' own relief and recovery priorities" (Cosgrave 2007).

Calls for the localization of humanitarian aid was a highlight at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS). Even prior to the WHS, INGOs and southern-based NGOs issued the "Charter for Change" which calls for specific changes in the way humanitarian agencies work, particularly for increased participation of southern-based NGOs in humanitarian response. Some of the changes considered significant in strengthening the localization of humanitarian aid are increased direct funding of NGOs engaging in humanitarian action,

emphasizing the importance of national actors and addressing subcontracting (see Annex B).

B. The History of Locally-led Humanitarian Response in the Philippines

Some of the country's large emergencies are the Central Luzon floods in 1972, Northern Luzon earthquake in 1990, Mt. Pinatubo eruption in 1991, the frequent eruptions of Mayon Volcano, typhoons, flooding, landslides, and armed conflict specifically in Mindanao. Aside from earning the dubious distinction of being one of the world's most disaster prone countries, the Philippines' disaster experience has also paved the way for the enactment in 1978 of a law called "Strengthening the Philippine Disaster Control, Capability and Establishing the National Program on Community Disaster Preparedness" that guided the government and local and national actors in preparing for and responding to disasters in the country. Historically, it was the national and local governments who led and managed humanitarian crises with support from the Red Cross and civil society organizations (religious, civic, non-government and people's organizations). International organizations on the other hand mainly provided technical and funding assistance, for instance, the participation of the US Army Corps of Engineers in the Mt. Pinatubo rehabilitation projects and the Italian Cooperation Team that supported the LGU of Albay in its Mayon Volcano mitigation and preparedness projects.

Among Philippine development NGOs, the idea of locally-led response is not entirely new. From a tradition of development work deeply

"We used organizing as a major strategy in disaster response because we wanted communities to own the process and manage it by themselves. Community structures formed through organizing also facilitated sustainability and was more efficient because you are able to build local capacity,"

rooted in the struggle against the oppression and deprivation of the Marcos dictatorship, and a series of disasters that aggravated the dire situation of the poor and marginalized, emerged a framework that put people as both driver and recipient of disaster response.

In the 1980s, a national network of relief and rehabilitation NGOs developed and promoted the framework "citizenry-based and development-oriented disaster response" (CBDO-DR) that espoused an orientation where the "vulnerable or marginalized are at the heart of the development agenda as its main force as well as its primary beneficiary" (Victoria and Heijmans 2001).

According to Zenaida Delica-Willison (2016), former Executive Director of the Citizens' Disaster Response Centre (CDRC), one of the organizations that spearheaded the CBDO-DR framework, the roots of this framework can be traced to the time of the Marcos dictatorship when progressive groups organized both poor/vulnerable groups and less-vulnerable sectors (youth, church, professionals, corporate workers, NGO workers, etc) to mobilize and distribute relief assistance to poor communities affected by disasters and economic crisis. *"Citizenry-based therefore refers to the strategy of mobilizing and organizing a broad citizenry for disaster response,"* Delica explained.

CBDO-DR sought to promote local ownership of the response process. People's knowledge of the community's disaster history and vulnerability factors was utilized in understanding the disaster context and linking emergency response to rehabilitation and development. CBDO-DR also harnessed local capacity both at the level of the

poor and marginalized and the less-vulnerable groups. (See Box 1: CBDO-DR Framework)

Development strategies were employed in operationalizing CBDO-DR such as capacity building, networking (especially with less-vulnerable groups) and advocacy, and community organizing. Relief committees formed during relief operations were transformed into grassroots disaster response organizations (GDROS) whose leaders and members were trained in disaster preparedness and the different aspects of disaster management. *"We used organizing as a major strategy in disaster response because we wanted communities to own the process and manage it by themselves. Community structures formed through organizing also facilitated sustainability and was more efficient because you are able to build local capacity,"* Delica further narrated.

CDRC/N[1] affiliates launched emergency responses that addressed emergency and recovery needs but also incorporated strategies that addressed long-term development issues that contributed to the disaster. Emergency response programs were designed based on damage, needs and capacity assessment (DNCA), a practice introduced by CDRC/N following the Capacity Vulnerability Analytical tool developed by Peter Woodrow

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1 The Citizens' Disaster Response Center (CDRC) was the Manila-based secretariat of the Citizens' Disaster Response Network (CDRN); the latter was composed of autonomous disaster response organizations based in the regions and were called Regional Affiliates.

and Mary Anderson. CDRC/N staff, communities and members of organizaitons were trained in emergency response planning, and, in particular, how to use the DNCA tool. Community leaders and members were also mobilized to become part of the response team. It is therefore not accurate to say that humanitarian partnerships in the country have been more of the "sub-contracting" modality *until* the introduction in recent years of national humanitarian networks (e.g. Humanitarian Response Consortium and CARRAT) when local NGOs got "more involved in the design and management of humanitarian responses" (see Featherstone 2014, p.4).

At the level of organizing and networking with less-vulnerable sectors, multi-sectoral support structures were formed such as the Inter-agency Committee on Children in Situations of Armed Conflict, the Inter-agency Network for Disaster Response, and the provincial level disaster response networks that were formed to lead the emergency response in Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991. These structures served as platforms for advocacy towards addressing humanitarian and development issues. One of the networks that was formed in 1991, the Pampanga Disaster Response Network transformed into a full-blown NGO and is now a national-level NGO called the People's Disaster Risk Reduction Network (PDRRN).

Box 1: CBDO-DR Framework

The CBDO-DR Framework was developed partly in response to the Marcos government's neglect of the situation and needs of the survivors after a string of disasters hit the country, in particular the collapse of the Negros sugar industry in 1983, six typhoons that displaced 280,000 families and damaged properties and livelihoods worth PhP 4.6 Billion, the eruption of Mayon Volcano that affected 35,000 families and damaged PhP 24 Million of crops and livestock, all of which occurred in 1984. These further aggravated the economic crisis being experienced by the poor. The crisis led to the formation of disaster response agencies which would later be known as the Citizens' Disaster Response Network; Citizen's Disaster Response Center would serve as the network secretariat.

The framework linked the short-term effects of a disaster to long-term poverty and developmental issues that, in the first place, created people's vulnerability to disasters. Thus, CBDO-DR defined disaster response not only in terms of emergency response but as "a collective term for all activities that contribute to the process of capacity building and that will lead to the reduction of people's immediate and long-term vulnerabilities to disasters". CBDO-DR as a framework "seeks to address the root causes of vulnerability through an empowerment process" (Victoria and Heijmans 2001).

One of the key features of CBDO-DR was the promotion of people's participation in disaster response. It considered people as the "main actors in disaster management"- they possess the knowledge about their community's disaster history, including their disaster vulnerability; and, thus their participation is crucial in identifying appropriate and responsive disaster management interventions (Victoria and Heijmans 2001). But more importantly, CBDO-DR promoted people's participation as an empowering strategy towards changing power relations and the system of access and control over resources in their community.

Key Features of CBDO-DR Framework.

1. It looks at disasters as a question of vulnerability.
2. It recognizes people's existing capacities and aims to strengthen these.
3. It contributes to addressing the roots of people's vulnerabilities and to transforming or removing the structures generating inequity and underdevelopment.
4. It considers people's participation (as) essential to disaster management.
5. It puts a premium on the organizational capacity of the vulnerable sectors through the formation of grassroots disaster response organizations.
6. It mobilizes the less vulnerable sectors into partnerships with the vulnerable sectors in disaster management and development work.

Source: Citizenry-Based & Development Oriented Disaster Response 2001

Local carpenters inspecting miniature model house in Capoocan, Leyte.

(© PDRRN)

Plywood distribution with fishermen volunteers in Brgy. 89 & 90, Tacloban City assisted by UPA

(© UPA)

PKKK members join the Typhoon Yolanda commemoration

(© PKKK)

SECTION 2

Key Findings

This section gathers key learnings from Christian Aid partners in their Haiyan response on how integrating development principles and strategies in humanitarian action can lead to putting people at the center of humanitarian action, building local humanitarian capacity and establishing mechanisms that link humanitarian action to longer-term development goals. The local partners' experiences and narratives were organized into the proposed set of elements of locally-led response which hopefully can serve as a framework for building local humanitarian capacity and promoting locally-led humanitarian response.

What is Locally-led Humanitarian Response?

A. Developmental Perspective and Orientation

A locally-led response empowers disaster survivors

The development orientation of Christian Aid's NGO partners in their Typhoon Haiyan response contributed significantly to shaping the objectives and direction of the humanitarian program. Having a strong development orientation enables the implementing NGO to consider factors that can contribute to "connectedness" of the response with recovery and longer-term development goals. Benedict Balderrama (2016), Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies, Inc (PHILSSA) National Coordinator, described humanitarian response as *"not only about delivering assistance; it is also a process of contributing to longer-term objectives of (people) empowerment."*

Thus, local NGO partners incorporated elements that could potentially link the humanitarian action with recovery, and help disaster-affected populations "get back to their feet". These elements included, among others identifying pre-existing and emerging vulnerabilities, rights and entitlements being violated, and power and gender inequalities.

Disasters can either create new vulnerabilities (e.g. displacement, loss of livelihood source, etc) or aggravate pre-existing ones like gender and power inequalities. By incorporating development principles, locally-led responses give voice and strength to people's participation in humanitarian action, enabling survivors to collectively engage

> *"Humanitarian response is not only about delivering assistance; it is also a process of contributing to longer-term objectives of (people) empowerment."*

with government and non-government actors who are usually the ones who hold positions of power within the local humanitarian system. The enabling processes of community organizing, rights-awareness raising and advocacy help disaster survivors to look beyond their immediate relief needs, deepen their analysis of the causes of their vulnerability and poverty, and build their capacity to plan and undertake collective actions towards addressing longer-term vulnerability issues arising from the disaster. For instance, survivors organized under the Maunlad Homeowners Association mentioned that they became more vigilant in relating with government and donors to ensure that relief assistance reached the rightful beneficiary. They were able to successfully negotiate with the Tacloban LGU for the release of shelter repair kits to households who were still staying in No Build Zone areas.[1] With the guidance from community organizers of the Urban Poor Associates (UPA), they continued to lobby with the City and Barangay LGUs on pressing issues such as their demand for decent permanent housing as a long-term solution to their displacement.

A women's association in Basey, Samar on the other hand looked beyond the needs of women affected by Haiyan and identified potentials for strengthening women's control and benefits from mat production which is the main livelihood of women in the municipality. (See Box 2: PKKK and BANIG)

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1 The City Council agreed to release the materials on the condition that people would evacuate as directed by the government in times of emergencies.

Box 2: PKKK and BANIG

Pambansang Koalisyon ng mga Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK) started organizing women's associations in the municipality of Basey in 2004. Majority of the members of the associations are mat weavers, the main source of income among women in Basey. By around 2013, there were a total of 33 individual associations organized which then became a federation called Basey Association for Native Industry Growth (BANIG Federation) by February 2014.

During the Haiyan response, women leaders and members of barangay-based associations participated in damage and needs assessment and in selecting beneficiaries using the following criteria: poor family/low income level, large number of family members, families with PWD, elderly, and lactating/nursing mothers. Interestingly, they also included "unity" of women members of the local association and assessed whether women were still active in mat weaving. *"We wanted to be sure that the association was still existing, and that if the women were still active in mat weaving, they can become part of BANIG's mission of enabling women to benefit from mat weaving."*

For PKKK and its coalition members, the Haiyan response was an opportunity to address a particular economic vulnerability affecting women mat weavers in the municipality. They were aware of how local traders exploited women weavers by dictating the buying price of the women's products and were convinced that only through a strong and united women's organization will they be able to address such exploitation. Thus, BANIG ensured that the women's association was consolidated as a mechanism for livelihood recovery. BANIG envisioned a livelihood recovery that will provide opportunities for women weavers to increase their capability in managing and selling their own products. According to them, *"We wanted to know if the organization and its members were still active. We didn't want the women to rely on relief; we wanted to help them resume their mat weaving. But at the same time, there was a need to strengthen the organization in promoting the interest of women in the community* (BANIG)*."*

Enables survivors for rights-claiming

The declaration of No Build Zones (NBZ) in Tacloban City was one of the triggers of UPA's decision to support communities in their advocacy to address the threat of displacement. Having worked on resettlement issues for a long time, they immediately knew that long-term development issues would be created after the NBZ declaration. Thus, their humanitarian framework incorporated Rights Based Approach (RBA) to strengthen the development orientation of its humanitarian program. They identified and assessed applicable laws, the key players in land rights and housing issues in the locality, and analyzed the local government's plans for temporary and permanent resettlement. (See Box 3: UPA)

UPA's strategy of community organizing and rights–based approach enabled Haiyan survivors to claim from local government their entitlements as disaster survivors. As already mentioned, UPA community organizers assisted the survivors in lobbying and negotiating with the appropriate government agencies for relief and recovery assistance thereby utilizing government resources that were intended for

Box 3: UPA

UPA's solid knowledge and experience of working on housing rights of poor people shaped and geared its Haiyan response particularly in fishing communities that were affected by further displacement due to the declaration of No Build Zones. Starting with the provision of shelter needs, UPA geared its response towards addressing the threat of further displacement. It built its response on a platform of community organizing and advocacy that included training of local community organizers and leaders, rights awareness building (e.g. Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992, Water Code of the Philippines), lobbying with private landowners (e.g. for the transitional shelter, vegetable garden and livestock project).

UPA accompanied survivors to lobby with concerned government units to negotiate for the provision of public assistance to the survivors (e.g. accessing funds from the Department of Social Welfare and Development for cash for work activities, seeds from the Department of Agriculture and water supply from the local water district). *"In assessing the disaster situation, we looked into the rights of the affected population – what rights were potentially being violated and should be protected, and which duty-bearer that the survivors should be dealing with,"* said UPA staff in explaining how the organization's development framework influenced their Haiyan response.

the survivors in the first place. However, while UPA's strategy enabled the mobilization of goods and services from the government, it also resulted to low-burn rate. According to Ivy Shella Pagute (2016), Coordinator for Special Project of UPA, they understood why such low-burn rate could be interpreted as an indicator of their level of absorptive capacity. *"The budget was indicated in the approved proposal, including the schedule of fund release. And we were not spending what we were supposed to spend as scheduled. But, clearly, this experience tells us that high-burn rate and spending according to schedule do not necessarily translate to high-quality response, and low-burn rate is not necessarily an issue of non-performance."*

Locally-led response is community-owned and managed process

A locally-led response is a process that is owned and managed by the disaster-affected community.

In their attempt to be inclusive and participatory, many humanitarian and development agencies conduct consultations with CBOs and other groups in the community. But, there is a caveat here- working with or through community organizations can hardly be called locally-led if the process is derived from shallow notions of people participation. Merely consulting people in the community is not equivalent to participation as experienced by the Maunlad Homeowners' Association in Tacloban City when they were "consulted" by an INGO about a project that it wanted to implement with the association. The INGO required certain methodologies and policies which the homeowners' association believed could cause disunity among its members. The Maunlad HOA officers did not participate in the project as an organization but allowed the INGO to work directly with individual members who were interested in joining the project.

Leading, owning and managing a humanitarian response also means that the members of the community are able to exercise power through genuine participation in processes and decisions that affect their life. Chambers defines participation "an 'empowering process' that enables people to do their own analysis, to take command, to gain in confidence and to make their own decisions" (Chambers 1995, cited in dela Cruz 2005). This resonates with the strategy of the Balik Calauit Movement (BCM) when they engaged with a number of NGOs during the Haiyan response. (See Box 4)

B. Community Organizing as Humanitarian Response Strategy

Community organizing or CO has long been a core strategy of development NGOs towards empowerment of poor and marginalized sectors and communities in the Philippines. As a community development strategy, CO builds on the "inherent capacities and concrete experience of communities" and enables people to "take charge of themselves" by building their capacity for critical awareness of their situation, analysing and understanding the factors and causes of their vulnerabilities and disempowerment, developing leaders from the members of the community, and capacitating them to manage their organization (dela Cruz 2004). It is clear from the experience of the NGOs in this research that the development principles embedded in CO could be applied even in humanitarian response contexts.

Engaging with pre-existing community structures

Local development NGOs that participated in Haiyan response worked closely with existing community organizations- either with their long-time partner people's organization, or with those organized by other agencies. It should be noted that many local NGOs in the Philippines will have partners – sectoral, community-based

Box 4: Balik Calauit Movement

The BCM is an organization of indigenous peoples (IPs) living in Busuanga, Palawan and a partner of PHILSSA. They were formed in 1986 with the aim of reclaiming their right to return to and live in their homeland (Calauit) after being driven out in 1976 to give way to former President Marcos's Safari Park project. The IPs has since returned to Calauit.

Through the years, BCM has developed its capacity to assert their rights and identity in engaging with other stakeholders. It is BCM's policy and practice for instance, that every external programme or assistance will have to be discussed, assessed and approved by the members of the community in terms of how the elements of a project will contribute to and promote the objectives of their Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP). *"We have to protect and develop our ancestral land and so all assistance will have to be assessed based on our ADSDPP,"* says Onofia Mued, BCM president (2016). Specifically for Haiyan assistance, the BCM made sure that the components of the project will enable the recipient not only to recover from the disaster but to "sustainably" earn an income as well. Thus, BCM decided to provide cash grants for livelihood support and prioritize the vulnerable members of the organization such as those who have very little income, large family size, families with members who are disable, elderly, and single-headed households.

organizations (farmers, fishers, urban poor, youth, etc) in their development program areas that in times of disasters become their natural link to the devastated areas. In the case of PKKK for instance, their Haiyan response was closely coordinated with the women's associations in the municipality of Basey which PKKK helped organized as early as 2004. The women officers of the BANIG Federation included in their emergency assessment the presence and current status of the women's organizations in the disaster-affected area to determine how these organizations can effectively participate in the relief program. PHILSSA on the other hand, worked with the Balik Calauit Movement (BCM), a PO partner of one of PHILSSA's member NGOs. Balderrama explained that PHILSSA's practice for now when responding to a disaster is to prioritize those disaster-affected areas where their partner NGO and POs are present.

UPA for its part worked with community organizations formed by other agencies like the savings group and pedicab drivers and fishers associations organized by a Catholic religious organization in Barangays 89 & 90 in Tacloban City. Triggered by the immense humanitarian needs in Haiyan affected areas, UPA decided to respond despite their not having prior engagement in said areas. To establish their presence, UPA relied on the information provided by other organizations within their network.

From the local NGOs' experience, working with pre-existing community structures was important as it provided them with mechanisms where people participation in humanitarian action can be promoted. With the participation of community organizations and their knowledge of local conditions of poverty and vulnerability, the humanitarian response program became more

From the local NGOs' experience, working with pre-existing community structures was important as it provided them with mechanisms where people participation in humanitarian action can be promoted.

responsive to the needs, interests and wellbeing of poor and vulnerable groups in the community.

Project committee versus organizational consolidation

It should be emphasized at this point that CO as practiced by the development NGOs in this research does not refer solely to the process of forming project delivery structures (e.g. relief project committee) through which response activities were to be implemented. Community organizing as a strategy for humanitarian action was aimed to consolidate the leaders and members of existing organizations by means of CO strategies like issue analysis, leadership development, various types of capacity building (from training to mentoring), community mobilization, and action-reflection sessions among others (see Box 5 for further discussion of UPA's CO process). In Tacloban City, there are around 11 homeowners associations from 17 communities that UPA brought together to form the MAUNLAD HOA Federation. In SAMAR, women leaders and members interviewed attributed the formation of the federation of 33 barangay-based women's associations into BANIG Federation to their engagement in the Haiyan disaster response.

New formation emerging from humanitarian action

In Busuanga, PHILSSA's response led to the formation of a new organization, the *May Kapansanan Laging Nagdadamayan* (MAKADAMAY), a local organization of persons with disability in Barangay San Rafael. According to its president Pedrito Cruzat (2016): *"In our consultation with PHILSSA we told them that whenever there is a disaster our needs as PWDs were not usually being appropriately addressed.*

PHILSSA then helped us organize ourselves; they gave us training on various topics. They focused (tunutukan) on our formation up to the stage where we were able to formally register MAKADAMAY with SEC[2]. Also, I owe it to PHILSSA that I am now a recognized leader of the PWDs in Calamianes." Cruzat added that an important outcome of organizing the PWDs was their membership in the Busuanga MDRRMC as representative of the PWD sector in Calamianes, a role which MAKADAMAY has to take forward beyond the relief phase.

Different strategies in the organizing process were utilized by the partners in the context of Haiyan response - such as identification of potential leaders and active members of pre-existing organizations, and mobilization of resources from different groups and individuals. It also included mentoring and accompanying leaders when lobbying with the LGUs for assistance. Box 5 below identifies the steps in what UPA

2 Securities and Exchange Commission.

calls its "condensed" organizing process in order to "speed-up" the organizing process given the sense of urgency in the context of the Haiyan emergency. According to UPA organizers Jessa Margallo and Jose Alegro Torrella, they conducted the above activities approximately in a month's time, and they needed to hold further consultations, trainings and other activities to strengthen the capacity and deepen the commitment of leaders and members.

C. Guiding Principles

Prioritizes poor, vulnerable and underserved communities for assistance

Local NGOs and community organizations bring into humanitarian programming their knowledge of the poverty context and political and power dynamics among development stakeholders in their locality. Christian Aid's local NGO partners are development organizations

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Box 5: Community Organizing Steps used by UPA

1. Community integration that included contact building with members and groups in the community.
2. Social Investigation that included class and power analysis, identifying issues and problems and resources in the community (potential and actual).
3. Identifying and working with potential leaders from the community.
4. Ground work which entailed data gathering about key actors/players involved in relation to issues and problems confronting the community.
5. Strategy development that is conducted together with the identified community leaders; strategies are developed on how to address identified issues; can also be referred to as technical working group.
6. Community meeting where strategies and action plans are presented and discussed.
7. Role playing of target activities, for instance negotiation meeting with the LGU or the landowner. UPA considers this as critical in capacitating people to effectively engage power holders in the community.
8. Mobilization involving members of the affected community to raise issues with concerned LGU or government agency.
9. Evaluation to identify improvements on strategies needed for future activities.
10. Reflection among leaders and members

engaged in programs that seek ways to address poverty and vulnerability in the community they are serving. They work directly with the poor and marginalized hence their in-depth knowledge of poverty and development issues affecting poor sectors.

Many of these NGOs would have sectoral focus in their development programming– women, fishers, farmers, urban poor, youth, etc.. This sectoral focus is carried over to their beneficiary selection, ensuring that the poorest and most vulnerable are reached and assisted, and avoiding the danger of serving only those within the ambit of media coverage and the so-called "humanitarian hubs" (where many international humanitarian agencies usually congregate). PHILSSA for instance, decided to respond in one of their programme areas in Busuanga, Palawan based on their assessment that only a few agencies were working in the province despite Haiyan's devastation on people's livelihoods and assets.

Local NGOs also regularly engage with communities, civil society organizations and local governments (officials and agencies) and this provides them with first-hand understanding of the socio-political and cultural realities in their areas of operations. Such knowledge of political and power dynamics in a community can help promote effective targeting and distribution mechanisms, according to Balderrama. *"Without this local NGO knowledge, targeting becomes 'hit and miss'; but, knowledge of local CSOs are at times not maximized and that's when we hear cases of beneficiary selection that is skewed towards certain groups or individuals and relief distribution being used by individuals for political gains,"* Balderrama said.

> *"Without this local NGO knowledge, targeting becomes 'hit and miss'; but, knowledge of local CSOs are at times not maximized and that's when we hear cases of beneficiary selection that is skewed towards certain groups or individuals and relief distribution being used by individuals for political gains."*

Locally-led response is based on needs

Generally, proximity to disaster-affected areas allows local NGOs to have faster access to assessment information. Local NGOs in this research employed community processes to gather information such as consultations and meetings and ocular visits of disaster sites. Needs were assessed based on information usually generated from a triangulation of data sources such as representatives of the affected households, local barangay officials (including official reports), and community organizations (formal or informal).

Identifying the needs of highly vulnerable groups is a common standard for making the needs assessment more inclusive: the extremely poor, pregnant and lactating mothers, children/orphans, the elderly, and people with disability. As mentioned, local NGOs also included capacity assessment of existing organizations, potential leaders, livelihood skills, etc. People were also asked about their priorities, especially in a situation where there were already other agencies providing assistance. Thus for instance, BCM opted to receive cash grants because they already received rice and other food items from the government.

Assessed needs and listing of target beneficiaries then went through a validation process together with members and officials of the community before plans were finalized.

Consultations and negotiations were also conducted to determine and validate distribution methods, policies and mechanisms. Local development NGOs and CBOs preferred distribution methods that build or promote

people's capacity so as not to contradict development processes that have been incorporated into the response design.

Avoids creating new vulnerability

Disasters are a significant part of the development context in the Philippines– they threaten and can destroy development efforts and gains in the same manner that humanitarian interventions have the potential of negatively affecting the development process in a community. Relief dependency and dole-outs are practices that local NGOs try so hard to avoid when engaging in humanitarian response. *"In the aftermath of a humanitarian program, it is the local CSO and not the international humanitarian agency that would be left with the responsibility of fixing whatever problem an intervention created"*, says Balderrama.

During Haiyan response, some NGOs observed that the huge amount of relief goods that flooded the disaster areas could potentially create relief dependency, especially if distributions were done in an ineffective manner. PKKK National Secretariat Amparo Miciano (2016) observed that there seemed to be *"a situation of plenty in a context of crisis when you see all those truckloads of relief goods being distributed."* PKKK also received feedback from their community organizers in Basey, Samar that all of a sudden some members of the community would only be willing to participate in community activities in exchange for cash. PKKK suspected that this attitude was due to the influx of cash that were distributed through various emergency cash transfer programming activities. This shows that a single intervention, if implemented without a clear developmental framework could potentially erode pre-existing capacity such as community volunteerism and self-help. *"Of course, this emerging attitude among members of the community has negative impact on our organizing efforts in the barangay,"* Miciano added.

For UPA, the organization was very clear with its approach at the time it decided to do humanitarian work in Tacloban City. *"We did not want the assistance to be given as dole-outs. That's why we used community organizing as main strategy,"* said Pagute (2016). As already mentioned, community organizing in the experience of Christian Aid partners referred not to the formation of committees through which relief could be delivered, but to the strategies and approaches that greatly enhanced the participation of disaster-affected people in the relief process, which in turn, promoted transparency and lessened conflict among members of the community.

Contributes to local preparedness and humanitarian capacity

Working with local organizations provides opportunities for building and installing preparedness mechanisms within the community organization. The Maunlad Homeowners Association, organized in the context of the Haiyan response, now recognizes that their organization plays an important role in disaster preparedness, and that as an organization, they can exert influence on the actions of power structures in their community like the Barangay Council. When Typhoon Ruby threatened to hit Eastern Visayas in 2014, it was the Maunlad Homeowners Association that urged the Barangay Council to pre-emptively evacuate the community. Their newly established network of supporters also enabled them to immediately mobilize vehicles needed for the pre-emptive evacuation.

In another example, PKKK hired capable members of women's associations which they said was aimed at strengthening the organization. Instead of hiring external staff, members were selected to become part of the response team who would be responsible for various project activities – damage and needs assessment, listing of beneficiaries, logistics, data gathering for progress monitoring

and reporting among others. One of the project staff in Tacloban said: *"Typhoon Haiyan already taught us (members) about the importance of preparedness, and the learning we obtained from the project will be brought back and shared with the members so that the organization can better prepare for the next disaster."*

PKKK members also mentioned that participating in the response provided them with a productive way of dealing with their disaster experience and in the process enabled them to help those who are in need.

In various parts of the world there exist organized groups of Overseas Filipino Workers and Filipino immigrants who, at times of disasters initiate the collection and distribution of donated goods and funds, driven by the *bayanihan* spirit and that same felt need to extend solidarity to disaster-affected communities – *pakikiisa at pakikiramay sa mga nasalanta*.

Locally-led response promotes healing and solidarity among local actors

Survivors possess and retain certain capacities despite the effects of a disaster on their lives and livelihoods. This was shown by the experience of the members of the Palaypay Women's Association in Basey, Leyte and the Maunlad Homeowners' Association in Tacloban, Leyte who shared that they joined other members of the community in helping distraught neighbours search for missing members of the community, look for food and water and safe refuge for everyone. PKKK members also mentioned that participating in the response provided them with a productive way of dealing with their disaster experience and in the process enabled them to help those who are in need. *"We lost everything-our homes, livelihoods, loved ones. But, PKKK has taught us to treat each co-member as family and to always serve the community,"* said the members of the Palaypay Women's Association.

Solidarity is an expression of the old Filipino cultural practice of *bayanihan* which is still widely practiced in many rural communities and in some cases, being revived by the need to help disaster-stricken communities. Solidarity as a trigger for humanitarian action facilitates people to people response, allowing Filipino diaspora and local communities not affected by the disaster to connect with each other and form solidarities with disaster-affected communities.

D. Resources

Network of local and international partners, promotes solidarity

Accessing resources to initiate response activities was a challenge for most local development NGOs in this research. Many of them did not have access to emergency funds that could be readily mobilized in times of disasters. What they have was their own network of organizations, friends and supporters in the Philippines and abroad from whom they mobilized resources especially funds and relief goods to launch emergency assessment and relief activities, albeit at a smaller scale.

UPA and PKKK mobilized resources from friends and partner organizations in order to launch "mission visits" to the affected areas. UPA solicited funds and other resources from friends (local and from abroad) while PKKK reached out to the other members of the national coalition for material support. PHILSSA was able to mobilize funds, relief items and volunteers from its member organizations in other parts of the country, and from a limited amount of "emergency funds" that they can use for assessments and relief. The organization of indigenous people Balik Calauit Movement in Busuanga, Palawan, contacted their long-time partner Pahinungod in the University of the Philippines-Los Baños for assistance that

brought rice and other food items even before assistance from the local DSWD office came.

Proximity and access do not only refer to being geographically located or near the disaster area as most NGOs interviewed for this research were Manila-based (PHILSSA, UPA, PKKK) or based in other provinces like the Cebu-based Fellowship for Organizing Endeavor, Inc (FORGE) or Sorsogon-based Coastal Core Inc. (CCI). The existing network of local NGOs is also an important source of operational support that could be mobilized for immediate deployment during emergencies i.e. resources for assessment "mission" teams, relief goods, immediate housing for deployed staff, warehouse and others. UPA for instance utilized its network of organization (e.g. religious sisters of the Holy Spirit) and former staff based in Tacloban City to gather information and establish its operations in the city. PKKK on the other hand directly contacted women leaders from Leyte and Samar areas to get initial information about the effects of the disaster and needs of the survivors.

The existing network of local NGOs is also an important source of operational support that could be mobilized for immediate deployment during emergencies.

Access to supplies and logistics

As the local NGOs in this research experienced, an organization's proximity and access to services, supplies and other logistical support are equally important and should be thoroughly assessed and mapped out as part of preparedness strategy. Coastal Core Inc (CCI) utilized its familiarity with the market near and around its operational base in Bicol and by getting supplies from Legaspi City and Sorsogon, it avoided the stiff competition among humanitarian agencies in purchasing supplies from Manila and Cebu.

Cebu was not as badly hit by Haiyan and thus became the major logistics hub for response agencies operating in Samar and

Leyte. It was in this context that Cebu-based organization FORGE agreed to manage logistics support for the response of Christian Aid partners in Leyte and Samar areas.

E. Collaboration Strategies

Solidarity relief: facilitating people to people response

If FORGE focused on logistics, RWAN explored what it calls "solidarity relief", referring to the procurement of supplies from its network of farmers' organizations in the country and delivering them to farmer survivors. In assessing the recovery needs of affected farmers, RWAN found that the Department of Agriculture did not have enough stock of seeds for distribution to farmers. And because there was no supply from the government, most humanitarian agencies purchased seeds from a commercial seeds manufacturer and supplier especially of vegetable seeds. RWAN also found that usually, there would be problems with the quality of commercial seeds (e.g. old stock) and there was always the possibility of mismatching the type of seed with the season and local farming practices (in terms of seed gap, germination and yield). From this came out the idea of utilizing farmers' products from other RWAN program areas not affected by the typhoon to assist in the recovery of typhoon affected farming communities.

For its Haiyan recovery intervention, RWAN procured seeds (palay and vegetable), organic fertilizer, and other local products like dried fish from its partner farmers' organizations in Sorsogon, while in responding to Mindanao areas hit by El Niño in 2016, RWAN bought supplies from its partners in Samar. RWAN said that its partner farmers'

organizations have the technology to produce seeds appropriate to the country's different planting seasons, and can produce and store enough stock until the next disaster.

Several other collaboration models resulted from the Haiyan response experience of the local NGOs. These models can be further explored in promoting locally-led responses, coordination between organizations and complementation of capacities and resources between NGOs. These models if done effectively i.e. contributes to the coherence of the response program and there is clear delineation of roles and functions of partners, could strengthen the role of local actors in humanitarian action.

- NGO-NGO collaboration where a partner with no physical presence in the disaster affected area collaborates with another NGO based on the latter's presence in the affected area. Example of this is CCI (no physical presence in Region VIII) that partnered with CERD which had development programming in Leyte and Samar and thus familiar with the affected areas, its local language, and the local socio-political context and culture. Christian Aid eventually supported the CCI-CERD consortium.

- Sector-focused collaboration where Christian Aid mobilized its partner NGO from a non-affected area (FORGE) which played a crucial role in providing logistical support to other Christian Aid partner NGOs. FORGE did not have substantial experience and knowledge in logistics work, and as expected faced huge difficulties in setting-up and managing its logistics system. Nevertheless, it was able to provide for the food and non-food relief needs of 13,000 families assisted by partners Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM) and Philippine Network of Rural Development Institutes (Philnet-RDI) in Leyte. The model of a partner NGO focusing on one aspect of the response system shows the potential

of close coordination and complementation of services among local NGOs in bringing about an effective locally-led humanitarian response. This model worked because of the partner's location - Cebu City which became a logistical and suppliers' hub for the Haiyan operations, and more importantly, because it showed that diversification of roles of local NGOs can contribute to the effectiveness of humanitarian action.

- Learning circle: Christian Aid partners' peer to peer learning support on DRR which can be continued as part of learning management during a humanitarian response program. The learning circle was originally formed by several local NGOs in the aftermath of Typhoon Reming (2006) in order to strengthen their understanding of disaster risk reduction. According to Shirley Bolanos (2016), Executive Director of CCI, the learning circle was conceptualized after CCI and several other NGOs that responded to Typhoon Reming realized that they needed a better understanding of climate change and DRR to enable them to become more effective in responding to the increasing frequency of disasters in the country. Bolanos added that the learning circle concept can be continued among Christian Aid partners as a form of collaboration in humanitarian response.

Critical engagement with LGUs, support for locally-led humanitarian system

The capacity of local government units to exercise its mandate as duty bearer for humanitarian action rely heavily on its response budget, allocation from the national government, and donations or assistance from NGOs and the private sector. It also has to manage the different goals and agenda of local and international humanitarian actors, the power dynamics of political groups, on top of ensuring timely, effective and accountable service delivery. And like in previous major emergencies, many of LGU staff are disaster

survivors themselves. All these can overwhelm an LGU and greatly reduce their effectiveness to lead and perform its humanitarian function. This was observed by a few of the local NGOs in this research who, during cluster coordination meetings observed how LGUs needed support in leading the humanitarian system.

It is within this context that some of the NGOs interviewed consider it an important role of local NGOs to support LGUs in exercising its humanitarian leadership. These NGOs see the need to assist LGUs especially in asserting leadership of the cluster coordination system which usually are dominated by external actors. During Haiyan response, PDRRN for instance provided technical support to a provincial LGU in setting-up the cluster system. It also "seconded" staff to LGU operations i.e. NGO staff teaming-up with its counterpart staff in the LGU, and conducted regular visits to mentor and coach LGU staff. *"By doing so, we are able to establish our good intention, build positive reputation and influence their decisions and actions towards better services to the disaster-affected population,"* says Esteban Masagca, Executive Director of PDRRN.

F. Power and Gender Dimensions

The experiences of local NGOs in this research show that the survivors' awareness of rights and entitlements is crucial in enabling them to fully participate and influence humanitarian plans and implementation. But, the research also found that the survivors' lack of awareness of rights, coupled with cultural factors can further reinforce the perception of the survivor as "victim" and passive recipients of relief. This was noted in the interview with Palaypay Women's Association and BANIG Federation which claimed to being

> *The research also found that the survivors' lack of awareness of rights, coupled with cultural factors can further reinforce the perception of the survivor as "victim" and passive recipients of relief.*

"shy" to "demand" from relief agencies for water and medicine for their members despite being consulted about their needs. The women also said they did not know that they could actually determine the content and quality of relief assistance. *"Nakakahiyang mag-demand sa PKKK. Nagpapasalamat kami kung ano mang tulong ang maibigay nila sa amin,"* (We are "shy" to demand from PKKK. We are just thankful for whatever relief goods they would give us.), some of the women said, and then: *"Malaking utang na loob namin sa kanila na binigyan nila kami ng tulong,"* (It's a huge debt of gratitude that we received assistance from them). The Filipino word "hiya" can be interpreted and translated differently depending on the context of its use, but in this particular context, *hiya* refers to the women feeling "shy" because they felt that it was inappropriate for them to demand from PKKK who has already given so much (see Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, where *hiya* was defined as a sense of propriety). The women said that it could be interpreted as *"wala kaming utang na loob"* (we don't have debt of gratitude) if they "demanded" or expressed their preference for certain relief items simply because they are "recipients". The elements of being unaware of their rights, and the Filipino cultural traits of *"hiya"* and *"utang na loob"* tend to make disaster survivors passive which in turn reinforce the power imbalance between the provider (as powerholder) and recipient (powerless) of assistance.

On the other hand, the NGO partners in this research expressed different levels of appreciation and understanding of the importance of having gender lens in humanitarian programming. Those with already strong gender orientation like PKKK, would obviously have more capability

in identifying gender issues and how to address them. But some partners mentioned that they had very little consciousness of the gender component of the response. They only learned about the implication of being gender blind in the course of project implementation. One partner said that *"Maybe by not being conscious about gender we are missing on important gender issues. We are not probing deeper enough like in terms of understanding women's reproductive role in urban setting and in addressing land use and housing."*

Gender and power inequalities are deeply-rooted in a community's socio-economic, political and cultural structures, and addressing them requires long-term interventions and processes. In using CO as humanitarian strategy in their Haiyan response, the local NGOs paved the way for people's collective engagement with powerholders, and ensured that women's needs and interests are adequately addressed. However, changing cultural beliefs and practices and gender biases will need long-term development interventions. This presents the importance of establishing a strong linkage between humanitarian response and longer-term development programming. Through the Haiyan response of Christian Aid's partner NGOs, women and men individuals were capacitated, community organizations were consolidated, and processes and structures were installed that, in a post-Haiyan phase, can serve as mechanisms for challenging values and practices that promote power and gender inequalities.

PKKK women-led DRR Team in Legaspi, Marabut, Western Samar

(© PKKK)

SECTION 3

Locally-led Humanitarian Response in the Philippines: Gaps and Challenges

Locally-led Humanitarian Response in the Philippines: Gaps and Challenges

The research shows that local development NGOs, despite their limited humanitarian experience and knowledge possess strong potentials for linking humanitarian action with development processes and goals. Through development strategies, locally-led responses can strengthen the participation of women and men survivors in humanitarian action, create opportunities for the survivors' active and collective engagement with powerholders and strengthen the relevance and appropriateness of relief and recovery interventions to the needs and priorities of the community. Community organizing, rights-based approaches and people-to-people responses build on existing capacity of disaster-affected people and communities and establish community structures and mechanisms where people can continue to challenge power and gender inequalities.

However, locally-led humanitarian response still operates within the context of the international humanitarian system, and as previous studies have shown, certain elements of the current international humanitarian system prevent the development of local humanitarian capacity. Below are some of the major gaps and challenges in further promoting locally-led humanitarian response as can be gleaned from the experiences of local development NGOs that engaged in humanitarian response.

> *"From assessment, designing, implementation and evaluation, the system now lacks direct human interaction that prevents flexibility."*

International humanitarian system's lack of understanding of the history and tradition of local humanitarianism

The local humanitarian landscape has changed significantly with the introduction of the formal humanitarian system in the country. As earlier presented, responding to disasters in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s was led mainly by the national and local government, with support from a few NGOs like the Red Cross and civil society organizations. International organizations mainly provided funding and technical support. Masagca recalls that changes happened starting in 2006 after the introduction of the Humanitarian Reform Agenda, and the conduct of a series of workshops about the Cluster Approach in 2007 which he himself attended. *"After that, INGOs and UN agencies started to implement directly on the ground,"* said Masagca. Where local NGOs would mobilize local volunteers, people's organizations and local networks, international agencies started sending in expatriates as part of its surge personnel. New systems, technology and approaches were introduced which in some cases were culturally inappropriate or unavailable locally. In doing so, local initiatives and capacity were undermined. The humanitarian system has also become mechanical. As observed by Masagca: *"From assessment, designing, implementation and evaluation, the system now lacks direct human interaction that prevents flexibility"*.

Understanding local approaches and strategies

The international system lacks flexibility and openness to accommodate local ways of doing humanitarian work, and most of the time it could be because local processes and results may not comply with international requirements and standards. The usual response to this is to conduct training to help the "locals" adapt to new system and technology. However, compliance to speed, scale and standards could remain as main motivations in training local staff, which brings questions as to the real goal and direction of trainings being conducted by international and local agencies in the context of humanitarian partnership. As Smillie states in Partnership or Patronage?: *"Capacity building is a central issue in partnership in crisis-related interventions. A recurring issue regarding capacity building is who sets the agenda and for what purpose. Capacity building may become a means to control partners' adherence to standards and financial accountability, and it has been suggested this has more to do with disciplining organisations to become good partners than to help them to realize their own goals"* (cited in Tukker and Poelje 2010).

As shown in the elements gathered in this research, a long history and tradition of disaster response that rely on local people and institutions, driven by solidarity and political consciousness have contributed significantly to the current thinking and practice of local humanitarian work. However, international agencies may fail to recognize the potential of these elements in strengthening the effectiveness, relevance and connectedness to longer-term development goals of humanitarian work by simply dismissing them as outside the "normative framework" of international humanitarianism

"guided by a set of principles designed to preserve the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian action" (Bennett and Foley 2016).

The research findings lead us to believe that the international humanitarian system needs to have a better understanding not only of the capacity of local development organizations but also of the history and tradition that shaped local humanitarianism in the country. Such understanding helps in acknowledging local ways of doing humanitarian action outside of the formal system, and a better appreciation of the current thinking and practice of local actors engaging in humanitarian action.

Lack of access to humanitarian funding

Local NGOs in the Philippines have varying levels of experience and knowledge of the various components of humanitarian work and to address this, there have been efforts by some INGOs like Christian Aid to build its partners' local humanitarian capacity through training, building their knowledge about standards, and partnering with them in humanitarian response. The partners themselves have exerted efforts at training their staff and building their own learning alongside project implementation.

It is a common experience among local NGOs to advance funds from other sources as they wait for the release of funds from donor countries, which will have to pass through the local INGO channel, then finally to local banks.

But, lack of access to humanitarian funding continues to be a challenge in promoting and building local humanitarian capacity. The NGOs interviewed for this research admitted facing difficulty in mobilizing resources for emergency assessment and conducting first phase relief. In fact, some of the NGOs claimed that they had to "borrow" funds from other projects and mobilize support from other sources in order to conduct emergency assessments. There was also an observation that

local NGOs incur "losses" whenever they delay the implementation of their regular development programs (e.g. losses in regular staff time, use of office equipment that doubles or triples during emergencies, recovery of staff wellbeing, among others) in order to operate in humanitarian mode, and that there is no existing mechanism where NGOs can recover such "losses", like providing "management fees" to NGOs similar to the one being provided to INGOs by some donors (Bonpin 2016).

This situation reflects the lack of investment in developing local humanitarian capacity that existing studies have already pointed out (see for instance Ramalingam, et al 2013, Featherstone, 2014, and Gingeric and Cohen, 2015). An Oxfam research found that between 2007 and 2013, humanitarian assistance that went to national and local actors in crisis-affected countries "averaged less than 2% annually (Gingeric and Cohen 2015).

The SOHS also reported that not much progress have been achieved in terms of investing in local capacity, as "donors continue to rely on their habitual partners, which are almost entirely (…) INGOs, often from their own country, and UN agencies. Little serious exploration has been done of the potential feasibility of funding disaster-affected governments or national NGOs directly." This is because donors prefer the efficiency of managing large amounts of funding support through their habitual single channels over multiple separate grants with different organizations (ALNAP 2015).

> *Feedback gathered from local partners indicates that they did not find cluster meetings useful. The meetings were mainly perceived as intimidating due to the dominant presence of external (foreign) humanitarian personnel, the use of technical language, frequency of meetings and distance of meeting venues to the partner's base of operation.*

On the ground however, achieving efficiency in coursing funds through their "habitual single channels" is not always achieved due to the slow turnaround of reporting, documentation and other contractual processes between the donor and its channel INGO that usually result to delays in downloading of funds. It is a common experience among local NGOs to advance funds from other sources as they wait for the release of funds from donor countries, which will have to pass through the local INGO channel, then finally to local banks.

Weak leadership and participation in cluster coordination meetings

As mentioned earlier, knowledge about local context and culture that can inform targeting and distribution schemes is often overlooked especially in cluster coordination meetings. Feedback gathered from local partners indicates that they did not find cluster meetings useful. The meetings were mainly perceived as intimidating due to the dominant presence of external (foreign) humanitarian personnel, the use of technical language, frequency of meetings and distance of meeting venues to the partner's base of operation. Christian Aid had attempted to accompany a few of its partners into those meetings but those partners opted to stop attending the meetings due to the reasons given above.

The cluster approach is an important aspect of the humanitarian system. Cluster coordination aims to "assure coherence in achieving common objectives, avoiding duplication and ensuring areas of need are prioritized" (OCHA). Hence, it is important that local NGOs and LGUs are

supported and capacitated to substantially participate during coordination meetings, making sure that its voice- knowledge, understanding and analysis of local context are heard and can influence humanitarian policies and guidelines that affect the lives of disaster survivors.

Children help in preparing plastic sheets for distribution in Bogo, Cebu(© Nikko Lacsina)

Capacity building of survivors: training of solar scholars in Tacloban City (© PDRRN)

Community orientation on DRR and the promotion of Typhoon-Resistant Building Construction in Dulag, Leyte

(© PDRRN)

One of the regular meetings of Busuanga (Palawan) leaders led by Pedrito Cruzat, a person with disability (PWD)

(© PHILSSA)

Community kitchen in Tacloban City supported by UPA

(© UPA)

Women in Culasi, Leyte extend help in hauling coco lumber for house repairs

(© PDRRN)

SECTION 4

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion and Recommendations

The narratives and examples gathered from the Haiyan response experience of Christian Aid's local NGO partners show that locally-led responses offer a strong alternative to the mainstream, formal and centralized international humanitarian system. Locally-led and development-oriented responses are an important part of the history of humanitarianism in the country. And looking back at the roots of humanitarian practice in the Philippines, our experience shows that local NGOs, faith-based organizations, the private sector and community organizations have always participated in humanitarian action and engaged the government (at national and local levels) in addressing the humanitarian needs of the affected population. The development and practice of the CBDO-DR framework in particular provides evidence that humanitarian action can be locally-led and development-oriented, informed largely by the local NGOs' strong activist tradition and continuing involvement in the struggle and activism against deep-rooted poverty and oppression.

The call now is for the "Western-inspired" international humanitarian system "to let go of power and control", to reorient its system and structure towards a "more diversified model that accepts greater local autonomy and cedes power and resources to structures and actors currently at the margins of the formal system" (Bennett and Foley 2016). The elements presented in this research show potentials and opportunities for developing those models that can make humanitarian action more people-centered, responsive to the needs and priorities of disaster-affected communities and connected to development processes and goals.

Locally-led responses are still unable to fulfil its full potential due to gaps and challenges in its internal systems and capacity to effectively engage the humanitarian system. Based on these gaps, the following recommendations are being forwarded towards further strengthening locally-led humanitarian responses:

Local NGO level:

- Local development NGOs will need technical support from other national and local humanitarian NGOs to enable them to effectively set-up an emergency response system. Most NGOs interviewed were able to use their existing systems, procedures, and policies for finance, administrative and even logistics, but some of these needed adjustments or modifications to meet the fast-paced demands of the emergency response and at the same time strengthen accountability mechanisms. Local partners need to be supported in setting-up the needed systems to further strengthen their accountability to the community being served, the public and the donors supporting the response. Local partners specifically mentioned that the lack of clarity in content, format and schedule of donor reports was challenging especially for those NGOs doing the response for the first time. Proper guidance and clear and perhaps standardized guidelines and templates from the different donors are needed to facilitate better documentation and reporting.

- Continue current efforts at further strengthening of local actors' knowledge

and understanding of the humanitarian system and humanitarian core standards for quality and accountability to enable them to effectively incorporate and link development principles with the response program. This should not be interpreted as a way of transforming development NGOs into humanitarian organizations, but a way of strengthening the development orientation of the humanitarian action. In particular is the recommendation to further strengthen the integration of community organizing, RBA, and power and gender analysis into the design of humanitarian action.

- Continue and further enhance solidarity-based or peer to peer system of mentoring and sharing of good practices/experiences among local NGOs and communities in humanitarian action specifically on the theory and practice of development-oriented humanitarian response, gender in emergencies, core humanitarian standards, among others.

- Harness the potential of mobilizing solidarity resources from within the local NGOs' network of support organizations, individuals and diaspora/OFW communities, as this promotes not only support to disaster survivors but may have positive contribution to strengthening *bayanihan* and solidarity among Filipinos. This would entail building locally managed solidarity emergency funds as mechanism for easy, fast and flexible resource for humanitarian action. INGOs and donors can contribute to this fund.

At the international humanitarian system level:

- We echo calls for the international humanitarian system "to let go of power and control by the Western-inspired humanitarian system" (Bennett and Foley 2016). International agencies should engage local NGOs as equals where solidarity as

humanitarian value defines the dynamics of partnership. The partnership should also promote interdependence as both partners have important roles to play in a locally-led humanitarian response.

- For partner INGOs and donors to create mechanisms where local organizations can have access to emergency funds to allow faster mobilization of personnel and other resources for assessment and immediate response.

- We also call for a better understanding of the local history and tradition of humanitarianism in the country so that international agencies will know which capacity and potentials can be promoted, supported and challenged. There are a lot of local values and practices that can be cultivated to support humanitarian principles like *bayanihan,* volunteerism, *pakikipagkapwa-tao* (soidarirty; accountability), *damayan* (empathy) among others.

National Government and Local Government Units

- For the local government to strengthen the emergency coordination mechanism within the MDRRMC, and to install mechanisms that will make MDRRMC a fully functional coordinating body of local, community-based and international actors during emergencies.

- For the local government to assert its humanitarian leadership to achieve coherent and responsive humanitarian action among local and international actors.

- For the national government to coordinate INGOs towards working within the country's DRRM system to achieve greater accountability. Such coordination should not undermine local leadership but support the strengthening of LGU responses.

Survivors from different barangays in Tacloban City take part in participatory livelihood mapping

(© UPA)

PKKK women-led DRR team during relief distribution

(© PKKK)

Men bringing home their shelter kits

(© Nikko Lacsina)

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Annex A: Research Participants

NGOs

- Coastal Core, Inc (CCI)

- Fellowship for Organizing Endeavors, Inc (FORGE)

- Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies, Inc (PHILSSA)

- Rice Watch and Action Network (RWAN)

- Urban Poor Associates (UPA)

People's Organizations

- Balik Calauit Movement (BCM)

- Basey Association for Native Industry Growth (BANIG)

- May Kapansanan Laging Nagdadamayan (MAKADAMAY)

- Maunlad Homeowners Association (Tacloban City)

- Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK)

INGO

- Christian Aid

Individuals

- Ted Bonpin (former Haiyan Response Manager of CA)

- Ildebrando C. Bernadas – City DRRMO of Tacloban City

- Zenaida Delica-Willison (former Executive Director of CDRC)

NGOs		
Name	**Designation**	**Organization**
Benedict Balderama	Executive Director	PHILSSA
Jimmy Quijano	CO	PHILSSA
Alberto Bernarte	DED	UPA
Ivy Shella Espineli-Pagute	Program Manager	UPA
Joli A. Torrela	C.O.	UPA
Jessa Margallo	C.O	UPA
Hazel Tanchuling	Executive Director	RWAN
Shirley Bolanos	Ex. director	CCI
Vidal G. Auxilio	Program Manager	FORGE
Crisivic Busarang	CO	FORGE
Ruben Bachiller	CO	FORGE

People's Organizations		
Name	**Designation**	**Organization**
Amparo Miciano	Sec Gen	PKKK
Fe Teves	Program	PKKK
Jennifer A. Alcober	CO	PKKK
Rodrigua Bortulfo	CO	PKKK
Luchie M.Corales	CO	PKKK
Clarita Miaga	CO	PKKK
Merlinda Darias	Livelihood Officer	PKKK
Azucena Bagunas	CO	PKKK
Rosa R. Presno	Finance	PKKK
Maria Ana Jaingue	Treasurer/Buss.Manager	TWA/BANIG
Lilibeth Padaya	Cluster Leader	PKKK
Blanca Delovino	President	PKKK
Julita Abal	Treasurer	PKKK
Nila Gacusana	Secretary	PKKK
Anita M. Ogrimen	President	PKKK
Ramil Agnes		PKKK
Onofia Mued	Chairman	PKKK
Fidel Mondiagos	APO	PKKK
Perfecto rufino jr	APO	PKKK
Jimmel M. Novero	BOT	TWA/BANIG
Jese Gonzaga	BOT	BCM
Charlie Traro		PDY
Roque Mondragon		BCM
Gabriel Muid	Member	BCM
Fredel Muld		BCM/IPMR
Medardo Macanas Sr.	Punong Barangay	
Anna Jean Aranas	Brgy. secretary	
Pedrito Cruzat	President	MAKADAMAY
Remy Amancio	Beneficiary	
Sansequito Amancio	Beneficiary	
Jaime Apostoil	President	PSGA
Marlon Galon	Member	PSGA
Neleza Duran	Bookkeeper	MAUNLAD-HOA

People's Organizations

Name	Designation	Organization
Neriza Apostol	Money counter	MAUNLAD-HOA
Ailyn Apostol	Asst.Bookkeeper	MAUNLAD-HOA
Belinda Acrino-ohan	Farm Manager	BBNA
Ma.Leslie C. Emmas	Treasurer/warehouse	C5
Karen Baynaco	Chairman/BOD warehouse	C5
Lorna Empalmado	Bookkeeper	Payapay C2

Christian Aid

Name	Designation	Organization
Allan Vera	PM	Christian Aid
Cyra Bullecer	PO	Christian Aid
Jojo Matriano	PM	Christian Aid

Individuals

Name	Designation	Organization
Ted Bonpin	Former Response Manager (TY Haiyan)	
Idelbrando Bernandas	CDRRMO	
Zenaida Delica-Willison	Former Exec. Director	CDRC

PDRRN

Name	Designation	Organization
Ricky Senoc	Training Officer	PDRRN
Chati Tonog	Info Mngt Officer	PDRRN
Jamilah Mustapha	Com. Mobilizer	PDRRN
Alexander Lopez, Jr.	Com. Mobilizer	PDRRN

Annex B

Charter for Change:

Localisation of Humanitarian Aid

We the undersigned organisations, working in humanitarian action welcome the extensive consultations and discussions which have been generated during the World Humanitarian Summit process. We believe that now is the time for humanitarian actors to make good on some of the excellent recommendations arising through the WHS process by committing themselves to deliver change within their own organisational ways of working so that southern-based national actors can play an increased and more prominent role in humanitarian response.

In the case of international NGO signatories we commit our organisations to implement the following 8 point Charter for Change by May 2018.

In the case of southern-based NGOs working in partnership with international NGOs we endorse and support this Charter for Change. We will be holding our international NGO partners which have signed this Charter to account and asking those which are not signatories to this Charter to work towards signing up:

1. **Increase direct funding to southern-based NGOs for humanitarian action**: At present only 0.2% of humanitarian aid is channelled directly to national non-government actors (NGOs and CSOs) for humanitarian work – a total of US$46.6 million out of US$24.5 billion.[1] We commit through advocacy and policy influence to North American and European donors (including institutional donors, foundations and private sector) to encourage them to increase the year on year percentage of their humanitarian funding going to southern-based NGOs.[2] We commit that by May 2018 at least 20% of our own humanitarian funding will be passed to southern-based NGOs. We commit to introduce our NGO partners to our own direct donors with the aim of them accessing direct financing.

2. **Reaffirm the Principles of Partnership**: We endorse, and have signed on to, the Principles of Partnership, (Equality, Transparency, Results-Oriented Approach, Responsibility and Complementarity) introduced by the Global Humanitarian Platform in 2007.

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1 See http://devinit.org/#!/post/ global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2015-2
2 Either national NGOs or local NGOs as defined by the GHA categorisation, see footnote 3.

3. **Increase transparency around resource transfers to southern-based national and local NGOs**: A significant change in approaches towards transparency is needed in order to build trust, accountability and efficiency of investments channelled to national actors via international intermediaries. We commit to document the types of organisation we cooperate with in humanitarian response and to publish these figures (or percentages) in our public accounts using a recognised categorisation such as the GHA[3] in real-time and to the IATI standard[4]

4. **Stop undermining local capacity**: We will identify and implement fair compensation for local organisations for the loss of skilled staff if and when we contract a local organisation's staff involved in humanitarian action within 6 months of the start of a humanitarian crisis or during a protracted crisis, for example along the lines of paying a recruitment fee of 10% of the first six months' salary

5. **Emphasise the importance of national actors**: We undertake to advocate to donors to make working through national actors part of their criteria for assessing framework partners and calls for project proposals.

6. **Address subcontracting**: Our local and national collaborators are involved in the design of the programmes at the outset and participate in decision-making as equals in influencing programme design and partnership policies.

7. **Robust organisational support and capacity strengthening**: We will support local actors to become robust organisations that continuously improve their role and share in the overall global humanitarian response. We undertake to pay adequate administrative support. A test of our seriousness in capacity building is that by May 2018 we will have allocated resources to support our partners in this. We will publish the percentages of our humanitarian budget which goes directly to partners for humanitarian capacity building by May 2018.

8. **Communication to the media and the public about partners**: In any communications to the international and national media and to the public we will promote the role of local actors and acknowledge the work that they carry out, and include them as spokespersons when security considerations permit.

To sign or endorse this Charter for Change please email **admin@charter4change.org** with the full name of your organisation and the country in which your organisation is based.

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3 GHA defines 5 categories of NGOs: international NGOs, southern international NGOs, affiliated national NGOs (which are part of an INGO), national NGOs and local NGOs. See http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/report/gha-report-2014 page 119
 4 Fully respecting security and not necessarily publishing the names of individual partners in conflict contexts.

Partner communities and community-based organizations assist in bringing relief goods to hard to reach disaster areas.

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A relief operation in the province of Iloilo

(© ICODE)

Orientation on building construction with local carpenters in Libertad, Capoocan.

(© PDRRN)

Evacuation during Typhoon Ruby in Brgy. 86, Tacloban City

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