MOVING FORWARD LOCALISATION OF HUMANITARIAN ACTION IN THE PHILIPPINES

Empowerment leads to better humanitarian outcomes

The Philippine Multi-Stakeholder Localisation Dialogue Process Final Report

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This is a summary of a localisation report that has been prepared as part of the Philippines Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) workplan to strengthen its localization agenda. The recommendations in the report were endorsed by the HCT. Acknowledgment goes to all who have contributed to the successful conduct of the Philippines Country Localisation Dialogue process and to Kathlyn Kissy Sumaylo-Pearlman and Smruti Patel for preparing this report.

Cover Photo: Marawi IDPs in a survivor and community-led activity initiated by ECOWEB providing them hope amid their continued displacement.

"We all have great ideas, but what happens within the next 24 hours, and the 24 hours thereafter calls for a commitment, calls for an action, more than that, a recognition that life has meaning because we are able to stay united in helping one another. Let us go for a home run, let us go for local!"

– Med Villanueva, National Anti-Poverty Commission Victims of Disaster Council Member

Local Humanitarian Action Key Stakeholders

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List of Acronyms

A4EP	Alliance for Empowering Partnership
ACCORD	Assistance and Cooperation for Community Resilience and Development
APP	Asian Preparedness Partnership
ASec	Assistant Secretary
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDP	Center for Disaster Preparedness
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CDRN	Citizen's Disaster Resilience Network
CERF	United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund
CLEARNet	Community-led Empowering Actions for Resilience Network
COVID-19	Coronovirus Disease - 2019
CSR	Corporate Society Responsibility
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ECOWEB	Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits (ECOWEB), Inc.
FBF	Forecast Based Financing
FGD/s	Focus Group Discussion/s
GB	Grand Bargain 2016
GB 2.0	Grand Bargain 2021
GHRP	Global Humanitarian Response Plan
GMI	Global Mentoring Initiative
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
IASC	Inter-agency Standing Committee
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IRA	Internal Revenue Allotment
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Organisations
IDP/s	Internally Displaced Person/s
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
ISF	Informal Settler Families
LDRRM	Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
LGU	Local Government Unit
L/NA/s	Local/National Actor/s
MHT	Mindanao Humanitarian Team
MSSD	Ministry of Social Services and Development, BARMM
NAPC	National Anti-Poverty Commission
VDC SC	NAPC Victims of Disaster and Calamities Sectoral Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCD	Office of Civil Defence
PDRF	Philippines Disaster Resilience Fund
PDRRN	People's Disaster Response Network
PPERR	Philippine Partnership for Emergency Response and Resilience
PhilPREP	Philippine Preparedness Partnership
PMPI	Philippines Miserior Partnership Inc.
PS	Private Sector
PSEA	Protection Against Sexual Violence and Abuse
SAFER	Shared Aid Fund for Emergency Response
SAP	Social Amelioration Plan
UNHC	United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator
UNHCR	United National High Commissioner on Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UN RC/HC	UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"We are learning a lot and changing because we have been impacted by many crises. Now, we are moving from donor-recipient to more horizontal partnerships. We are transitioning from a silo to more participatory action which is part of resilience-building. We are moving from vertical and centralized aid to localisation. We are moving from stand-alone interventions... to platforms, to coalitions. Localisation agenda is also an agenda of complementarities between those from the grassroots to the rest! We complement each other."

Gustavo Gonzalez
UN Resident Coordinator and
Humanitarian Coordinator

Introduction

The humanitarian sector has been discussing localisation for over 25 years. The World Humanitarian Summit, the Agenda for Humanity, and the launch of the Grand Bargain in 2016 were major initiatives to reform the humanitarian system to make it fit for the future. In the last five years there has been a push for more concrete implementation of localisation commitments at country level. This report presents key findings of the country level dialogue carried out in the Philippines between February and July 2021 and aims to serve as a localisation blueprint, a plan of action, with concrete recommendations to be taken forward by various stakeholders.

The multi-stakeholder dialogue process

The initiative to map the state of localisation through multi-stakeholder dialogue was seen to be the first step in raising awareness of the commitments, understanding country level progress, documenting the good practices already existing and mapping the way forward. The Philippines country level dialogue is part of a global effort to promote better understanding and implementation of the Grand Bargain localisation commitments. As part of its commitment as the 63rd signatory of the Grand Bargain, the Alliance for Empowering Partnership (A4EP) committed to support such dialogues in country through a collaborative process. In the Philippines, the Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits (ECOWEB) took the lead in the process in collaboration with the UN OCHA Philippines, Oxfam Philippines and A4EP and with leadership support from the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. The dialogue process was organised in collaboration with various CSO networks in the country, including the Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP), Philippines Preparedness Partnership (PHILPREP) and Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP).

The objectives for the country dialogue process were to promote and institutionalise the implementation of Grand Bargain commitments on localisation and the participation revolution at the country level as well as to devise a localisation roadmap for the Philippines Humanitarian Country Team.

The dialogue also assisted in creating a greater sense of momentum and providing the space to explore synergies and linkages with existing humanitarian coordination mechanism, donors and Philippine INGO networks, private sector, local and national CSOs and national authorities. Lastly, it sought to identify opportunities and challenges to localisation and to develop a county level plan of action and a tracking mechanism, which are crucial to the success of localisation in-country.

The dialogue process took place between February and June

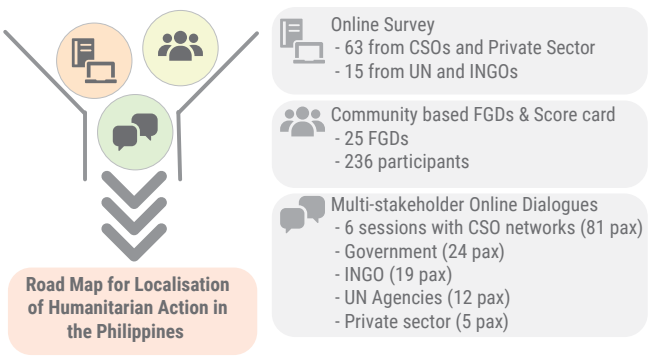


Fig. 1 Summary of process and participation to the Philippine Localisation Dialogue

2021 and consisted of focus group discussions (FGDs) with representatives of communities affected by crisis in six regions in the Philippines and with humanitarian responders. In total these consultations reached 504 participants – 268 from humanitarian agencies and 236 from the affected communities. The online survey for humanitarian responders that mapped the state of localisation of humanitarian actions in their respective agencies was completed by 63 respondents from the CSOs and 15 from the UN agencies and INGOs. The series of online intra-network dialogues had a total of 155 participants from national and local CSO networks, government agencies, INGOs and UN agencies, and private sector humanitarian groups operating in the Philippines. The process culminated in a multi-stakeholder dialogue on June 10, 2021, with close to 100 participants identifying key actions to move forward the localisation in the country. It also brought to the fore the insights and findings from the community FGDs, online survey and the series of online dialogues among humanitarian stakeholders. Annex 6 lists the organisations and agencies who have participated in the process.

The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the major stakeholder groups involved in the process committed to take forward key action points identified in the dialogue. The Seven Dimensions Framework for localisation –(i.) Relationship Quality, (ii.) Participation of Affected Populations, (iii.) Quality of Relationship and Partnerships, (iv.) Quality of Funding and Financing, (v.) Capacity, (vi.) Visibility and Credit Sharing, and (vii.) Humanitarian Standards and Policy - was used as a framework for systematic analysis of localisation commitments.

Kimberly Go Tian from the Philippine government's Disaster Response Management Bureau of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) noted during the multi-stakeholders' dialogue that "the actions toward localisation are aligned with the upcoming implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling by 2022, which aims to enhance the service delivery of local government units through enhanced decentralization of basic services of the government." She then emphasised the importance of developing the road map and the importance of coordination among various actors, in order to better provide effective and efficient programs in crisis-affected communities.

Below are key findings and recommended actions to move forward the localisation of humanitarian action in the Philippines.

Key findings and recommended actions:

Quality of Relationships and Partnerships

The main issue raised on quality of relationship was the urgency to address power inequalities and call for equitable and long-term complementary partnerships between local/national and international actors, as opposed to sub-contractual arrangements. Affected populations in crisis also wish to be treated as partners in humanitarian actions rather than being treated only as "beneficiaries/recipients" of aid. Politicisation of aid and "red-tagging" of humanitarian workers putting at risk their safety and security were also among major concerns raised by local humanitarian actors.

Suggested changes to improving relationships include depoliticising aid, promoting complementarity instead of competition among humanitarian actors to enable effective services to affected communities of crisis.

KEY ACTIONS for Improving Relationship and Ensuring Quality Partnership between and among humanitarian actors:

1. Enable equitable partnership among humanitarian actors on the basis of shared values and accountability between partners, upholding the principles of partnership (based on equality, mutual understanding, transparency, participation, shared responsibilities) that can best benefit the community.

2. Local and international partners to conduct joint decision-making and co-creation process of programming and implementation of projects.

3. Strengthen learning through cross-learning, capacity sharing, complementation and systematically documenting good experiences and practices that highlight the contribution of all partners.

4. Depoliticise humanitarian aid, address the practice of political patronage in government humanitarian actions and provide protection for civil humanitarian actors.

5. Provide support to local CSO accreditation in LGUs and national government for stronger partnership and accountability in humanitarian and development governance and for building partnership with private sector.

The Participation of Affected Populations

Traditionally, affected communities have been seen as victims and recipients of aid. However, affected communities wish to be treated as partners in humanitarian action. They expressed the need for contextualizing humanitarian action to make it culturally-sensitive and ensure participation and empowerment of the affected population with bottom-up/ community-led approaches which are more dignifying and ensure inclusion of the most vulnerable in all humanitarian action processes. Advocating for, and strengthening, real-time feedback mechanisms will allow affected populations to better communicate with humanitarian actors, including donors and government, and ensure they receive immediate feedback on actions from duty-bearers.

KEY ACTIONS for Improving Participation of Affected Population in humanitarian actions

1. Institutionalize co-creation and co-implementation in projects, where affected communities are involved in conceptualizing and delivering humanitarian interventions based on their needs and capacities such as through the conduct of community FGDs, survivor- and community-led crisis response approach, participatory action planning, and upholding the principles of inclusivity - "Nothing About Us, Without Us!".

2. Promote community organizing as a long-term strategy. This does not only ensure that communities are able to mobilize themselves to respond at the onset of disasters, but this also builds the capacity of the community to influence their LGUs (e.g., in local development planning and DRRM planning). These should be among the indicators of success of community participation.

3. Strengthen community-based monitoring, evaluation, and accountability mechanisms, especially those that enable access of community to mechanisms for community feedback- whether face-to-face or through digital means (e.g. Loop digital feedback platform).

4. Advocate for the creation and implementation of policies and guidelines supporting bottom-up processes, creation of CSO desks in international NGOs, donors or national government, and enable CSO accreditation in LGUs and national government, for stronger partnership and accountability in humanitarian and development governance.

In 2017, AMDF organized Family Conversations, or listening sessions involving fathers, mothers, youth, and children who were displaced during the Marawi crisis. At least 240 families were engaged in these Family Conversations, which helped shape the development of a "People's Agenda" for the recovery and rehabilitation of Marawi. Here, a community facilitator conducts a debriefing session with women in an evacuation center.

Photo: Genevive Estacaan/Oxfam

Focus group discussions with women, mothers and elderly in Barangay Baseco, Manila as part of the pre-crisis information mapping on aid preferences of at-risk community in an event of a 7.2 magnitude earthquake.

Photo: Gil arevalo/OCHA

Funding and Financing

Based on the survey conducted with humanitarian actors, the overall trend for the last five years has seen decreasing funding to varying degree for a number of CSOs. About 35% of the CSO respondents said they have no international funding, and about 25% said their access to international funding had significantly decreased compared to about 13% among UN/INGOs. Meanwhile, over 35% of INGO/UN respondents said their access to international funding has slightly increased, compared to 11% of CSOs in the last five years. Major challenges identified by national and local actors include limited, or lack of, access to multi-year funding and flexible grants, lack of coverage for overhead costs, and barriers to financing requirements, which are difficult to comply with by small and local organisations (examples cited are requirement for counterpart and highly technical programming). The increased use of cash assistance and programming was positively received by communities, and this is projected to be used more widely for anticipatory humanitarian actions.

Local humanitarian actors are looking to diversify sources of funding and partnerships, such as building local and shared pooled funds such as SAFER and exploring corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs provided by the private sector. However, to engage with the private sector, CSOs need to strengthen their capacity for good stewardship of allocated funds and resources, accreditation and registration requirements of government and improve transparency and accountability within their own ranks.

KEY ACTIONS for Ensuring Quality funding and Financing for effective, efficient, and accountable humanitarian actions

1. Support small and local CSOs to gain more access to humanitarian funding by simplifying requirements, bureaucratic systems, and removing administrative policies that exclude smaller local actors in funding mechanisms such as the requirement for financial counterpart which is perceived to favour the bigger and financially stable organizations.

2. Provide enough support for overhead, staff retention and other operational costs for local actors (including those related to institutional capacity strengthening) other than direct project costs.

3. Promote consortium-building efforts in accessing humanitarian funding for CSOs that actively involve smaller local actors/area-based local actors, especially in planning and implementation of projects on the ground.

4. Expand country-based pooled funds that are accessible to local humanitarian actors including community-based organisations.

5. Expand cash-based flexible and participatory programming to effectively address the needs of the crisis-affected people.

Capacity

Existing capacity of local CSOs/NGOs in facilitating humanitarian actions on the ground is generally appreciated by the communities. Many CSOs have been building technical capacity for managing and implementing humanitarian response. However, they also recognize that there is still a need for effective and complementary technical support from international partners. The nexus approach as practised by many CSOs is considered important to ensure effective transition from humanitarian response to recovery and development. This requires integrated programming to facilitate resources, and capacity for complementarity to address the complex needs of crisis-affected communities.

Challenges experienced by local humanitarian actors include limited staff capacity and staff turn-over, which constrain them from immediately deploying humanitarian response. They are also hampered in their ability to fully engage in partnerships due to difficulty of complying with due diligence standards and necessary accreditation requirements. Exploring collaborations with the private sector for corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs, working more closely with the academic institutes and cross-learning were some of the proposed actions.

It was recognized that localisation requires a change in mind-set among all actors, including donors, UN and INGOs; and a commitment to new ways of working to genuinely work towards localisation, and to build lasting capacity for local humanitarian actors at all levels, including on financial stewardship and project execution whilst also recognising the complementarity of actors and added value each of them brings. This way, the burden of raising capacities does not just lie on communities, and local actors, but among all humanitarian and development actors.

KEY ACTIONS for Improving Capacity of humanitarian actors to ensure effective, efficient, complementary and accountable humanitarian actions

1. Undertake scoping of capacities of local actors and conduct organizational assessment to determine their strengths and weaknesses and build on their strengths as basis for programming and investing in their capacity enhancement.

2. Enable local actors to retain and maintain their staff capacity through appropriate budget allocation for staff. Provide just support for overheads and advocate for dialogue in support of individuals or NGOs in the humanitarian sector who have been affected by threats of violence and personal safety.

3. Provide support that will enable local actors to comply with due diligence processes and requirements, to enable them to fulfil their partnership obligations, and meet standards related to safeguarding, accountability.

4. Invest in education and training for transformative partnership, i.e., enabling local actors to claim their rights to engage in transparent, accountable, and equitable partnership.

5. Promote effective complementarity and sharing of capacity between local and international partners and among local and national humanitarian actors to facilitate better humanitarian and nexus services to the affected communities.

Coordination Mechanisms

Coordination mechanisms are generally valued for information sharing between international, national and local actors and facilitating complementary capacities and resources, as well as for providing space to elevate concerns of local actors and communities to authorities. It is a positive development that local humanitarian actors are increasingly being represented in various coordination platforms. What needs to happen next is for them to be actively engaged and to take on leadership positions in these platforms. Some of the challenges faced by local humanitarian actors relate to staff capacity to attend various coordination meetings and the lack of space for them to honestly (or openly) share their opinions. Other reasons cited for CSOs' low participation in existing coordination mechanisms include lack of funding and distance or geographical location of meetings if they they were to happen face-to-face.

KEY ACTIONS to make Coordination valuable to affected populations and inclusive of local actors

1. Strengthen local humanitarian leadership and effective local coordination among CSOs.

2. Develop mechanisms through which crisis-affected communities are adequately represented in coordination meetings.

3. Enable stronger coordination between ocal government and CSOs to address issues of duplication and politicization of aid and strengthen complementation.

4. Increase the capacity of local actors for their more meaningful participation in the cluster coordination system ensuring that these meetings are inclusive and offer added value to local actors.

Humanitarian Standards and Policy

The rights and dignity of the affected population should be made the centre of the humanitarian action. Communities affected by disasters argue that humanitarian standards used for assistance should be made transparent and well-coordinated to avoid creating conflict in affected communities. They also expressed wanting to be engaged in the process. Among humanitarian workers, threats to their safety and security, particularly "red-tagging by the government" in their work for their potential association with suspected insurgents, has been strongly identified as a concern. Providing protection for safety and security of the humanitarian actors is also among the humanitarian policies sought by CSOs. With the COVID-19 pandemic, international and national humanitarian actors need to support communities to have internet access and effective communications. While steps have been taken to orient on humanitarian standards, CSOs need support and resources to be able to follow policies and standards, which also need to be contextualised.

Communities want to be informed about humanitarian standards and policy and INGOs and CSOs should invest in retraining communities on understanding and application of humanitarian standards.

Community members form a human chain to bring supplies to higher ground in Barangay Lipatan, Santo Niño, Cagayan, an area affected by Typhoon Mangkhut (local name Ompong) in 2018.

Photo: April Bulanadi/Oxfam

KEY ACTIONS to harmonise and contextualise Humanitarian Standards Policy ensuring effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of humanitarian actions

1. Ensure accountability of all humanitarian actors to humanitarian standards where rights and dignity of people are placed at the centre. Include relevant clause in partnership agreements that addresses non-adherence to humanitarian standards.

2. Conduct an inclusive review for the harmonisation and contextualization of current humanitarian standards and policies to ensure quality humanitarian services are delivered to communities.

3. Establish effective monitoring systems ensuring participation from vulnerable sectors such as persons with disabilities, and older persons, among others.

4. Create a feedback mechanism accessible to affected population of crisis with registry of emergency and key humanitarian actors' number.

5. Advocate to include in the humanitarian policy the protection for safety and security of humanitarian actors.

Visibility and Credit Sharing

Perspectives from the FGDs and stakeholder dialogues expressed that visibility and credit sharing with local humanitarian actors be given more attention. Visibility should not only be expressed using branding materials; communities emphasised that what is more valuable is that the presence of humanitarian actors and services provided are felt by the communities. Clear visibility of humanitarian actors is also considered important for the safety of affected population in areas at risk to conflict. Policies on visibility and credit-sharing should form part of partnership frameworks between and among international and local/national actors.

KEY ACTIONS for shared Visibility and Credit Sharing that is more relevant to the affected population of crisis and local CSOs

1. Ensure the participation of communities in the whole project cycle - from project design, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation - so that they can already provide inputs during programming, partnership and design as well as in during reporting and in visibility for humanitarian action.

2. Include in the global humanitarian standards equitable credit sharing and accountability between local and international humanitarian partners. Include provisions on equitable credit sharing and accountability in partnership agreements.

3. Design visibility materials in such a way that is inclusive, culture-sensitive, integrates accountability/feedback mechanisms, peace-promoting and upholds the rights and dignity of people.

4. Ensure clear visibility of humanitarian actors for safety and security of both humanitarian actors and conflict-affected communities.

Cross-Cutting Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Localisation

COVID-19 has affected and delayed programmes and services and has severely limited the movement of communities and humanitarian actors. However, many actors are finding ways to localise their operations by working with local organizations. Cash assistance given during the pandemic was appreciated by the affected populations, but this is not enough and has at times excluded many vulnerable groups. Politicisation of government cash assistance at local level often lacked transparency and corruption was reported to be a significant issue. Proposed actions include the mainstreaming of COVID-19 response across programmes and strategies and providing support to local partners, including the allocation of funds to enable their access to digital technology (which has been shown to be a key need during humanitarian responses that have occurred in this pandemic).

KEY ACTIONS to make Humanitarian Aid more responsive to needs of the most vulnerable and affected by COVID-19 in the face of limited resources and growing needs

1. Build on existing coordination mechanisms/working groups for localisation that will study and facilitate the conduct of transparent, multi-stakeholder consultations to include sectors related to education, economy, health, peace and order, among others, to help determine tangible solutions to the impact of the pandemic.

2. Identify potential local solutions to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in humanitarian response, in collaboration with actors engaged in sectors such as health, social welfare, economic empowerment, enterprise development, gender equality, and skills training and education.

3. Advocate and establish support mechanisms that strengthen partnerships between CSOs and government and that will enable CSOs' direct access to communities amid travel restrictions imposed by the government during the pandemic.

4. Enable effective complementarity and partnership between local and international actors to effectively respond to the impact of the pandemic on vulnerable communities. Harness access of local actors to affected communities amid hardship in mobility as a result of lockdowns and restrictions as imposed by the government this pandemic.

5. Support nexus approach, flexible and locally led actions and more cash-programming to effectively address various humanitarian needs of communities during this pandemic.

ECOWEB Marawi Response Project Manager, co-facilitating the community scorecard roll out to youths in Bantogawato, Balindong, Lanao del Sur. The main facilitators were the community leaders who graduated the community scorecard training of trainers.

Photo : Arven Kim Arceno/ECOWEB

Post-Dialogue, Moving Forward the Localisation Commitment

Following the dialogue process, major stakeholders committed to moving forward the localisation of humanitarian actions in the Philippines and strengthen complementarities and added value of each stakeholder.

With the strong leadership from the UN RC/HC, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) created an ad hoc group on localisation composed of donors, the UN agencies, INGOs and CSOs. The ad hoc group is tasked to operationalize key actions which the HCT can move forward. From the thematic lists of key actions identified through the dialogue process, and listed above, the HCT ad hoc group conducted a survey and will prioritize at least one key action per theme to turn it into a plan for action.

A core team of CSOs also continued a dialogue process by consolidating the views of all of the networks of CSOs advocating for localisation in humanitarian action. The CSOs have decided to conduct a wider CSO summit where the dialogue results will be presented and turned into specific plan of action, which can be used to determine short-term, medium-term and longer-term action points. Apart from the engagement with the INGOs, UN and donors, CSOs are giving attention to the identified key actions in engaging the government.

The creation of a National Reference Group as recommended by the global Grand Bargain 2.0 process is an important action point, which CSO localisation leaders in the Philippines agreed to move forward in coordination with the government, UN, INGOs and donors in the country. Representation of affected population, local and national CSO networks, private sector, INGOs, UN, Filipino diaspora, donors and government in the national reference group is considered crucial to ensure complementarity, inclusivity and stronger coordination among humanitarian actors in the country. Safeguarding the rights and dignity of people is at the centre of humanitarian action and at the core of the localisation framework that stakeholders in the Philippines all committed to.

While needs in sectors like shelter and WASH are tangible and easier to identify, the international partners complement capacities of local responders in augmenting relief efforts to address intangible needs around protection concerns, particularly in gender-based violence and child protection. Tiwi, Albay emergency response to Typhoon Goni (Rolly) in 2020.

Photo: Martin San Diego/OCHA

1. Context and Introduction - Carrying on the torch for localisation in the Philippines

The World Humanitarian summit in 2016 and the commitment to the Grand Bargain catalysed the call for strengthening local humanitarian action. The fifth anniversary of the Grand Bargain commitments in 2021 provides an opportunity to take stock of how far we have come with localisation commitments and how we can take them forward.

Many humanitarian actors are reflecting on these commitments and the changes brought about in the humanitarian landscape by COVID-19 and the increasing vulnerabilities of communities amidst disasters, including climate risks. The threat to civil society space in many countries, including the Philippines, has been compounded by the pandemic. Humanitarian actors have been severely limited in their aid delivery and access to local vulnerable populations. Despite the challenging times, local organisations have been at the forefront of the response, and the urgency to push localisation forward is a move in the right direction.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidance Note (2021) cites the crucial role that local humanitarian actors play in humanitarian crises:

"Engaging Local/National Actors (L/NAs) is critical to the success of humanitarian action. L/NAs are often the first responders and are at the heart of humanitarian response. They provide an invaluable understanding of local challenges and potential solutions, are able to mobilize local networks and offer greater access to affected populations, hence contributing to a more effective, efficient, and sustainable humanitarian response with an enhanced accountability to affected populations. They are also often adept at working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to support affected communities in preparedness, response, recovery and after international actors withdraw. Yet the international humanitarian system has made limited progress in increasing funding, capacity development, equitable and meaningful partnerships and the participation of L/NAs in their coordination structures, which has overall remained relatively limited over the past years – particularly in terms of risk-sharing, leadership and decision-making."

From the United Nations Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) to the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) position paper, and the Philippines Humanitarian Country Team's COVID-19 operational response plan and its Call to Action, there is a commitment across all levels to advance the localisation agenda in the context of COVID-19 response. The United Nations University research report on COVID-19 and Humanitarian Access: How the Pandemic Should Provoke Systemic Change in the Global Humanitarian System also emphasised the need to reinforce a local-first approach in the provision of aid.

1.1 Reflections on Localisation in the Philippines

Localisation in the Philippines is not new and many partners, including national and local humanitarian actors, have been initiating locally led actions. However, local humanitarian actions are not without their challenges. In 2019, during the review of the third year of World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in the Philippines at the Balik-Lokal National Conference, local humanitarian organizations cited the shrinking civil society space and the threat to humanitarian workers, such as being "red-tagged," (a tactic whereby individuals are labelled as communists or terrorists – often without substantial proof) as outstanding concerns . With the increasing frequency of natural disasters in the Philippines and worldwide, as well as the onset of COVID-19, struggles of local humanitarian actors include reaching the most vulnerable and delivering timely and appropriate aid during the pandemic. Amidst the backdrop of the pandemic, important reflections are emerging from international and national actors in the push towards operationalising localisation.

Reflection 1: The Need for localised humanitarian response, in the time of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the need for a localised humanitarian response, and humanitarian actors in the Philippines are moving in that direction. The various lockdowns in 2020 through to 2021 hampered aid delivery. The observance of minimum health standards means traditional ways of reaching communities need to be adjusted. The situation also forced local actors to adapt to these circumstances by further localising their presence and mobilising aid from national and international agencies to local populations.

UNOCHA has demonstrated how localisation can work during periods of COVID-19 disruption. One such example is the experience of the Shared Aid Fund for Emergency Response (SAFER), a national pooled fund, providing 1,400 informal settler families (ISF) in Navotas City with necessary humanitarian assistance. OCHA reports that: "*The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has put a spotlight on the need to further accelerate this process. The pandemic fundamentally underscores not only the central role played by civil society organizations, local governments and at-risk communities themselves but also how the international humanitarian community must adjust to the challenges that lie ahead. With the social and economic consequences of movement restrictions imposed since early March being keenly felt, it has become imperative to support localized action to protect the most vulnerable communities and beat the spread of the virus.*"

Reflection 2: Putting local narratives and local leadership on the frontlines

Oxfam Pilipinas documented the evolving work on local humanitarian action, and how localisation has taken shape, with lessons learned from extreme disaster events such as Typhoon Haiyan in 2013.

They argue that *"Local humanitarian actors are on the brink of what could be a revolutionary movement in the global humanitarian space, which is still dominated by huge and powerful international players. In the Philippines, this movement started way before the Typhoon Haiyan catastrophe of 2013. For many communities in the country, local humanitarian actors were always at the front lines of efforts that enabled communities to recover and build back better. In such efforts, it was understood that people in disaster-stricken communities should themselves be the drivers of change for a safer, readier future, not just as apart from being the recipients of disaster response."*

The recent multi-stakeholder country dialogue by A4EP, UNOHA, ECOWEB and Oxfam Pilipinas from April to June 2021 reflects the perspectives of national and local actors about how humanitarian outcomes are made better when people are empowered and when communities are supported to achieving these outcomes.

Reflection 3: Addressing Power inequalities in aid and capacity

The Alliance for Empowering Partnership (A4EP) calls for prioritising locally led responses and reversing inequities within the humanitarian sector. A4EP is a network of southern organisations advocating for the strengthening of the humanitarian architecture to support locally led response. ECOWEB is the current chair of A4EP and the lead in the Philippines.

A4EP, in its position paper Reversing the inequity – Opportunity knocks again or missed opportunity again, emphasises that the COVID-19 crisis response and the Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) present opportunities to accelerate progress on Grand Bargain commitments and reverse existing inequities. They argue that there are four key approaches: i) increased cash programming, ii) a reduction in paperwork and more resources into actual aid, iii) the provision of more resources to local and national actors to reduce transactional costs, and iv) ensuring safety and care for local humanitarian responders. The purpose and spirit of collaboration is also clearly stated in the Grand Bargain "We engage with local and national responders in a spirit of partnership and aim to reinforce rather than replace local and national capacities."

In terms of addressing the inequities with the capacities and resources available, the Philippines UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) Gustavo Gonzalez, in his address during the consultation with UN agencies in the Philippines, underscored the need to go beyond the financial dimension of partnership: *"…localisation is about expanding the concept of partnership. It is about recognising the importance of the financial dimension which justifies all of the discussion on capacity development but should not be limited to this as the only element."*

1.2 Operationalising commitments

Building on discussions in the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream's Demonstrator country missions' and subsequent regional workshops in 2018-19, Workstream members determined that it will be important to foster further dialogue about how best to meet Grand Bargain Localisation commitments at the country level.

However, given the nature of the Workstream as a voluntary grouping of mostly headquarters-based representatives of signatory organisations and invited local actors, it is neither feasible nor desirable for it to try to lead or oversee solutions at the country level. Its role is instead catalytic, relying on the interest and active engagement of those based in the country, facilitating exchange and learning among the countries selected, and being conscious of its own limits of contextual understanding, time and resources.

In response to the call of the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream for self-nomination for country-level dialogue facilitation, A4EP, as a signatory to the Grand Bargain, with ECOWEB, Oxfam Pilipinas and OCHA Philippines are both committed to the Grand Bargain, with localisation being one of the priorities under the Humanitarian Country Team Workplan.

"…localisation is about expanding the concept of partnership. It is about recognising the importance of the financial dimension which justifies all of the discussion on capacity development but should not be limited to this as the only element."

- Gustavo Gonzalez, UN RC/HC

2. Objectives and Methodology of the Philippine Localisation Dialogue Process

The country-level localisation process started in February 2021 through to July 2021, with preparations starting in December 2020. With momentum gained from COVID-19 pandemic, localisation has become an urgent issue on the agenda of the humanitarian community in the Philippines amidst a succession of disasters (typhoons, Covid response, localised flooding, earthquakes etc).

2.1 Objectives of the Country-level localisation process are to:

- Move forward the localisation movement in the Philippines by learning from the initiatives already undertaken and harnessing the commitments of local actors which already demonstrate concrete localisation actions on the ground.
- Create a greater sense of momentum on localisation in the country– exploring synergies and linkages with existing humanitarian coordination mechanisms (within the Humanitarian Country Team, Mindanao Humanitarian Team etc), within donor coordination mechanisms and platforms, and within Philippine INGO networks, private sector and civil society networks.
- Identify opportunities, challenges, and specificities for localisation and to develop country-level plans of action.
- Provide recommendations for the next phase of the Grand Bargain beyond June 2021.

2.2 Methodology

Echoing the global localisation agenda, the country-level localisation process provides a space for reflecting on how far we have come in terms of fulfilling the Grand Bargain commitments on delivering the Participation Revolution and on Localisation. A series of national and local dialogues and consultations were initiated to gather the perspectives of humanitarian actors on how we can move this agenda forward. The dialogues aimed at promoting and institutionalising commitments to localisation, hearing from the community and from local, national and international actors as well as exploring synergies and linkages in order to develop a country level action plan and share experiences and recommendations to a wider audience.

These were the questions for reflection and discussions:

- How are we holding ourselves and the international community accountable towards better, more inclusive humanitarian service delivery?
- How are we making localisation really local and enabling CSOs and people's organisations to become true partners in humanitarian action?
- How can we work together to overcome the challenges in the current aid infrastructure and make it accountable and responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable?

In the aftermath of Typhoon Goni (local name Rolly), the strongest storm on planet in 2020 that made its initial landfall in Catanduanes, the UN agencies and local partners distributed cash assistance through the Central Emergency Response Fund. This gave most vulnerable families in Catanduanes flexibility in addressing their needs, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photo: Martin San Diego/OCHA

2.3 Components of the Dialogue Process

The dialogue process is a series of activities that strategically engaged international and humanitarian actors in identifying the needs and recommendations moving forward.

2.3.1 Forming a consortium to co-facilitate the country-level dialogue to develop the overall concept and mobilise resources.

Leadership to take on localisation, with commitment from multi-stakeholders, is paramount. The A4EP, the newest and 63rd signatory of the Grand Bargain, initiated the process in the Philippines with ECOWEB and organised the dialogue process in collaboration with UN OCHA and Oxfam Pilipinas. The localisation dialogue process in the Philippines, therefore, is a collaborative effort of the national and international humanitarian actors: UN OCHA, with leadership support from UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits Inc. (ECOWEB), Oxfam Pilipinas and Alliance for Empowering Partnerships (A4EP). A core team from the four agencies had regular weekly meetings to plan and executive activities. Each core team member took responsibility to mobilise resources and engagement from wider stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups representing the government, local governments, CSO networks, UN agencies and INGOs were among those that lent their support to the dialogue process towards developing a road map for localisation in the Philippines. Figure 1 shows the summary and interaction of the dialogue process.

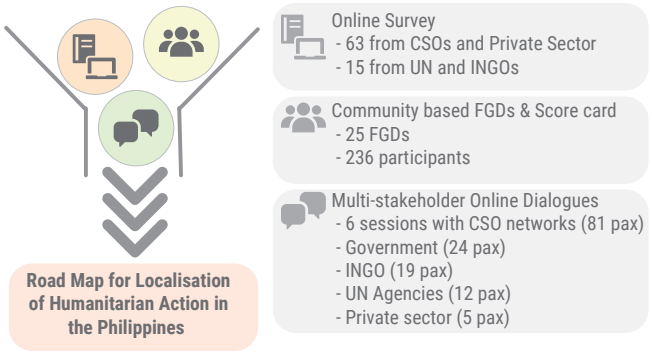


Fig. 1 Summary of process and participation to the Philippine Localisation Dialogue

The methodology of the dialogue process, uses a combination of qualitative and qualitative methodology outlined below:

2.3.2 Designing and conducting the online survey on the State of Localisation in the Philippines for local and national CSOs, INGOs, UN agencies and private humanitarian groups.

This included developing a methodology and guide for country level dialogue to assist in conducting and documenting views and opinions at different levels. The dialogue process was guided by the Seven Dimensions Framework developed by the Global Mentoring Initiative (GMI) in 2017 (See Annex 2). The Seven Dimensions Framework draws on the Grand Bargain Commitment 2 on Localisation and Commitment 6 on the Participation Revolution as well as the Charter4Change commitments and consultations with local, national and international actors. Figure 2 shows the Seven Dimensions, which were used as the key parameter for the discussions on localisation. The impacts of COVID-19 pandemic were regarded as a cross-cutting factor across the frameworks and was added as a thematic area in the dialogue.

2.3.3 Online survey, using KoboCollect, with data collected from organizational respondents from the UN, INGOs, CSOs and private sector.

The survey questions were structured according the Seven Dimensions above, particularly on Commitment 2 (Localisation) and Commitment 6 (Participation Revolution), which are directed towards humanitarian actors/duty bearers. The opportunity was also taken to include specific questions on Covid19 -response. The survey was open for six weeks.

A total of 63 CSOs and Private sector and 15 INGOs and UN agencies completed the survey. The online survey provided quantitative and qualitative data regarding the awareness and status of the Grand Bargain commitments and implementation in the country. It draws recommendations from the local and national civil society organizations, UN agencies, donors, private sector, and INGOs as well on how to move forward the localisation of humanitarian action based on the experience and perspectives of the respondents. The analysis of the responses are presented in the proceeding sections.

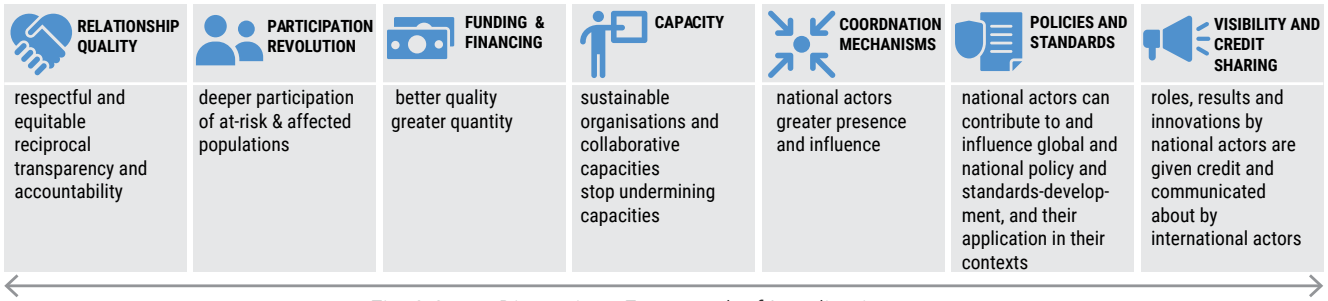


Fig. 2 Seven Dimensions Framework of Localisation

2.3.4 Conduct of community Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with Score Card Method.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with crisis-affected communities to hear their views and perspectives about the localisation agenda. To generate quantitative data on the perspective of the affected population around crisis of localisation, a score card method was used to rate their responses using the Seven Dimensions Framework. ECOWEB developed a facilitation guide for partner NGOs (see Annex 4). The diagram below (Figure 3) shows the steps that were taken to conduct the FGDs.

Fig. 3 FGD Process

The score card tool developed was tested and adapted before use. The score card was structured as follows:

Fig. 4 Score Card Guidance

Participation of the Communities in the FGDs. The FGDs engaged a total of 236 participants, 49% of whom were women from crisis-affected populations from six regions as shown in Fig.5.

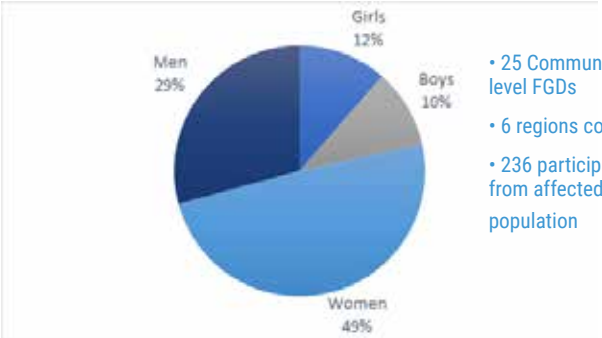


Fig. 5 Participants of the Community FGD

The communities in the six regions where community FGDs were conducted have been affected by major disasters, either natural or human-induced or both, as well as by the pandemic. Major factors for the selection of these communities were: access to the areas by CSO partners, community willingness to participate in the FGDs. The FGDs covered crisis-affected communities within major island groupings: three regions in Luzon, one region in the Visayas, and two regions in Mindanao. Figure 6 below shows the location of the Community FGDs conducted and the number of participants and FGDs per major island grouping.

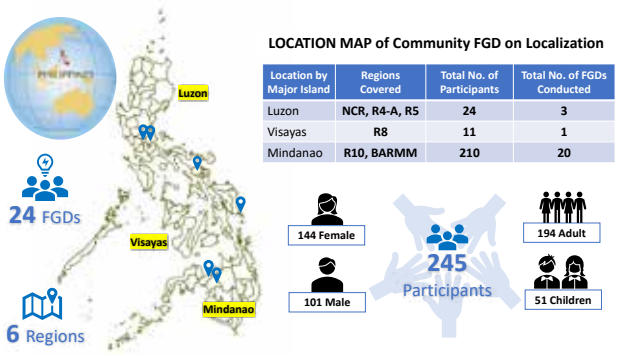


Fig. 6 Location Map of Community FGDs on Localisation

The actual number of FGDs conducted was dependent on the capacity of the facilitating CSOs within the time frame allotted. Due to the pandemic, this number was visibly lower than in normal face-to-face discussions. An FGD with a children and youth group was also specifically organised. Most of the FGDs conducted were conducted face-to-face and two sessions facilitated virtually (a local co-facilitator was onsite to assist participants during the virtual sessions). Each FGD session lasted between 2 and 3 hours. The breakdown of number of FGDs per region is provided in Figure7.

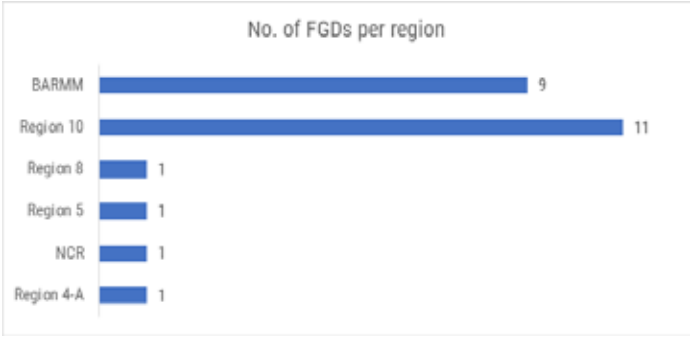


Fig. 7 No of FGDs by Geographical Region

Communities Feedback on the FGD process. Community members who took part in the FGDs felt that these discussions provided a venue for learning, sharing and expression. They were also an opportunity to share their insights, views and perspectives about humanitarian response openly and without hesitations. Participants articulated what they understood of localisation as a concept and in practice. They also learned about the differences of CSOs, INGOs, UN Agencies, and foreign donors. They felt it was a very engaging process, informative, useful and can be shared to the wider community. The children involved in the consultations were happy to learn something new especially about disasters and that the organisations with which they have interacted are helping their country.

Table 1. Feedback from Community FG Participants

From child participants in Brgy. Santiago, Iligan City (Mindanao)

Nalipay ko kay naa koy nakat-onan ug nakauban na ang mga uban bata. Nakabalo ko kung kinsa ang tig-donate sa Philippines. Nagpasalamat pud ko kay gi-invite ko. (I am happy that I learned a lot from other children. I also learned who is helping us In the Philippines. Thank you for inviting me.)

I want to come here again because it was fun to learn and make new friends

Nalipay ko nga naa koy nailhan nga lain bata. Nakatuon pod ko og daghan parehas sa mga disasters, unsay buhaton, mga unsaon pagtabang ug uban pa. Nagpasalamat ko sa gatudlo kay daghan ko natun-an. (I was able to get to know other children, I also learned about disasters, what to do and how we can help. Thank you as I learned a lot).

From participants in Baloi, Lanao del Norte (Mindanao)

This activity is very useful. It's not only about learning, but it helps us to contribute in sharing our experiences in the process of receiving assistance and we are confident that it will be shared to the UN and International agencies so they would know our situation on the ground. We can also share this to our community.

From Marawi IDPs FGDs (BARMM, Mindanao)

We are happy for it gives the participants learning about humanitarian and localisation as a concept, and gives them venue to share insights, views, and perspectives on localisation.

From participants in Salcedo, Eastern Samar (Visayas)

We liked the activity because we were able to share our insights to what we wish the different humanitarian agencies will be able to do in case a crisis or calamity is to happen to our community.

From participants in Binangonan, Rizal (Luzon)

Maligaya dahil naibahagi namin ang mga saloobin at na-enlighten kami. Nakapaglabas ng mga damdamin at kung anong nararamdaman namin. (We are happy because we are able to share our thoughts and we have been enlightened. We are able to express what we feel.)

Overall, participants expressed hope that their voices will be heard, and their recommendations can make a difference in the way humanitarian agencies respond to crises in their communities. Overall, they were extremely satisfied that there are agencies who are willing to walk with them and guide them.

Photo: ECOWEB

2.3.5 National-level dialogues

The dialogues on localisation, which were held with local and national CSOs, private sector, humanitarian groups, INGOs and UN agencies, used the key analysis from the online survey and FGDs as starting points for the national discussions. Convening 11 inter-network and intra-network dialogues was a real collaborative effort. This diagram (Fig. 7) shows the collaboration efforts, the support provided and ownership from various stakeholders.

Fig. 8 Stakeholders of the Country-level Localisation Dialogue in the Philippines

The online dialogues were organised between 21 April and 10 June 2021. The chart below (Figure 8) shows the breakdown of participants from multi-stakeholder groups.

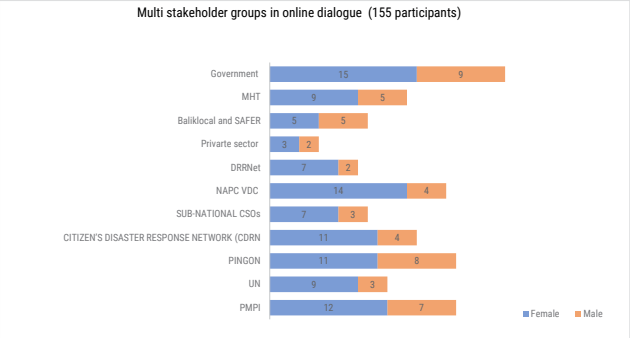


Fig. 9 Multi-stakeholder Virtual Dialogues Participants, by sector and age

Each online consultation took between 90-120 mins. The goal was to utilise the insights and analysis from the consultations to develop a road map for moving forward localisation commitments in the country, with defined monitoring mechanisms. Findings of the online survey and the community FGDs were presented during the virtual dialogues. Participants were given the space to reflect on their experiences and the opportunity to have honest and open conversations. They were asked for recommendations on how they think localisation works for crisis-affected communities. This was achieved through break-out group sessions as well as through plenary discussion. The impact of COVID-19 was woven into all the group discussions. It was important that stakeholders felt safe and that they could openly share their experience and views. Dialogue break-out sessions were grouped according to the different dimensions. They explored questions such as: *What can be improved? What obstacles can be anticipated and how to overcome them? What needs to change?*

Each group also discussed the impact of Covid 19. See Annex 1 for the generic agenda for the discussions.

2.3.6 The final national inter-agency and multi-stakeholder dialogue on 10 June 2021.

The final dialogue session was opened by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Gustavo Gonzalez, followed by keynote remarks from Herndando Caraig, the Assistant Secretary of the government's Office of Civil Defense (OCD).

Close to a hundred participants took part in the final dialogue and action planning workshop. The breakdown by stakeholder is shown in the graph below (Fig.9).

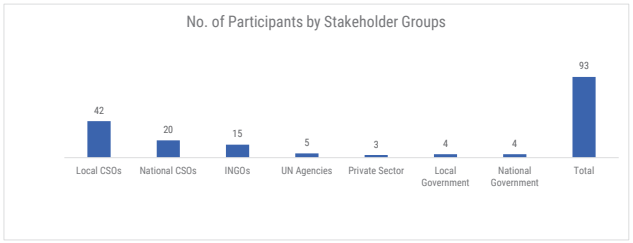


Fig. 10. Number of Participants by Stakeholder Group during the June 10, 2021 Final inter-agency and multi-stakeholder Localisation Dialogue

2.3.7 Analysis and Report writing - Harvesting information from the rich discussions

Rich discussions in all the online dialogues were harvested by documenters and analysis was carried out to synthesise the key findings, insights, recommendations, and action points from the survey, FGDs and dialogues. The report is a key record of the proceedings and will be the reference document to take actions forward. It will be shared with the stakeholders in the Philippines and to the wider audience including the Grand Bargain signatories.

2.3.8 Post-Dialogue Actions: Developing the Road Map and Moving Forward Localisation in the Philippines

The Grand Bargain commitments, including the ones on localisation and the participation revolution, aim at a wider reform of the practices of the humanitarian system in the Philippines. While several improvements have been achieved over the last few years, operational improvements by individuals and sets of collaborating agencies are not enough to affect systemic change. In this second wave of localisation, the aim is to a look at accelerating more holistic and systematic measures for localisation. Figure 10 shows the different levels where actions need to take place and where responsibility and accountability must lie. A broader perspective is therefore needed, that asks more strategic questions:

Photos 1, 2. Screen Shots of the UN RC/HC Gustavo Gonzalez (left) and OCD Asec Hernando Caraig (right) delivering the Opening and Keynote Remarks respectively during the final inter-agency multi-stakeholder

1) How to make the collective, global, or 'system-wide' capacity better prepared to respond to a crisis in ways that maximise the participation of affected populations and reinforces rather than replaces local and national capacities?

2) What strategic decisions for the collective response to a particular crisis will create a situation where the international assistance reinforces rather than replaces local and national actors?

3) What will make our own organisation better prepared to do this?

4 What does localisation mean for our individual (and collective) operational practices?

Taking into consideration the above questions and developing a road map for localisation as well as putting in place a strong monitoring mechanism will ensure that the Philippines can move forward on its localisation commitments. Results of the dialogue process were presented to various stakeholders including Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), Mindanao Humanitarian Team (MHT), other humanitarian coordination bodies, donors, networks of CSOs, INGOs and to the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream, as well as to the Government of the Philippines. The HCT and the various CSO networks will be the key stakeholders targeted to move forward the identified actions. CSO networks are also expected to share the results to their community partners.

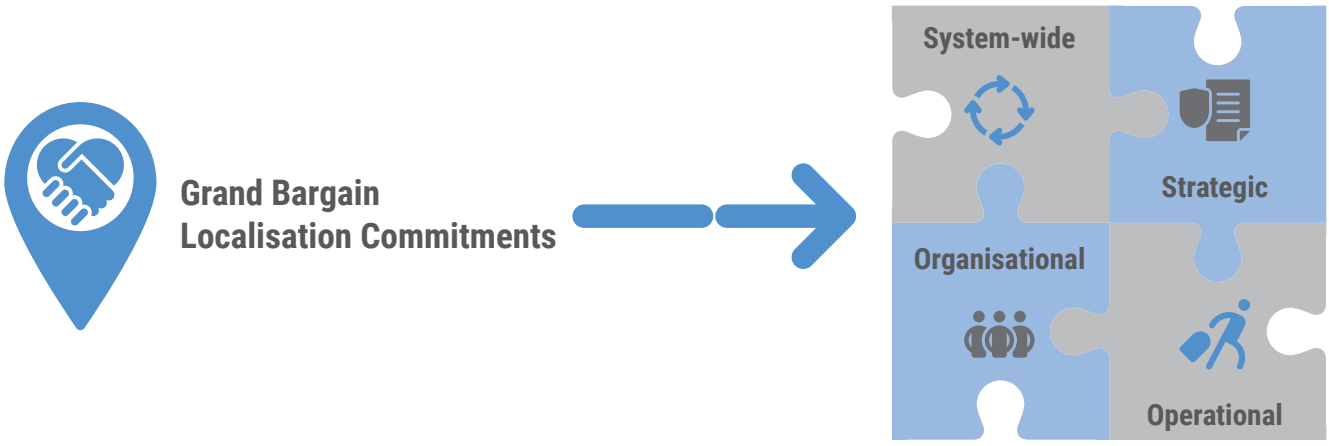


Fig. 11 Localisation Holistic Framework

ECOWEB's community development facilitator, facilitating the participatory action learning in crisis (palc) with the Marawi IDPs.

Photo: Rakila Mamosaca/ECOWEB

3. Key Findings and Insights from Community FGDs with Crisis-Affected Communities – Online Surveys with CSOs, Private Sector, UN and INGOs, and Virtual Dialogue with Various Stakeholders

This Section synthesises the key findings and insights from stakeholders who participated in the community FGDs, online surveys and in the virtual national dialogues, between February and July 2021. The findings are arranged around the Seven Dimensions of Localisation; and an additional thematic cross-cutting area on COVID-19 which was also partially mentioned across the discussions in the other dimensions.

"Stakeholders have to meet, assemble among themselves and talk about what we need and what we want to do in case of emergencies. During the Marawi experience, the CSOs strategised to come up with a platform and established hotlines so that people could have participation, especially the internally displaced persons."

- Padoman Paporo, Bangon Marawi CSO Platform

3.1 Quality of Relationship and Partnerships

Feedback from participants include that:

"We want to be equal partners in humanitarian action, not just in terms of funding. [It] should be rooted at the local level."

Local NGO leader, Intra network dialogue

"Humanitarian outcomes are better when people are empowered…we need the support of the communities."

National NGO leader, Inter network dialogue

"We receive support from government, but we were not involved in the process (planning & implementation)."

Community member at the FGD

Key Findings and Insights from the Community FGDs

Community members consulted across the six regions in the Philippines really appreciated that local/national CSOs are able to immediately respond to disasters. They particularly appreciated the transparent process and involvement of community leaders in the implementation and the involvement and consultation with communities. These communities prefer contextualised needs assessment and assistance, along with timely validation by international and national humanitarian actors such as conducting house-to-house survey and proper/on-the-ground validation of beneficiaries. A fair beneficiary selection process (i.e., without palakasan/political patronage) was highlighted as important. However, some participants expressed appreciation to the national government for efficient cash distribution under the Social Amelioration Program (SAP) for COVID-19 pandemic response. Using the score card method, Fig. 12 below shows that overall, communities have positive views of their relationship with local/national CSOs, the national government, followed by local governments and international NGOs. Other humanitarian actors such as donor agencies and UN agencies have a fair relationship with communities. Meanwhile, relationship of affected communities with individual donors and business/private sectors needs marked improvement.

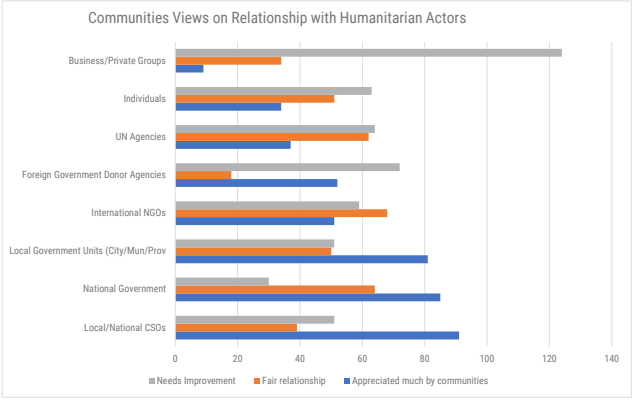


Fig. 12 Views of the Participating Affected Communities of Disaster on Relationship with Humanitarian Actors, Community FGDs Scorecard

Access to information. Community FGD participants emphasised the importance of social media in dissemination of information. They mostly expressed preference for direct assistance to families, and recommended not to provide assistance through barangays or LGUs. Rather, they argue that it is better to channel support through local CSOs as they work closely with the community. Some of the participants recommended that UN agencies and INGOs obtain data from the barangays; however, they noted that this data would need to be validated on the ground.

Bottom-up approach. Coordination and cooperation with CSOs present in the locality was also suggested. A top-down approach should be discouraged as much as possible; instead, participants argued that it was important to enable needs-based and bottom-up response. Community-based groups also recommended capacity building support for them in preparing project proposals, where time and human resources are not factored into project costs. Communities affected by crisis wanted to become partners in humanitarian assistance and to be included in the process of aid distribution, delivery, and planning, not just being beneficiaries or recipients of aid. The inclusion of communities affected by crisis in the process needs to be consciously integrated in the INGO and donor strategy and actions.

Transparency and Accountability.

Quick, timely, fair, transparent, and needs-based response are being hoped for by the affected population. – Community FGD findings

"Transparency and accountability should always be practiced so trust and respect will be gained," emphasised a participant during the Online Survey for CSOs and private sector. Community FGD participants expressed the need to strengthen transparency and accountability among humanitarian actors and felt that other humanitarian agencies are not as transparent on how much they received and what support they have provided. Participants shared that they have local and national partners that have demonstrated transparency in their humanitarian programming.

Challenges. The FGD community participants also suggested improving the quality of relationships between, and among, humanitarian actors. At the heart of communities' concern is the continuing politicisation of aid or the so-called 'palakasan' characterising a political patronage system that creates conflict and inequality in the community. Some vulnerable populations, like displaced and host families, are usually overlooked in the distribution of assistance under this system. For instance, in the COVID-19 response, not all vulnerable families received Social Amelioration Program (SAP) assistance from the government; and the information on the distribution of the assistance was not widely disseminated. Complaints were raised by those consulted regarding the behaviour of some national government staff who were not so approachable and strict with the requirements for the grants. Some respondents shared that cash assistance given in the form of cheques is difficult to manage for small organisations, given their limited financial capacity. It was also shared that where the extent of devastation is huge, such as in the Marawi siege, government should compensate the losses of the victims of the crisis which the IDPs have continually advocate.

The quality of some of the distributed goods (e.g., expired rice from government) was also an issue raised by the beneficiary communities. They also complained about the disorganised distribution of relief goods. Others said they experienced a lack of supply of medicines in quarantine facilities.

There were also observations among some INGOs and CSOs that assistance channelled through LGUs were not effectively reaching the affected people. However, coordination and building effective relationships with local governments is viewed as crucial to successful humanitarian action.

The ability to speak openly is an important factor in improving the quality of relationships between humanitarian actors and the communities. Some participants also expressed fear of authorities and were afraid to speak out. The "red-tagging" of civil humanitarian actors by the government, accusing them of having links to subversive or terrorist groups because of their humanitarian presence, was another issue raised by CSOs as putting humanitarian actors' safety and security at risk.

Undervaluing local capacity by duty bearers was also an issue for local communities. Thus, for instance, empowering both camp managers and internally displaced populations (IDPs) in camp management was suggested in the FGDs.

Key Findings and Insights from the Online Survey and Dialogues

Quality of relationship in humanitarian action hinges on the long-standing call for equal, equitable, real and long-term partnership between international and national/local actors. The online dialogues also demonstrated the urgency of addressing power inequities and call for equitable and long-term complementary partnerships between local/national and international actors, as opposed to the sub-contractual arrangements. More work needs to be done to improve the partnership framework from planning to implementation, including increasing the level of partnerships with local CSOs. The need to improve on transparency and fairness in the relationships between local/national and international actors was noted by community FGD participants.

"We are all in the same storm, but we are not in the same boats. We believe collaboration is best way forward, and where there are limited resources, they should go to the CSOs who can make the biggest impact, not the agencies who have the biggest marketing budgets." CSO respondent to the online survey

To help overcome this, complementation instead of competition among humanitarian actors is the preferred way of working – this way, local actors can work towards becoming equal partners in humanitarian action. Participants argued that they wanted to see complementarity between different humanitarian organisations, rather than competition between them, as to who could distribute what, where the fastest or at the greatest quality.

"Instead of competition, the coordination and synergies should be improved to achieve better outcomes and results." INGO/UN respondent to the online survey

Similar to the community FGDs, online survey respondents noted the effectiveness of a bottom-up approach and

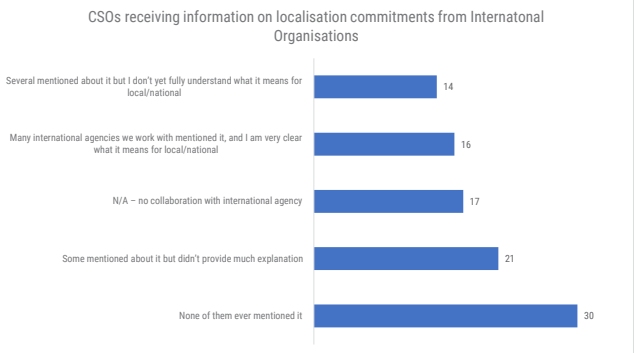


Fig. 13 CSO receiving information on localisation commitments from International Organisations

community-led process. A first step of that approach is where majority of CSOs seek out the views and preferences of the community partners in designing their own programs but not always in their joint programming with international partners.

It is apparent from the online survey that there is a need to increase awareness of localisation commitments among local and national humanitarian actors. The online survey carried out among local humanitarian actors and CSOs indicated that local actors are not familiar with localisation commitments – a little under 15% have a clear understanding what localisation means for the local actors and their international partners had mentioned it to them. More than 20% showed little understanding and received limited explanation from international partners about localisation although it was mentioned to them. Meanwhile about 30% of CSOs have never heard about localisation. Figure 13 shows the awareness among CSOs on localisation.

A question was posed to the international organisations on whether they shared the localisation commitments with their

Fig. 14 INGOs/UN sharing information of localisation commitments

partners. As shown above in Figure 14, among the UN agencies and INGO survey respondents, only 6% confirmed that they shared it with all their partners, 12% said they shared it with some of their local and national partners, 50% of the respondents said they shared the commitments indirectly through coordination mechanisms, and 31% mentioned they did not share the localisation commitments at all. Given the commitment to localisation, this is clearly an area that needs to be greatly improved. It is hoped this dialogue process has further improved awareness of localisation commitments, however the international humanitarian actors have to consciously include localisation targets and markers in their programming and strategy and share them with national and local partners.

Strategic Partnerships between International and Local Partners. In the online survey, there was a marked difference between the response from CSOs compared to INGO/UN on forming strategic partnerships. This can be seen in Figure 15 below.

More than 70% of INGOs/UN respondents said they had strategic partnerships with one or few of their local partners

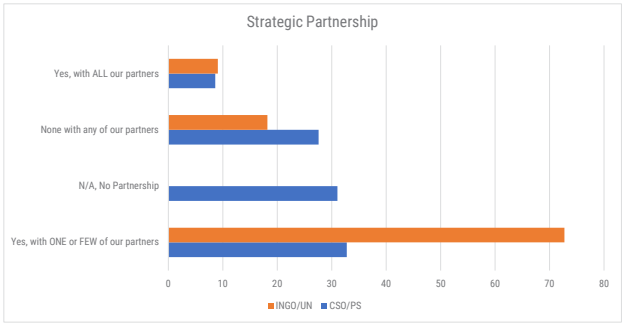


Fig. 15 Strategic Partnerships between local and international partners

while only a little over 30% of the CSOs have strategic partnerships with one or few international partners. Among the CSOs, under 30% said they do not have any strategic partnership with their international partners, compared under 20% for INGOs/UN agencies. A small proportion of CSOs (8%) and INGOs/UN (9%) said they have strategic partnerships with all their partners. 31% of the CSO respondents have no international partner. Strategic partnerships between international agencies and local actors are important not only for their financial dimension but for technical and capacity support to local humanitarian actions.

"We never know where they got the money from or the conditions of that money, just enough information for visibility and reporting purposes. Often when asked they get all upset." CSO Online Survey Participant

The key actions for improving relationship quality and partnership were therefore focused on encouraging practices and actions that promote joint decision-making, accountability and equality in partnership and learning.


Photo: ECOWEB

KEY ACTIONS for Improving Relationship and Ensuring Quality Partnership between and among humanitarian actors:

1. Enable equitable partnership among humanitarian actors on the basis of shared values and accountability between partners, upholding the principles of partnership (based on equality, mutual understanding, transparency, participation, shared responsibilities) that can best benefit the community.

2. Local and international partners to conduct joint decision-making and co-creation process of programming and implementation of projects.

3. Strengthen learning through cross-learning, capacity sharing, complementation and systematically documenting good experiences and practices that highlight the contribution of all partners.

4. Depoliticise humanitarian aid, address the practice of political patronage in government humanitarian actions and provide protection for civil humanitarian actors.

5. Provide support to local CSO accreditation in LGUs and national government for stronger partnership and accountability in humanitarian and development governance and for building partnership with private sector.

3.2. The Participation of Affected Population

"We need to work on not just looking at the response side, but we need to anticipate that there are some issues that we will be facing. Resources may not be enough, LGUs and other local communities may be responding but there are a lot of communities with less capacities that need external help. Everyone should be involved in the process in order for us to address the needs appropriately and reach the most vulnerable communities." - Shem Guiamil, MSSD DRM Chief, BARMM

"Grassroots organizations should play a big role in the humanitarian aspects because they know the context." CSO respondent to the Online Survey.

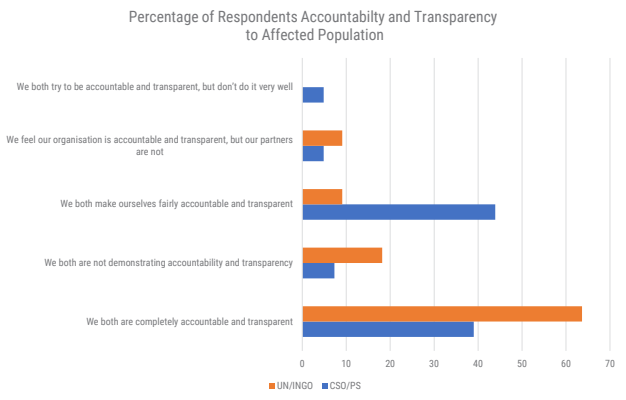


Fig. 16 Accountability and Transparency to Affected Population

Key Findings and Insights from the Community FGD and Online Survey

The participation of affected populations is at the centre of localisation. Traditionally, affected communities have been regarded as victims and recipients of humanitarian aid. However, the view from affected communities is that they wish to be treated as partners in humanitarian action.

"Accountability and transparency will require enough staffing with appropriate professional fees to CBOs. Volunteers should also be treated with dignity through provisions of decent per diems and CBOs should also be allowed to hire its own project-related staff and office cost assistance." CSO Participant to the Online Survey

Online survey reveals (Fig. 16 below) that international actors view more positively their actions towards partnership accountability and transparency to affected population of crisis. More than 63% of international actors view that they, along with their local partners, are accountable to the affected population, whereas only less than less than 40% of the local actors shared the same view. Most of the CSOs (about 44%) viewed partnership accountability and transparency to be fair. There are also a few international and local actors who felt they or their partners are falling short n these practices.

In terms of satisfaction to humanitarian assistance received, FGD participants very much appreciated the cash assistance and other humanitarian response on food and livelihood. However, they also shared their dissatisfaction to some processes that have resulted in the exclusion of some community members who are viewed to be also in need and vulnerable. The top-down approach to aid is the common experience that participants disliked.

FGD participants also revealed different experiences in terms of their involvement in humanitarian planning. There are those who said they were involved from planning, budgeting to implementation and monitoring They also helped identify and prioritised recipients in the actual distribution of goods and cash assistance in their community.

"During ECOWEB's (COVID-19) response to our community we feel very fulfilled but tiring, but we appreciate the process because we were able to address what the community really needs. We are satisfied of being part and able to lead the process of assistance. Empowering and fulfilling to us, the community members because we are able to participate and lead for our own." Community FGD participant, member of SARANAY HOA in Caloocan City

Frequency of action	Organisation seeks active participation of people in programming, implementation & M&E		Organisation seeks out views, priorities and preferences of people		Joint program seeks out views, priorities and preferences of people	
	CSO/PS	INGO/UN	CSO/PS	INGO/UN	CSO/PS	INGO/UN
Always	70%	91%	82%	100%	50%	73%
Sometimes	30%	9%	15%		47%	27%
Never			3%		3%	

Fig. 17 Involvement of Population based on perspective of the humanitarian agencies

While some participants may have felt excluded from this decision-making process in humanitarian action, results from the online survey revealed a more positive view from humanitarian actors in terms of ensuring participation or seeking views and inputs from the affected population on their priorities as basis for humanitarian action. Fig. 17 below shows the difference in the views of international actors and local actors. For instance, 91% of INGOs/UN agencies said they always sought local participation in programming and 73% prioritised joint programs based on local views and needs. Local views were also positive though slightly lower, with about 70% among CSOs and private said that locals actively participate in program but only 50% felt that these programs were informed by local views and preferences.

In FGDs with crisis-affected communities, they identified elements of the participation revolution that humanitarian actors need to consider:

- Enabling local CSOs/NGOs' facilitation to ensure more contextualised, culture-sensitive, participatory, and more effective humanitarian action

- Mainstreaming bottom-up and community-led approach to ensure inclusion of the most vulnerable in all humanitarian action processes

- Advocating and strengthening real-time feedback mechanisms that would allow affected populations to communicate to humanitarian actors including donors and for getting immediate feedback and expecting actions from duty-bearers

- Validating data on the ground level and not relying only on data provided by the LGU

- Empowering camp managers and IDPs leaders in managing evacuation centres

Findings and Insights from the Dialogue

The dialogues suggested that there has already been a shift where affected populations are involved not only in consultation in projects programmes but increasingly in implementation with local partners. However, there have been some challenges identified by local humanitarian actors when affected communities are not involved. For instance, if INGOs/ UN agencies directly implement their projects without working with local NGOs, there is a higher likelihood of these projects failing to be sustainable.

Padoman Paporo, representative of local CSOs in the Bangon Marawi CSO Platform and an IDP leader herself stressed the importance of stakeholder's consultation and assemblies ("masuwara") to talk about the needs, and actions that need to be done in cases of emergencies. Lessons from the Marawi siege emphasised the value of strategising and establishing platforms and hotlines where IDPs can participate, developing partnerships with other CSOs and promoting the principle of "nothing about us, without us". This has promoted survivor-community-led response and has influenced duty bearers in implementing "doable" solutions. She underscored the importance of community-based monitoring and evaluation to ensure checks and balances on all project implementation in emergencies.

Improving space for CSOs in leadership and decision-making roles at the DRRM/humanitarian action was deemed necessary. This representation should not only extend to consultative bodies but also in decision-making bodies at the global, national and local levels where they can effectively influence the outcomes of these actions.

Language barriers also pose a challenge when international NGOs/actors work with communities and local CSOs. In one of the consultations, participants shared that *"…foreigners who serve in the frontlines of the project speak in English, but the community is not that good in English. They are forced to speak in English and that's difficult for them. As a development worker, INGOs should understand, adjust, and adapt to the community's preference and not the other way around."* Understanding the context and language are bridges to reach the most affected populations. Major suggestions to improve participation of affected populations in humanitarian action include:

Data and feedback. Actions include improving community feedback and generating real-time submission and feedback systems to government and INGOs/agencies, as well as ensuring the availability of feedback and complaint mechanisms are in place and that they are functional. Normally, it is hard to know whether, and what, actions have been taken in response to beneficiary comments and feedback. International and humanitarian actors need to ensure they conduct contextual analysis (necessary to understand the dynamics of the humanitarian action being responded to) and that actions they take are appropriate and culturally sensitive. Aside from this analysis, it is good practice to regularly consult affected communities on quality of services and engagement and give them feedback on how their complaints and responses were addressed.

Quality partnerships. There is a growing recognition of the role of the basic sectors on influencing policies that best benefit those marginalized and made vulnerable by disasters.

For instance, the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) basic sectoral councils are advocating the localisation of sectoral participation by replicating the national sectoral council representation at the local level. Stakeholders also identified other actors who can add value to local humanitarian action. These include academics, who can be engaged not only for their research expertise but also for evidence-based advocacy. Local faith-based networks and the private sector are also important partners in humanitarian action as they have the influence, base, and the mechanisms to mobilise and adapt aid quickly. Lastly, there is a need to continuously promote learning platforms for good practices and guidelines.

Localising risk information & knowledge. Translating materials into local, appropriate language and media should be included in the localisation of risk information. Acknowledging the value of local and indigenous knowledge which could improve humanitarian action and their appropriateness to the local context, will also be important. For instance, communities living in and along the Agusan River reported that they have developed adaptive strategies that allow them to prepare beforehand - these need to be acknowledged by local and international humanitarian actors, and be built into their response systems and planning, in consultation with the affected communities.

The key actions recognise the strengths and contributions of communities in local humanitarian action, while making it imperative that community feedback, monitoring and evaluation systems are in place and bottom-up approaches are continuously promoted.

KEY ACTIONS for Improving Participation of Affected Population in humanitarian crisis

1. Institutionalize co-creation and co-implementation in projects, where affected communities are involved in conceptualizing and delivering humanitarian interventions based on their needs and capacities such as through the conduct of community FGDs, survivor- and community-led crisis response approach, participatory action planning, and upholding the principles of inclusivity - "Nothing About Us, Without Us!".

2. Promote community organising as a long-term strategy. This does not only ensure that communities are able to mobilize themselves to respond at the onset of disasters, but this also builds the capacity of the community to influence their LGUs (e.g., in local development planning and DRRM planning). These should be among the indicators of success of community participation.

3. Strengthen community-based monitoring, evaluation, and accountability mechanisms, especially those that enable access of community to mechanisms for community feedback- whether face-to-face or through digital means (e.g., Loop digital feedback platform).

4. Advocate for the creation and implementation of policies and guidelines supporting bottom-up processes, creation of CSO desks in international NGOs, donors or national government, and enable CSO accreditation in LGUs and national government, for stronger partnership and accountability in humanitarian and development governance.

3.3 Funding and Financing

One of the commitments under the Grand Bargain Localisation commitment is to increase and support multi-year investments in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including for preparedness, response and coordination. Some improvements have been made to address this, but more work needs to be done.

Key findings from the Community FGDs and Online Surveys

In the community FGDs, community members identified key actions for funding and financing as critical for local actors to assist communities in need. These include the need for quick response and quality assistance, with humanitarian support to be needs-based; support/ assistance to be given directly to families and not coursed through barangay captains/ government; and a preference for cash and individual assistance, as well as increasing in government cash assistance and digital financial assistance for local humanitarian actors.

One of the challenges that local humanitarian actors have struggled with is immediately deploying human and financial resources amidst a disaster or emergency and having access to sustainable and more flexible funding. Below are highlighted results from the survey.

Access to funding. This is a real obstacle in that local humanitarian actors report challenges in accessing financial resources. The result from the online survey below (Figure 18) on access to funding reveals that 35% of the CSO respondents said they have no international funding. Also, among CSOs, 25% said their access to international funding has significantly decreased compared to about 13% of the UN/INGOs. Among UN/INGOs, 37% said their funding has slightly increased, while only 11% of CSOs reported increases in funding over the last five years. Around 25% of INGO/UN respondents confirmed there has been no change in access

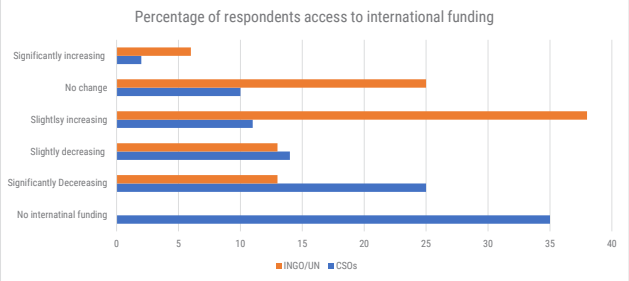


Fig. 18. Percentage of access to international funding

to international funding compared to 10% of CSO respondents. However, overall, trends for the last five years show funding significantly or slightly decreasing for a number of CSOs.

Access to multi-year funding for humanitarian response and flexible funding. A big gap that surfaced in the surveys was the limited access of CSOs, UN agencies and INGOs to multi-year funding, with only 33% of CSOs confirming they received multi-year funding, and only 33% of international organisations confirming they give multi-year funding to one, few, or all of their CSO partners. Among INGO/UN respondents, 67% confirmed that they do not receive multi-year funding; among local CSOs, 33% confirmed they do not receive multi-year funding, while the other 33% said they do not have international partners (Figure 19) below.

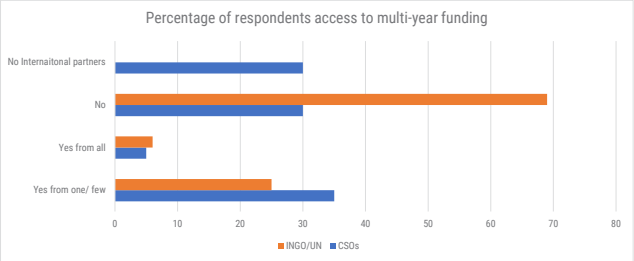


Fig. 19. Percentage of respondents with access to multi-year funding

Another challenging area for humanitarian actors is accessing flexible grants. As can be seen in Figure 20 below, 13% among CSO respondents say that they have not received flexible funding, and 25% of INGOs/UN respondents confirmed that they have never provided flexible funding to local/national partners. Another 25% of CSOs confirmed that they do not receive funding at all from international agencies. A little under 20% among INGOs/UN said they always give flexible grants, while 37% sometimes provided this to local partners. Only 13% of CSOs said that all the grants they received from international partners have a flexible component while 22% replied sometimes, and 18% rarely.

The COVID-19 pandemic allowed flexibility of funding, which was recognized as one of key strengths of the pandemic humanitarian response. The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) as well as basically all other donors allowed

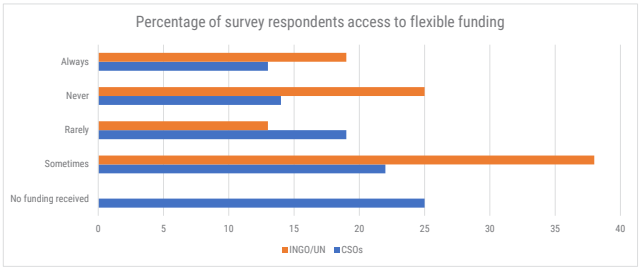


Fig. 20. Percentage of humanitarian CSOs receiving flexible funding

reprogramming and time extensions of contracts. This helped partners mobilise and adapt a localised frontline response.

Overhead costs. Globally, access to overhead costs has been identified as one of the biggest issues. As can be seen in Figure 21, less than 30% of CSOs indicated that overhead costs are covered by their international partner, although more than 60% of INGOs/UN agencies mentioned they provide overhead costs. This could indicate a difference in the interpretation of overhead costs. Among CSO respondents, 22% said their international partners are sometimes able to cover these costs, compared to about 19% of UN/INGOs who said that sometimes they cover overhead costs. Access to overhead costs is clearly a significant issue in the ability of local actors to respond effectively to humanitarian crises. All funding agreements should make a provision for overheads/ core costs in order to increase capacities for locally led humanitarian response.

Effects of COVID-19. The Covid-19 pandemic is a major challenge for the Philippines and globally.

Mr. Benedict Balderrama of SAFER, and the PPERR representative to the HCT reflected, *"While there has been some progress, recent events have also proven that more needs to be done to address the complexities and challenges (with the pandemic, increasing frequency and intensity of disasters) confronting the humanitarian ecosystem. There is a need for the humanitarian system to "evolve faster",* and in a more effective and meaningful way".

As can be seen in Figure 22 below, the survey results show stark differences in availability of resources - both funding and logistical, and the access to affected populations between CSOs and international agencies. The majority of CSOs have limited COVID-19 response due to limited avail-

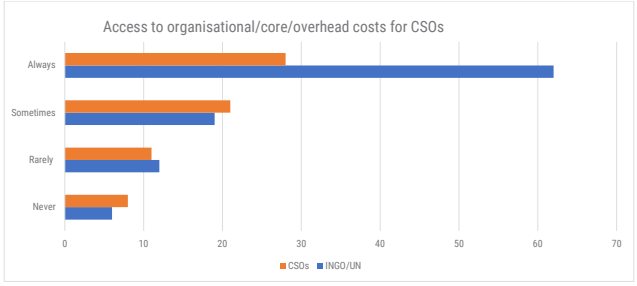


Fig. 21 Percentage of access to overhead costs by CSOs

ability of funding, human resources, and logistical support. However, the majority had access and made innovations to overcome these challenges. The pandemic has necessitated a shift to online activities and meetings. International and national partners supported local humanitarian actors with technical support to a digital shift. However, limited connectivity is also a problem for many, especially in more remote areas. Monitoring of projects has proven challenging during the height of the pandemic. The lack of readiness was a bigger issue for CSOs than for international actors. However, lack of access, permits and staff well-being were bigger issues for international NGOs. The issue of permits also hindered CSO engagement in the response along with the access to resources needed to shift to COVID-19 response. Local CSOs also reported that they did not have their own programming for COVID-19 responses, which has been challenging for them in building expertise in pandemic response.

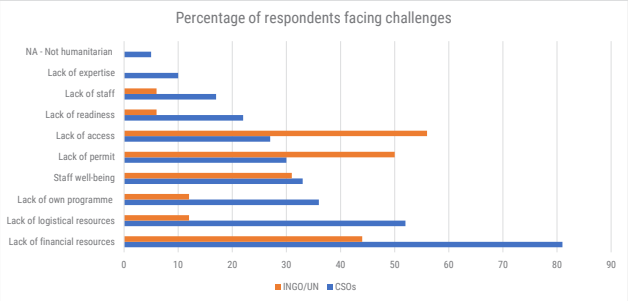


Fig. 22. Challenges faced by humanitarian actors for COVID-19 response

Findings and Insights from the Dialogue

The discussions from the dialogues highlighted the need to look at the complementarity of resources, funding and capacities among all humanitarian actors (CSOs, government, INGOs, UN agencies, private sector) as a means of ensuring more effective and efficient delivery of services to affected population.

The key message during the national dialogue was: Complementarity and not competition is the preferred way for effective services delivery by majority of CSOs.

Stakeholders also called for more direct access to funders to lessen the barriers for access to funding and to allocate sufficient overhead budget for national and local CSOs. A specific area where CSOs find things difficult are around the financial requirements for reporting. For instance, official receipts are not always available in the field. Some beneficiaries may have difficulty reading or filling out forms/vouchers. This may leave out small local businesses who are not able to provide these receipts or vouchers.

Inflexible funding and programming make it difficult for NGOs to transfer cash. Some NGOs find ways to support communities by providing livelihood packages or technical assistance based on their needs.

CSOs also emphasised that too much time was spent on project/proposal development, with short funding calls, leaving less time to consult people on the ground. If these proposals are rejected, this may cause disappointment among communities. They suggested including costing for preparatory activities (consultations, project development) to allow quality inputs and allocate dedicated staff time within programming budgets. Recognising the threats that humanitarian actors face, funders should also allocate funds for legal counselling support to humanitarian workers experiencing harassment and other human rights violations, as suggested during the consultations with local CSO networks.

Related to the suggestion to improve quality of relationship, it was also emphasised that communities' needs should be considered when deciding on funding priorities. FGDs with communities also indicated general preference of cash assistance, which is considered more flexible in addressing multiple needs of families and communities that are affected by crises. This means making funding more accessible, flexible, and having more options for multi-year funding for CSOs/NGOs by international actors.

<u>Exploring funding sources and approach.</u> International agencies can create an accessible country-based funding including for communities and make CERF accessible to national and local CSOs. Another approach is to do this via consortium approaches which include local actors and through technical assistance which engages local partners.

Multi-year financing, while ideal, is not always available even for UN agencies – this is the reality they face during an emergency. However, respondents said that international NGOs and donors should always be on the lookout to find ways to provide multi-year support for funding and technical assistance for their partners. There is also a call to ease compliance requirements and improve standardisation and harmonisation of reporting templates. It is also high time to review sub-contractual arrangements with CSOs to allow for more leeway and for flexible funding and programming approaches. This supports CSOs' suggestions for enhancing access to funding. As can be seen in Figure 23, more than 60% suggested to make funding easily available, followed closely by making funding less competitive and lowering access barriers.

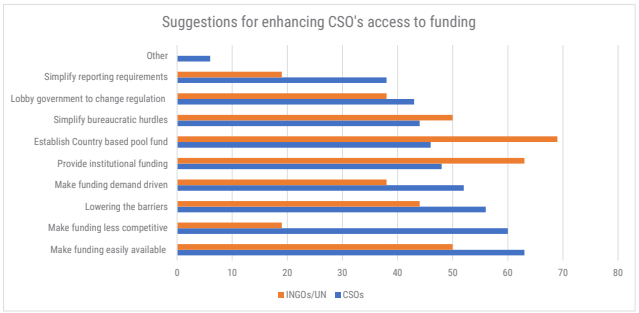


Fig. 23. Suggestions for enhancing funding for CSOs

Among INGOs/UN, the suggestions were to provide institutional funding and simplify bureaucratic hurdles (50%), and close to 70% suggesting establishing a county-based pooled fund. CSOs also would like to see simplified reporting requirements (nearly 40%), compared to under 20% for INGOs/UN. More than 50% of the CSOs would like to make funding demand-driven, compare to under 40% for INGOs/UN. Donors have also highlighted the need for national governments to provide access to local level humanitarian funding to reduce the burden on international actors. The bureaucratic requirements for funding can be burdensome for CSOs, who have either limited staff or limited organisational capacity to manage them on time. Some help would be required to support them through, among others, more simplified funding access tools. Other major suggestions that CSOs felt strongly about were lowering the barriers for funding (+50%) and making funding less competitive (60%).

As shared during the dialogues with the government, there are other ways to look at funding and financing for localisation. One is by working through, and advocating with, national and local governments for the allocation of budgets from the increased budgets of LGUs for humanitarian action in partnership with local and national actors. Through the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling, the Supreme Court affirmed that local government units are entitled to a "just share" on all national taxes collected. According to the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), with the implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia ruling in 2022, it is projected that LGUs will have a 27.61% increase in their total Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) shares. The DILG has issued Executive Order No. 138 to provide guidance on the transition to more devolved services with LGUs. This increase in the IRA share of LGUs is supposed to enhance the service delivery of local government units through decentralization. With the additional services to be taken on by LGUs, it will also be important to include vulnerability criteria in fund allocation/budgeting at the national and local levels to avoid political patronage. CSOs and international actors can work closely with LGUs to advocate for more needs-based, risk sensitive priorities on the ground.

Another entry point is the provision for the funding of anticipatory risk actions, which are being introduced by the national government, INGOs and UN agencies. INGOs and donors should explore including support for activities to beneficiaries beyond their project areas, as part of flexible funding approaches.

Respondents also suggested to maximise diverse funding sources, including exploring Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes of the private sector. Examples of linkages with the private sector include access to financial markets and CSR programmes for greater inclusion (i.e., digital banking, using technology for social enterprises, business support). To foster trust and transparency between donors/UN/INGOs and the private sector, CSOs need to build their capacity on, and work towards, accreditation and due diligence in order to increase the confidence of the private sector to work with CSOs.

The discussions on funding and financing emphasised the need to help CSOs gain more access to funding mechanisms through accessible funding and simplified requirements. Institutional funding was also deemed important to sustain local CSOs, while also exploring other funding means, as outlined in the Key Actions below:

KEY ACTIONS for Ensuring Quality funding and Financing for effective, efficient and accountable humanitarian action

1. Support small and local CSOs to gain more access to humanitarian funding by simplifying requirements, bureaucratic systems, and removing administrative policies that exclude smaller local actors in funding mechanisms such as the requirement for financial counterpart which is perceived to favour the bigger and financially stable organizations.

2. Provide enough support for overhead, staff retention and other operational costs for local actors (including those related to institutional capacity strengthening) other than direct project costs.

3. Promote consortium-building efforts in accessing humanitarian funding for CSOs that actively involve smaller local actors/area-based local actors, especially in planning and implementation of projects on the ground.

4. Expand country-based pooled funds that are accessible to local humanitarian actors including community-based organisations.

5. Expand cash-based flexible and participatory programming to effectively address the needs of the crisis-affected people.

3.4. Capacity

"We are learning a lot and changing because we have been impacted by many crises. Now, we are moving from donor-recipient to more horizontal partnerships. We are transitioning from a silo to more participatory action which is part of resilience-building. We are moving from vertical and centralised aid to localisation. We are moving from stand-alone interventions... to platforms, to coalitions. Localisation agenda is also an agenda of complementarities between those from the grassroots to the rest! We complement each other." – UN RC/HC Gustavo Gonzalez

Findings from the Community FGDs, Online Survey and Dialogue

The existing capacity of local CSOs/NGOs in facilitating humanitarian actions on the ground is generally appreciated by communities. Local humanitarian capacity is hampered by lack of humanitarian staff capacity, which may constrain their ability to immediately deploy humanitarian response and local staff. This includes gaps caused by trained staff leaving for bigger organisations/INGOs, which creates a vacuum in the local CSO space. When this happens, it is harder for local organisations to hire them back or regain the lost capacity. Figures 24 and 25 below show the percentage of CSOs who have lost several staff to international agencies.

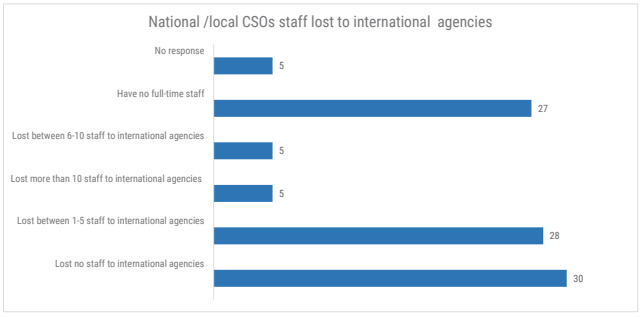


Fig. 24. CSO Staff lost to international agencies

CSOs complained that they face difficulty in retaining staff and of losing staff to bigger organisations and international agencies. Figure 24 shows that close to 50% of national/ local CSOs said they lost a number of staff to international agencies. Often, it is harder for those staff to work with local organisations again due to financial expectations, which local CSOs find difficult to match. More than 25% said they have no full-time staff.

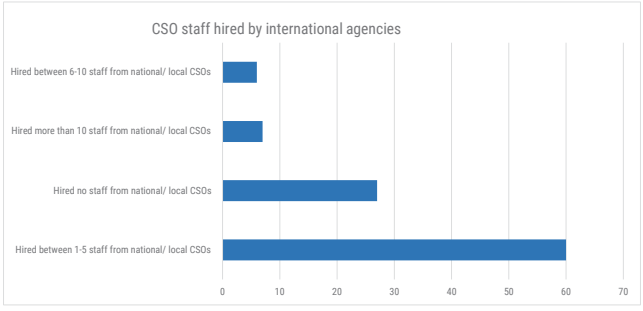


Fig. 25. CSO Staff hired by international agencies

Figure 25 above shows that international agencies have hired staff from national/local CSO, with 60% hiring between 1 and 5 staff. Under 10% said they hired more than 10 staff from national/local CSOs.

Succession planning is therefore important for local CSOs to manage staff-turnover and develop leaders from among their ranks.

There has been investment in capacity strengthening of local/ national CSOs in the Philippines by their international partners in the past. The survey respondents were asked for their views on the effectiveness of the capacity strengthening efforts (see Figure 26 below). Only 11% of the CSOs and 13% of INGO/UN respondents felt that the capacity strengthening efforts were very effective and contributed to organisational strengthening of CSOs. On the other hand, 60% of the INGO/ UN respondents felt the capacity strengthening was fairly effective, needing just a little improvement compared to 40% of CSO respondents. 20% of the INGO/UN agencies felt it needs more improvement, while 5% of CSO respondents felt that support was not effective. 30% of the CSO respondents did not have a partnership with international actors, which meant they missed out on capacity support. Many CSOs have been building technical capacity for the management and implementation of humanitarian response, but the results of the survey show more effective technical and organisational support is needed from international partners.

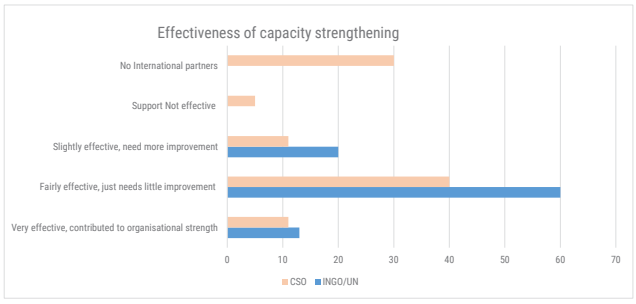


Fig. 26. Effectiveness of capacity strengthening of local and national CSOs

Although a few CSOs are actively participating in coordination mechanisms and consulting with local bodies to make quality inputs, many CSOs still need to improve in their participation. An example given were instances where CSOs have negotiated spaces such as in the HCT, but CSOs also need to push their agenda in these forums. Many CSOs lack the confidence to engage in these forums and may not have the language ability to do so effectively. A deeper assessment is required to identify what is preventing local CSOs from engaging in quality participation in coordination bodies.

There was a request by various stakeholders for capacity enhancement to comply with due diligence standards and necessary accreditation for eligibility to enter into partnerships with the private sector and international agencies to establish trust and facilitate reliable partnerships. Support for capacity assessments to allow partners to align with standards is also needed. Some examples cited were among some

local CSOs in BARMM that have struggled to comply with these requirements.

Local humanitarian actors shared their practical realities when it comes to compliance:

"[in terms of finance], it is so hard to look for official receipt from small businesses. The capacity of small and local businesses is not at par with those big and established ones. Funders look for certain output that is beyond the capacity of the project recipient." – Dialogue with PMPI, 21 April 2021

As emphasised during the consultation with the private sector, building trust and accountability between and among partners is essential, for which this is a significant step.

Increasing capacity for cash assistance. Increasing local capacity to implement cash and voucher assistance (CVA) programmes and the increase in CVA programmes in humanitarian response are considered important based on the feedback from the FGDs with crisis-affected communities. CSOs respondents felt that more capacity strengthening is required to undertake this as only 5% among them reported that their current capacity is highly effective with no need for technical support. 12% among CSOs reported that CVA programmes were not very effective and need significant capacity development support. Despite these challenges, more than 60% of INGOs/ UN and 54% of CSO respondents viewed that CSO capacity was effective, with just a little more capacity development support, however this may reflect views of the larger national CSOs who have more capacity and resources than the smaller local CSO and CBOs (Figure 27).

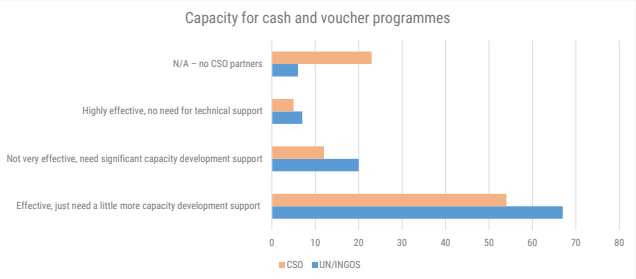


Fig. 27. Organisational capacity to implement cash and voucher programmes

Nexus approach. The nexus approach is being used by over 60% of CSO respondents. One respondent emphasised "that it is always important to link humanitarian response to development and understanding the causes of the crisis." It is also important to identify and to ensure transition from humanitarian response to recovery and development. This requires integrated programming to facilitate resources and capacity complementarity to address the complex needs of crisis affected communities.

A survey respondent shared that, "*Our survivor and community-led response to crisis approach allow the partner communities/groups to address not only their emergency needs but also other developmental needs and actions that somehow address their identified vulnerabilities. The use of cash-based and community-led programming provides the people the agency to initiate development, DRR, advocacy and peace actions apart from emergency response actions in humanitarian crisis situation*". Padoman Paporo, representing local CSOs through the Bangon Marawi CSO Platform and an IDP herself, reiterated the following message:

"The survivor and community-led response (SCLR) as promoted by ECOWEB is the preferred approach to make humanitarian response more responsive and able to facilitate in identifying durable solutions – by providing "doable" solutions to duty bearers and ensures engagement, coordination, and providing convergence at the local level".

The humanitarian programmes and projects for the marginalised are crucial to resolving the issues on advocacy for land and housing rights, so working across the nexus of humanitarian, peace, and development should become the goal. Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic not only has health implications; it has also resulted in longer term distress with an impact on people's livelihood and survival. This has also led or highlighted conflicts in the community.

Learning from each other, working across sectors. Humanitarian actors cannot work in isolation from each other, due to the interconnectedness of various efforts and the limited resources for humanitarian action. Practical actions can be undertaken to improve cross-learning and exchange.

Among participants, peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing are essential to improving the skills and advocacy of the wide network of advocates for localisation. This would enable actions such as exploring coordination and learning exchanges with universities and research institutions for research and advocacy. Tapping into local knowledge and experiences into program implementation with national/ INGOs and in advocating with local government for humanitarian action (e.g., experience of early action by flood affected communities in the Agusan River) is an example.

Co-learning from each other is an important element of capacity building: This include sharing the learning on how the private sector can work with CSOs in their participation approach and how CSOs can adopt some of the innovations that the private sector organizations have developed (e.g., financial inclusion using technology, digital banking, blended learning, logistics pooling, sustainable incentives). Bigger networks are working to document their members' experience through their headquarters' support to local CSOs in knowledge management.

Veronica Gabaldon, Executive Director of the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), representing the private sector felt that, considering the vulnerability of the Philippines to various hazards, it is imperative for actors working together to begin operationalising localisation. She shared that in their experience, it can take up to three days before they can provide emergency assistance to communities. As such, she highlighted the importance of building the capacity of communities to prepare for and provide for their needs at the onset of the disaster. Resilience initiatives must

place the community at the centre while recognising their varying levels of capacities.

"In the context of the private sector, where we have business continuity as a mechanism to make sure that our operations continue even in the face of disaster, it is important that the community is resilient on their own. To realize this, we have to focus on preparing them, capacitating them and all that has been discussed today will come to play." – PDRF

It was recognized that localisation requires a change in mind-set among all actors, including donors, private sector, UN and INGOs; and a commitment to new ways of working to genuinely work towards localisation, and to build lasting capacity for local humanitarian actors at all levels, including on financial stewardship and project execution whilst also recognising the complementarity of actors and added value each of them brings. This way, the burden of raising capacities does not just lie on communities, and local actors, but among all humanitarian and development actors.

Explore anticipatory and data-driven decision-making. During the consultation, participants shared their experience on how risk governance decision-making can be enhanced through anticipatory actions and better data. UNOCHA shared their experience in using pre-crisis survey tools to support LGUs in Metro Manila with risk management for the "Big One" or the Magnitude 7.2 earthquake that is feared will devastate Metro Manila. The major challenge, however, remains with the utilization of the data after the survey.

Anticipatory actions, including use of forecast-based financing (FbF), are being piloted to shift priorities towards the most affected populations. The community of practice have been quite helped in the engagement of stakeholders the localisation discourse. With the implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia ruling by 2022, it is anticipated that both CSOs and LGUs would need capacity development support to take on more devolved functions for LGUs and respond to the demand for effective complementary support from CSOs. For LGUs in BARRM, the MSSD representative suggested conducting catch-up plans for low-income, remote LGUs (particularly in BARRM), as many currently do not have functional DRRM systems in place and some have just received a share of their IRA. Kimberly Go Tian from the Disaster Response Management Bureau of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) noted that the actions toward localisation are aligned with the upcoming implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling by 2022. She also emphasised the importance of developing a road map and coordination among various actors, in order to better provide effective and efficient programs in crisis-affected communities.

Support, not undermine local capacities. Given the challenges brought by COVID-19, it is important to map capacities available locally and among local actors (e.g., local contractors, engineers, masons, trainers). To overcome their limited presence in the field, many CSOs are localising their presence, working closely with CBOs and POs, and being more adept at online communication. Volunteers also need due recognition for their work, with just and fair compensation and support. Investing in local capacity building (M&E, planning, implementation, financial management) should continue to be supported by international and national agencies.

The capacity of local humanitarian actors is crucial to an equal and equitable humanitarian action. They have the advantage and capacity to deliver to the most vulnerable and marginalised; however, they need support to comply with due diligence, be able to retain staff, and invest in transformative leadership, as provided in the Key Actions below:

KEY ACTIONS for Improving Capacity of humanitarian actors to ensure effective, efficient, complementary and accountable humanitarian action

1. Undertake scoping of capacities of local actors and conduct organisational assessment to determine their strengths and weaknesses and build on their strengths as basis for programming and investing in their capacity enhancement.

2. Enable local actors to retain and maintain their staff capacity through appropriate budget allocation for staff. Provide just support for overheads and advocate for dialogue in support of individuals or NGOs in the humanitarian sector who have been affected by threats of violence and personal safety.

3. Provide support to enable local actors to comply with due diligence processes and requirements, to enable them to fulfil their partnership obligations, and meet standards related to safeguarding, accountability, among others.

4. Invest in education and training for transformative partnership, i.e., enabling local actors to claim their rights to engage in transparent, accountable, and equitable partnership.

5. Promote effective complementarity and sharing of capacity between local and international partners and among local and national humanitarian actors to facilitate better humanitarian and nexus services to the affected communities of crisis.

3.5. Coordination Mechanisms

Key insights and findings from the FGDs and Online Survey

Coordination mechanisms are generally valued for their benefit for information sharing among international, national and local actors, to facilitate complementation of capacities and resources and for providing space to elevate concerns of local actors and communities to authorities.

Local humanitarian actors are increasingly being represented in various coordination platforms; however, more needs to be done to enable them to take leadership positions in these platforms. While a few CSOs have actively participated in coordination mechanisms and made contributions, the majority of them still need improvement in their participation. As was expressed during the consultations and in the section on Capacity, being in these platforms is not just about being given a seat at the table but being able to maximise these spaces and taking them forward. Local humanitarian actors feel challenged by their lack of staff capacity to attend various coordination meetings and the lack of space for them to honestly (or openly) share their opinion. For some CSOs, these platforms could feel like a waste of their time.

One survey respondent emphasised that *"Our organisation has very limited staff capacity to attend meetings effectively - it is not only about attendance, but ensuring staff attending are prepared technically. The number of meetings require focus staff for coordination that we don't have. Technical support for staff attendance is also necessary so we could influence decision-making"*.

CSOs cited other reasons for their low participation in existing coordination mechanisms, such as lack of funds and the distance/geographical location of meetings, which could hinder their presence.

As reflected in the survey, among the coordination mechanisms perceived to be effective were LGU-led mechanisms (30%), and consultations at the local level (for more detail see Fig.28). Those venues which were considered fairly effective were provided by INGOs, the UN and national government coordination. Coordination among CSOs, however, needs improvement, as shown in Figure 25 below.

Less than 10% found online meetings and other coordination types (LDRRM and NAPC Coordination) to be fairly effective. The shift to digital communications is a fairly recent development.

Government coordination mechanisms are viewed as being either modestly effective or not effective at all. However, the reality is that local humanitarian actors have to work with the government counterparts. Most communities, however, are not familiar with the existing formal coordination mechanisms except for those in their locality that are coordinated by local governments or initiated by CSOs. It is therefore imperative for CSOs to take leadership roles in coordination mechanisms at all levels.

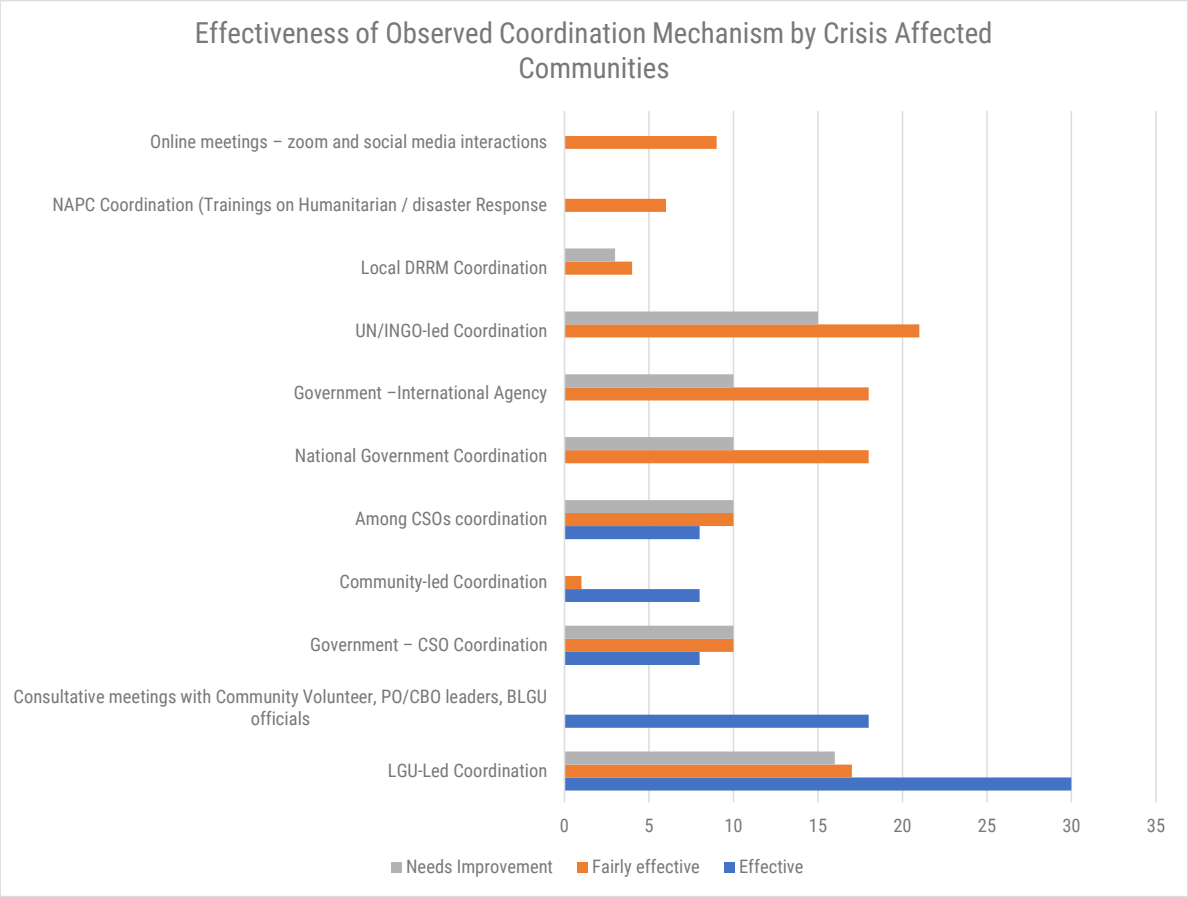


Fig. 28. Effectiveness of observed mechanisms for coordination


Photo: M. San Diego/OCHA

Key insights and findings from the Dialogue

Making coordination mechanisms work for local humanitarian actors. Pre-partnership agreements and prior community structures that have been built and capacitated over time have been instrumental in the local ability to efficient response and effective intervention for recovery in a timely manner. This includes mobilising community associations, PWD groups, LGUs, private sector organisations, among others. Working closely with affected populations and building their capacity are key to sustainability of humanitarian actions. Among existing good practices cited and need for action are the user-led housing programming and capacity building of IDPs and camp managers for effective camp management.

Figure 29 (above) shows the suggestions that were made by CSOs respondents to improve the effectiveness of the coordination platforms. The top three actions for improving coordination included enhanced information sharing, more complementary leadership between international actors and national CSOs, and more space for honest and open conversation.

One respondent suggested that an *"interactive and informational website should be provided in favour of small CBOs, in order to resolve their issues and concerns, including their right to participate and be represented. Country level coordination hub between and among CBOs should be explored to be established in the soonest possible time".*

Another respondent emphasised the *"need still to improve interphase of the government and UN-led coordination mechanism but in both, CSO participation still must be improved. Support for CSO capacity strengthening must be provided especially to CSO-initiated coordination mechanism".*

It is important to help address the lack of confidence among local CSOs, as local networks felt they can be outnumbered in these coordination platforms. It needs to be noted that the Philippines HCT is considered as one of the most inclusive HCTs globally as out of the 19 HCT members, 9 members are from the NGO community – 6 from INGOs and 3 local CSO networks . Both national and international agencies should encourage CSOs to take more active leadership roles in coordination mechanisms, recommending more facilitative information sharing with international actors. This means supporting them to maximise the space in various platforms and forums, from the HCT to the local bodies, including being able to make quality inputs. A major concern highlighted was direct implementation of humanitarian actors without proper coordination with the authorities- this was viewed by communities to cause conflicts or result in the exclusion of people in need. Overall, humanitarian coordination is seen as beneficial and ensures more information to local actors.

Coordination provides the space and the voice for humanitarian actors to work together. Some coordination mechanisms were viewed as fairly effective, although some coordination mechanisms require improvement. With the shift to online communications, more CSOs are adapting to new ways of coordination while finding ways to stay connected to communities they serve. More than just providing space, the value of coordination is then to facilitate an honest conversation about how things can be done better and a more coordinated resource and information sharing platform. In the process, building the confidence among local actors is key to being able to make their voices heard, and effectively influence humanitarian outcomes.

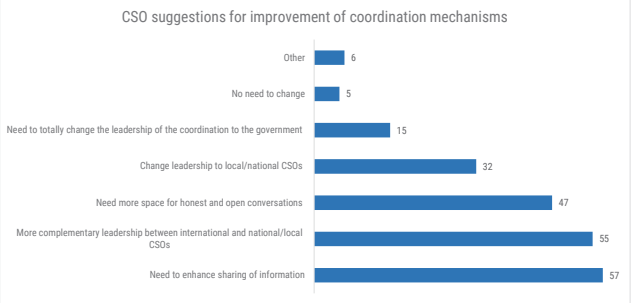


Fig. 29. Improvement of coordination mechanism

KEY ACTIONS to make Coordination valuable to affected population and inclusive of local actors

1. Strengthen local humanitarian leadership and effective local coordination among CSOs.

2. Develop mechanisms through which crisis-affected communities are adequately represented in coordination meetings.

3. Enable stronger coordination between LGUs and CSOs to address issues of duplication and politicization of aid and strengthen complementation.

4. Increase the capacity of local actors for their more meaningful participation in the cluster coordination system ensuring that these meetings are inclusive and offer added value to local actors.

3.6. Humanitarian Standards and Policy

Key Insights and Findings from FGDs and Dialogue

Communities affected by disasters argued that humanitarian standards used for assistance should be made transparent and be well-coordinated to avoid creating conflict in the affected communities. Standards should be framed around the rights and dignity of affected people. The FGDs with crisis-affected communities highlighted the issue of some sub-standard goods distributed especially by the government (e.g. rotten rice distributed that is already harmful for human consumption). FGD participants also expressed having no knowledge about international humanitarian standards, however they recommended that ensuring quality of goods and humanitarian services and treating them as partners (not beneficiaries only) of humanitarian actions should become part of standards.

Some humanitarian actors/CSOs face threats such as "red-tagging by the government" in their work for their potential association with suspected insurgents, because they operate in remote of conflict affected areas. Providing protection for safety and security of the humanitarian actors is also among the humanitarian policies sought by CSOs.

While steps are being taken to orient them on humanitarian standards, CSOs need support and resources to be able to follow standards and policies, as these standards also need to be contextualised according to local conditions. The survey asked if CSO and INGOs/ UN respondents thought the humanitarian policies and standards required by international agencies in the Philippines are appropriate for the Philippine context. Figure 27 below shows that 60% of INGOS/ UN respondents replied that it is appropriate, compared to only 25% of CSOs. However, around 55% of CSO respondents expressed that some of the standards are appropriate, compared to 40% of the INGOs/UN. 20% of CSOs respondents said they have not engaged with the international standards either because they have no international partners, and 5% said they don't know about these standards (Figure 30).

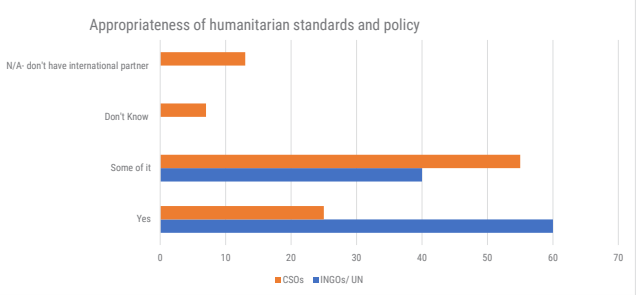


Fig. 30. Humanitarian policies and standards appropriate for the Philippines context

One CSO respondent to the survey shared that: "Some give more focus on due diligence rather than on ensuring quality humanitarian services reach the people affected of crisis that led to delays, inflexible funding and frustration among the affected. Standards are better set not based on international perspective but should also be considering the perspective, culture and contexts of the crisis- affected". Many CSO respondents in the survey and in the online dialogue commented on the inappropriateness of the standards for the Philippine context and that standards need to be contextualised.

INGOs, CSOs and government agencies therefore need to invest in contextualising the standards and training communities on the understanding and application of humanitarian standards and how they leverage this knowledge to hold national and international agencies accountable if these standards are not met.

From the national dialogues, suggestions to localise humanitarian standards were to include developing country-specific markers and contextualising humanitarian standards such as SPHERE. State duty-bearers have an important role to play but they also have limited understanding of, and capacity to implement, these standards. Keeping them accountable can help ensure functionality of local structures and mechanisms, supported by trained staff and personnel, and reinforce implementation of humanitarian standards and policies to protect the rights and dignity of the most vulnerable populations. This can be achieved through safe housing, camp coordination and camp management (CCCM), addressing gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination. For national and local CSOs, advocating the inclusion of localisation indicators in national government plans is important and should be a priority.

KEY ACTIONS to harmonise and contextualise Humanitarian Standards, ensuring effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of humanitarian action

1. Ensure accountability of all humanitarian actors to humanitarian standards where rights and dignity of people are placed at the centre. Include relevant clause in partnership agreements that addresses non-adherence to humanitarian standards.

2. Conduct an inclusive review for the harmonization and contextualisation of current humanitarian standards and policies to ensure quality humanitarian services are delivered to communities.

3. Establish effective monitoring systems ensuring participation from vulnerable sectors such as persons with disabilities, and older persons, among others.

4. Create a feedback mechanism accessible to affected population of crisis with registry of emergency and key humanitarian actors' number.

5. Advocate to include in the humanitarian policy the protection for safety and security of humanitarian actors.

3.7. Visibility and Credit Sharing

Key Findings and Insights from the FGDs and Online Survey

Perspectives from the community FGDs expressed that visibility and credit sharing with local humanitarian actors is narrowly defined and therefore should be given more attention. Visibility should not only be expressed through the use of signs or visibility materials. FGD participants said that what is more valued is the presence of the humanitarian service providers and that their services are felt by the communities.

For one FGD with a children's group in Barangay Santiago, Iligan City, participants said they know the local and national actors. They gave a score of 8 to CSOs and local and national government as visible and active actors in their communities.

Among the youth FGD participants in Mahayhay, Lanao del Norte, the youth gave high scores to responders, particularly donor agencies, the UN, LGU and national government agencies, and private donors, and appreciated their help, while noting that they still need to improve and know more about the work of CSOs, NGOs and INGOs.

Communities are said to be inspired by the visibility of humanitarian actors; for them it means that their needs are being or can be addressed and this provides them a sense of security, especially in conflict-affected areas. Community score cards shown below (Figure 31) ranked the national and local government and local/national CSOs as the most visible humanitarian actors. Those moderately visible were INGOs and UN agencies. Meanwhile the visibility of business groups, donor agencies, volunteers need some work.

Among those issues raised as important for visibility and credit-sharing, participants emphasised that people in the community should have direct access to better communication and information. Social media should be used for clear information dissemination. Clear visibility guidelines for agencies and partners should be disseminated. For instance, those who come to the community to help should be wearing uniforms or vests bearing the logo/name of the organisation for security. This is emphasised to be especially important in conflict-affected communities where proper visibility could help ensure the safety and security of both responders and communities. They also recommended that signages should be of good quality and durable, and tarpaulin/signages and visibility materials should be installed in strategic areas.

Importance and Improvement of Visibility: Perspective from the Marawi City FGD

Community participants emphasised that visibility is important because people can see in the barangay where the support comes from. This is important for transparency, appreciation, credit and for accountability. They suggested that visibility materials should be placed where it is accessible to the community. The beneficiary list should be posted where it is visible and include the amount that will be spent for the project. The logos should be clear and readable.

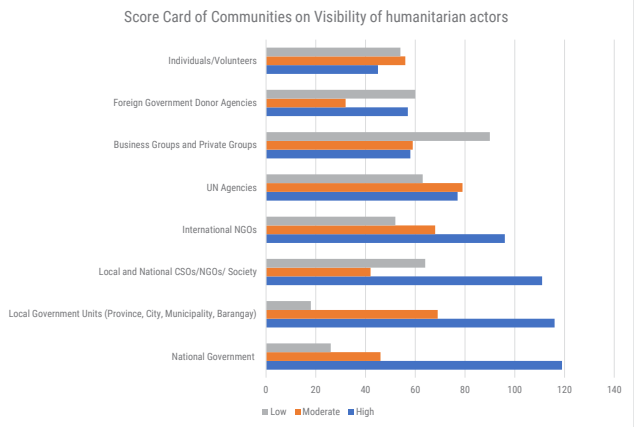


Fig. 31. Scorecard on Visibility of humanitarian actors

The survey also asked the question around how the contributions of CSOs are explicitly mentioned in donor reports. 27% of the respondents said that their name, contribution, role and achievements are correctly reflected in the donor reports; 15% said they never see copies of reports that their international partners send to donors and 11% mentioned that their contribution does not get much attention in reports to donors. In contrast, 87% of INGO/UN respondents mentioned that their partner CSO's name, contribution and achievements are well reflected in their report to back donors; and 13% said that partner CSOs get some attention in the report to donor, but not as much as they deserve.

One respondent confirmed that "We receive recognition of the work we do on the ground but believe this is used by International Agencies for their own marketing and reporting to donors - and does not benefit us - as donors will never sidestep INGOs or International agencies and approach us directly".

Key Findings and Insights from the Dialogue

Visibility of local/national CSOs in communication and reporting of international and government partners still needs improvement, in the following areas:

First, addressing politicisation of aid, especially at the local government level, is a cross-cutting concern for local humanitarian actors. Certain relationships with LGUs could hamper access and ability to deliver for "colour-coded" or non-aligned NGOs. Some LGUs take credit for aid being provided by NGOs, observing that, in some cases, they "manipulate the list of beneficiaries and the distribution of assistance" for personal gain.

Secondly, while the names of CSOs have been visible in projects and are mentioned in the reports, including in communications with international partners, there is still a need to ensure their recognition by national and local governments. It would be helpful if national NGOs and partners have updated their communications and visibility guidelines for partnerships as well as reporting and data sharing with local

KEY ACTIONS for shared Visibility and Credit Sharing that is more relevant to the affected population of crisis

1. Ensure the participation of communities in the whole project cycle - from project design, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation - so that they can already provide inputs during programming, partnership and design as well as in during reporting and in visibility for humanitarian action.

2. Include in the global humanitarian standards equitable credit sharing and accountability between local and international humanitarian partners. Include provisions on equitable credit sharing and accountability in partnership agreements.

3. Design visibility materials in such a way that is inclusive, culturally sensitive, integrates accountability/feedback mechanisms, peace-promoting and upholds the rights and dignity of people.

4. Ensure clear visibility of humanitarian actors for safety and security of both humanitarian actors and conflict-affected communities.

partners, who are frequently given only a summary of the partnership, which is not always sufficient.

Overall, the recommendation was to have clear visibility guidelines to include partners; this is not to be limited to signages alone but also having their presence and services felt by communities and incorporated into the partnership agreements should take precedence. Trust and partnership building, therefore, was seen as key to establishing fair visibility and recognition of the contributions of CSOs.

3.8. Cross-Cutting Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Localisation

Delivering humanitarian aid amidst a pandemic continues to be challenging for international and local humanitarian actors, as they need to be more resourceful, innovate and find new ways of working. As a disaster-prone country, the Philippines has faced many major types of disasters. Community members participating in the FGDs emphasised that looking back at the last five years and based on their recent experience, COVID-19 has had the most severe impact on people in the community, closely followed by the Marawi Siege. The other major disasters identified in terms of severity are flooding in Iligan and Butig and, to a lesser extent, Typhoon Vinta in 2017. Figure 32 below shows how they perceive their disaster experience and the severity of their impact.

Figure 33 below shows the thematic impact of disasters on their lives from the community scorecard. In terms of disaster impacts, the hardest hit was the socio-economic sector, followed by the health, education, and cultural sectors.

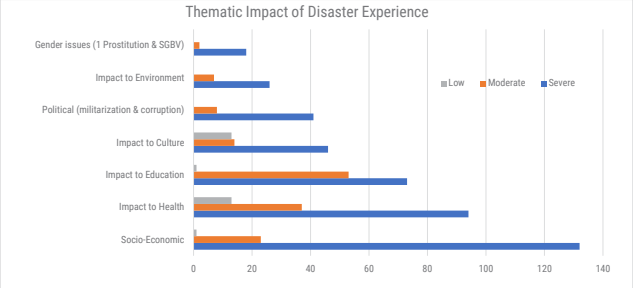


Fig.33 Thematic Impact of Disasters by severity, community FGD

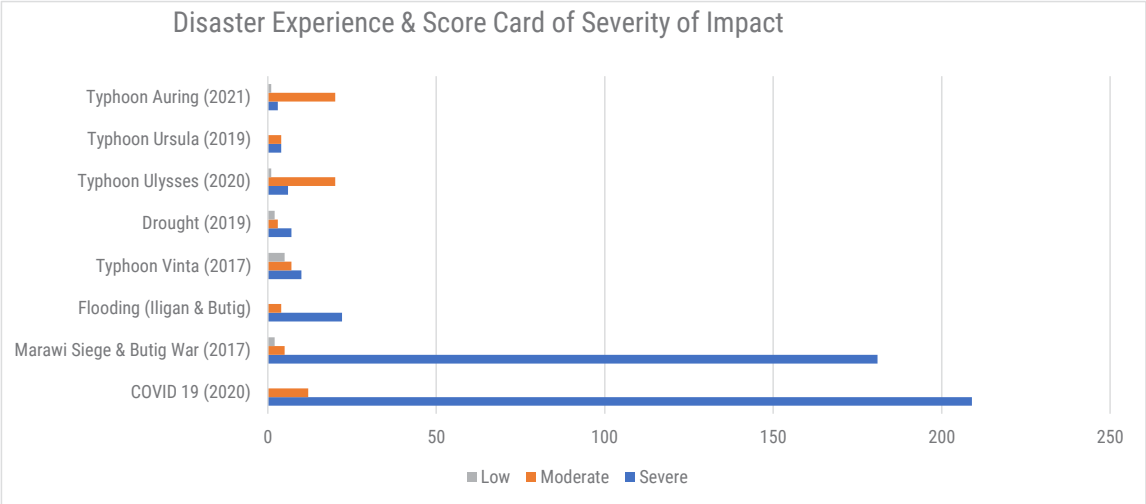


Fig. 32 Disaster experience and severity (from community FGD)

It was suggested during the FGDs and national dialogues that it will be important for national and international actors to find a middle ground where they can work together using their comparative advantages and expertise. Local actors have better access to communities, while international actors have better access to funding and can provide technical assistance to local actors. With COVID-19 expected to drag on, communities are at a breaking point in their resilience and their ability to recover.

Increasingly, key actions such as improving the reach of cash assistance and addressing aid politicisation will help improve local humanitarian action in reaching the most vulnerable populations. It is therefore imperative for humanitarian actors to stay informed and vigilant, and connected to the communities they serve. The CSO survey respondents emphasised the need for more capacity support on dealing with protection and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) issues. Ensuring duty of care and wellbeing of their own staff is also crucial. If they are to continue providing assistance to the communities they serve, they need the resources and support from their international partners for this.

The role of the local government also cannot be understated. Ciriaco Tolibao II, City DRRM Officer of the City Government of Ormoc encouraged the CSOs to adopt a bottom-up approach to enable greater participation of LGUs in the decision making, noting that they are the ones who know more about the local context. Proposed actions include mainstreaming of COVID-19 response across programs and strategies and providing support to local partners, including the allocation of funds to enable their access to digital technology (which has been shown to be a key need during humanitarian responses that have occurred in this pandemic).

Both international and national actors are mainstreaming COVID-19 impacts and indicators into programs and policies, and some, like UNHCR, into their multi-year country strategies.

Adapting to a changing risk landscape. As highlighted in the COVID-19 response section above, monitoring of projects has proven challenging during the height of the pandemic. There is a need to shift operating approaches. Some networks have tried to overcome these challenges by working more closely with local networks and professional groups in the area. Some organisations like Citizens Disaster Response Network (CDRN) and the Philippine Misereor Partnership, Inc (PMPI) have started localising their operations, in keeping with COVID-19 protocols. INGOs are also working with local expertise and networks in their operations, engaging households and local groups in the implementation. The confusing and changing government protocols and the need for permits to respond outside their area geographic scope proved challenging for them and goes against findings elsewhere in this report which argues for flexibility of response, including adding geographical areas if needed. However, there are some good examples of best practice, for instance the good relationships built by the Leyte Center for Development with government, particularly the Office of Civil Defence in Region 8, which enabled them to obtain humanitarian passes and continue delivering needed aid.

Among UN agencies, OCHA was working with the Government/OCD on protocols for humanitarian assistance during quarantine and adaptation of the HCT protocols to COVID-19. Together with the private sector, ICCG and HCT, OCHA supported the creation of the government's operational document: "Interim Protocols for Humanitarian Assistance During Community Quarantine". These protocols became the basis for humanitarian assistance actors to conduct its operations relative to the response, mitigation, and recovery against COVID-19 and other disasters that may occur during the pandemic. In support of the clusters and technical working groups, OCHA initiated and facilitated the adaptation of COVID-19 Safety and Health Protocols into existing ICCG response protocols. At the sub-national level, OCHA, on behalf of the Mindanao Humanitarian Team, was given an observer seat at the Bangsamoro COVID-19 Interagency Task Force.

KEY ACTIONS to make Humanitarian Aid more responsive to needs of the most vulnerable and affected of COVID-19 in the face of limited resources and growing needs

1. Build on existing coordination mechanisms/working groups for localisation that will study and facilitate the conduct of transparent, multi-stakeholder consultations to include sectors related to education, economy, health, peace and order, among others, to help determine tangible solutions to the impact of the pandemic.

2. Identify potential local solutions to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in humanitarian response, in collaboration with actors engaged in sectors such as health, social welfare, economic empowerment, enterprise development, gender equality, and skills training and education.

3. Advocate and establish support mechanisms that strengthen partnerships between CSOs and government and that will enable CSOs' direct access to communities amid travel restrictions imposed by the government during the pandemic.

4. Enable effective complementarity and partnership between local and international actors to effectively respond to the impact of the pandemic on vulnerable communities. Harness access of local actors to affected communities amid hardship in mobility as a result of lockdowns and restrictions as imposed by the government during this pandemic.

5. Support nexus approach, flexible and locally led actions and more cash-programming to effectively address various humanitarian needs of communities during this pandemic.

4. Post-Dialogue, Moving Localisation Forward

The Grand Bargain commitments, including the ones on localisation and a participation revolution, aim at a more wholesale reform of the practices of the international humanitarian system. It is important to take a more holistic and systematic measure in order for localisation to be accelerated and succeed in the Philippines. Following the dialogue process, the major stakeholders all committed to moving forward the localisation of humanitarian actions in the Philippines. With the strong leadership from the UN RC/HC, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) created an Ad Hoc HCT group on Localisation composed of volunteers from the donors, the UN, INGOs and CSOs. The ad hoc group is tasked to prioritise key actions which the HCT can move forward. From the thematic lists of key actions identified in the dialogue process, the HCT ad hoc group conducted a survey and will prioritise at least one key action per theme to turn it into a plan for action.

A core team of CSOs also continued the dialogue process by consolidating the views of all of the networks of CSOs advocating for localisation. The CSOs have decided to conduct a wider CSO summit where the dialogue results will be presented and turned into a specific plan of action, which can be used to determine short-term, medium-term and longer-term action points. Apart from the engagement with the INGOs, UN and donors, CSOs are giving attention to the identified key actions in engaging the government.

The creation of a National Reference Group as targeted in the Grand Bargain 2.0. is an important action point agreed upon by the CSO localisation leaders in the Philippines to move forward in coordination with the government, UN, INGOs and donors in the country. Representation of the affected population, local and national CSO networks, private sector, diaspora, INGOs, UN agencies, donors and government to the national reference group is considered crucial to ensure complementarity, inclusivity, and stronger coordination among humanitarian actors of the localisation of humanitarian actions in the country. Ensuring the rights and dignity of people is at the centre of humanitarian actions and of humanitarian aid is the core of the localisation framework that stakeholders in the Philippines all commit to.

Defining further the Country Road Map on Localisation with measurable indicators and a monitoring mechanism shall be the next step to be undertaken following the results of the dialogue process.

Collaborating agencies forging ahead on localisation

From among the dialogue partners, Smruti Patel of the A4EP noted that the immediate next step is not only to come up with the report, but for the different stakeholders to concretely take forward the actions in their own work in a holistic way so actions are taken at all levels. A4EP can share the process to other countries and share some of the findings with the Grand Bargain.

From Oxfam Pilipinas, Ma. Rosario Felizco recognised the importance of the processes over the last few months, leading up to the roadmap planning, in revisiting what localisation meant across stakeholders and be able to input them into the global discussions that are happening relative to the future of the Grand Bargain.

While the global discussions are very important, they will only be meaningful if they can be adopted and practiced at the country level, thus requiring more concrete and more actionable resolutions. Oxfam expressed its commitment to carrying on the conversation with all the stakeholders to make the localisation roadmap meaningful and be something that can be implemented.

From UNOCHA, Manja Vidic, reiterated that localisation is about complementarity, not competition - about partnership and relationship building, and not replacing one another. In order for the Philippines to take on the localisation agenda, there is a need to continue creating safe spaces for open dialogue. Ms. Vidic expressed UNOCHA's commitment to walk the talk, especially in coordinating the HCT, in which some of the activities on the action plan will be discussed and put into action.

Regina Salvador - Antequisa, Executive Director of ECOWEB, acknowledged all the partners who contributed to the localisation dialogues, including the trust given to ECOWEB in leading the dialogue process – this is localisation in action. She encouraged continuing vibrant collaboration among stakeholders "to show to the global community how localisation is done in the Philippines." She, together with other CSO leaders are leading the continuing process among CSOs to move forward the identified key actions for moving forward the localisation agenda in the Philippines.

4.1 HCT Priority Actions for Localisation

Fig. 11 (displayed on page 30) shows the relationship between the commitments of Localisation commitments under the Grand Bargain to the needed change system-wide, strategic, organisational and operational changes in the localisation of humanitarian action across the Seven Dimensions Framework.

The priority actions identified in the Interagency Consultation were summarised into following six key actions adopted by the Humanitarian Country Team and worked on further by the Adhoc Localisation Group created by the HCT to help move forward the recommended key actions.

Key Priority Actions identified by the Adhoc Localisation Group (arranged according to highest sub-action priorities):

Priority Action 1: Make funding available to local actors that is accessible, flexible and multi-year that support community/locally led and anticipatory of humanitarian and nexus actions with enough support for overheads and institutional capacity strengthening of local actors.

Sub-action 1: Fund through consortium of CSOs that include smaller local actors and community-based organisations

Sub-action 2: Expand country-based pooled fund for access by local actors including community-based CSOs

Sub-action 3: Remove barriers for (direct) fund accessing by small local actors, e.g., the requirement of counterparts

Priority Action 2: Strengthen participation of local/national CSOs in coordination mechanisms at different levels

Sub-action 1: Incorporate in program support to CSOs to enable them to participate in coordination mechanism

Sub-action 2: Strengthen CSO coordination mechanism and their effective leadership and representation in government-led and UN-led multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism

Sub-action 3: Create multi-stakeholders TWG to monitor and move forward localisation

Priority Action 3: Strengthen participation/leadership of communities in humanitarian actions

Sub-action 1a: Support community/locally led humanitarian and nexus actions

Sub-action 1b: Support bottom-up process in designing and planning programs and projects

Sub-action 2: Strengthen community-based monitoring and real-time (digital) feedbacking mechanism from affected communities to services providers and duty bearers

Priority Action 4: Transform sub-contracting arrangements and support equitable and empowering partnership agreements

Sub-action 1: Practice capacity complementation between local and international actors and map local actors and their capacities

Sub-action 2: Provide support for needs-based capacity strengthening of local actors to include due diligence compliance and accreditation/registration requirements of the government

Sub-action 3: Simplify and harmonise reporting mechanism

Priority Action 5. Harmonise and contextualise humanitarian standards and support capacity strengthening humanitarian actors for compliance and raise awareness of affected communities

Sub-action 1: Make rights and dignity of people and communities affected at the centre of humanitarian standards

Sub-action 2: Monitor compliance of humanitarian standards

Sub-action 3: Include in the standard, equitable credit sharing and visibility of partners in humanitarian

Priority Action 6: Support locally led response to effectively address the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the most vulnerable.

5. Concluding Statement

Benedict Balderrama of SAFER and PPERR, a member of the HCT, reflected on the progress of the localisation discourse. While there has been some progress, recent events have also proven that more needs to be done to address the complexities and challenges (with the pandemic, increasing frequency and intensity of disasters) confronting the humanitarian ecosystem. He expressed a need for the humanitarian system to "evolve faster", and in a more effective and meaningful way.

The conversation is a significant step in terms of being able to actualise localisation at the national and local level. However, there is also a need to take braver steps to make coordination mechanisms, and other forms of effective localisation work, especially for affected communities.

Localisation calls for a whole-of-society approach, change in mindset and transformative actions to bring equitable and more effective and efficient humanitarian actions to communities affected of crisis. Localisation and Participation Revolution are necessary changes to be brought to the humanitarian system to ensure humanitarian actions centre on the rights and dignity of the affected people. It is our accountability to the affected population that should drive the needed system change.

The dialogue process is a major step forward for localisation in the Philippines. The commitment of humanitarian stakeholders will push further the initial gains to fuel more energy towards initiating concrete changing actions.

The continuing process would mean international and humanitarian actors are continuously made accountable and their processes made more transparent and dynamic.

The localisation dialogue process in the Philippines encourages communities themselves to speak and take forward their concerns and agenda in the platforms given them. Ms. Sindhy Obias, Executive Director of ACCORRD and DRRNet Philippines representative to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) noted in her closing message that the dialogue process is a significant step to "move the needle on localisation in the country", specifically on the collective aspiration of the group toward:

- Genuine and equitable partnership
- Coordination and complementation
- Effective, appropriate capacity strengthening support to local actors
- Due recognition, celebration and promotion of the roles and contributions of local actors
- Meaningful participation of affected populations
- Local actors having influence in international policies
- Increased access to adequate financial support

Ms. Obias echoed the sentiment of other dialogue participants that much still needs to be done. Nevertheless, she also expressed her optimism that organisations present in the dialogue will continue to engage in inclusive and open conversations, and improve synergies, mechanisms and ways of working together – thereby, contributing to their overall improvements in humanitarian action that is timely and upholds human dignity.

The inclusion of affected communities resulted to a more meaningful dialogue that pivoted discussions towards the views, issues and concerns of the affected population and will make it more meaningful for them.

The final take-away for everyone is: "Communities and populations affected by crisis and disaster should not be perceived merely as receivers of aid, but as movers and drivers of change, thus making, community based and locally led actions fundamental in the humanitarian, resilience and development nexus."

The continuing localisation process in the country is now at the stage of developing a roadmap of localisation in the Philippines and continuing the multi-stakeholder process that would turn the roadmap into concrete actions to change the humanitarian landscape such that locals take the lead with communities as partners whose rights and dignity are at the centre of aid.

Grand Bargain 2.0 shall be a reference for defining concrete actions to be made in the next five to ten years (leading up to the ten - year review of the Grand Bargain and World Humanitarian Summit commitments) years. Philippine experience will hopefully contribute as well to the global humanitarian movement towards localisation.

Localisation and Participation Revolution commitments are still indeed a work in progress for the Philippines as processes continue to galvanise various humanitarian actors and the communities themselves to make these commitments a reality. In the end, our collective aspiration, is as one CSO respondent puts it, is:

"We hope to make localisation a standard way of working in the humanitarian sector in the near future. And it should be a kind localisation that is contextualized, highly accountable, and promote locally-led and participatory approaches in humanitarian action."

6. Annexes

Annex 1: Generic Agenda for the Localisation Dialogue

Date: May 24, 2021, 3:45 – 5:45 PM

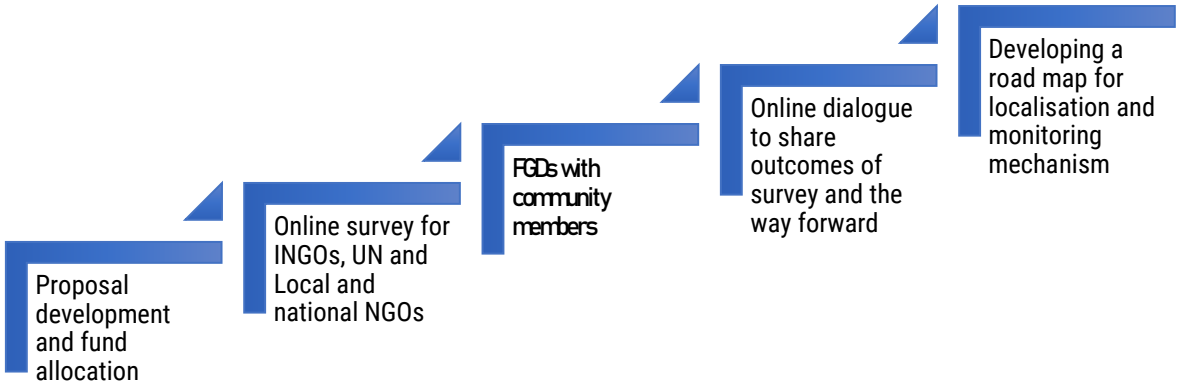
Welcome Introduction of the Participants Picture
Context of Localisation/Grand Bargain Background Findings of the Localisation survey and FGD Clarifications, Workshop Mechanics
Discuss dimensions – 35 minutes **GUIDE QUESTION: What needs to change? What obstacles can be anticipated and how to overcome them?** **Group 1-** ***On Quality of relationship and partnership; Funding and financing*** **Group 2-** ***On Participation of the affected population; Humanitarian Standards and Policy*** **Group 3-** ***On Capacity and Coordination*** **Group 4-** ***Visibility and impact of COVID-19***
Plenary reporting Key insights from workshop
Sharing of insights Conclusions, wrap-up thanks and next steps

Annex 2: Guidance for the Philippines Country Level Dialogue

The initiative to map the state of localisation in the Philippines and country level dialogue is part of global efforts to promote better understanding and implementation of the Grand Bargain localisation commitments. The process is facilitated by collaboration between UN OCHA, ECOWEB, Oxfam Pilipinas and Alliance for Empowering partnership (A4EP). The objectives for the country dialogue process are:

1. To promote and institutionalise the implementation of Grand Bargain commitments on localisation at the country level.
2. To create a greater sense of momentum on the GB commitments – exploring synergies and linkages with existing humanitarian coordination mechanisms (within the Humanitarian Country Team, Mindanao Humanitarian Team), donor coordination mechanisms and platforms, Philippine INGO networks, private sector and civil society networks.
3. To identify opportunities, challenges and specificities when it comes to localisation
4. To develop country-level plans of action.
5. To share recommendations in relation to the next phase of the Grand Bargain beyond June 2021.

Country dialogue Process



Description of methodology to be used, activities, timeline and target participants

The dialogue processes will consist of:

1) Designing the online survey using the seven dimensions framework.

2) Conduct of an on-line survey to generate quantitative and qualitative data on the awareness and status of the Grand Bargain commitments implementation in the country and recommendations from the perspectives of local and national civil society organisations, UN agencies, donors, private sector and INGOs. Voices of the affected population of crisis shall

be included in the survey.

3) Develop a methodology and guide for country level dialogue to assist in conducting and documenting the dialogues at different levels.

4) Conduct of planning workshop with Key stakeholders.
5) Conduct of series of national virtual discussions and face to face meetings, if possible, at local levels. Face to face meetings will follow COVID-19 health protocols. Meetings will be done per network and inter-network.

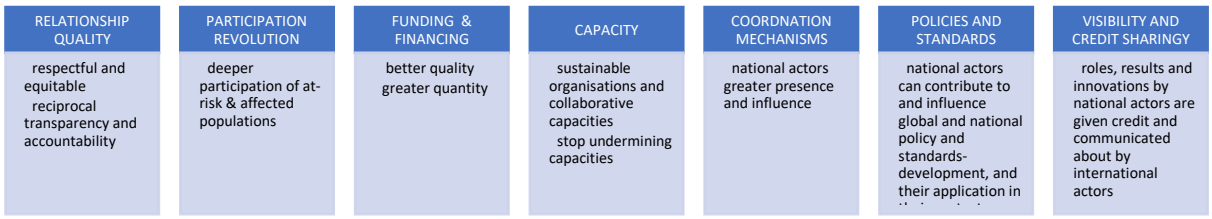
6) Finalising and submitting the final report on the outcome of the dialogues

Target Outputs

The process will lead to a shared contextual analysis of the status of Grand Bargain implementation in the Philippines by civil society, UN agencies, INGOs, private sector and donors present in the country. It will assist in identifying gaps and opportunities and help to develop a country level plan of action to promote implementation of Grand Bargain Commitments on localisation in the Philippines. The experience and recommendations will be shared for the next phase of Grand Bargain Beyond and 2021.

Detailed Guidance for country level dialogue process

This document has been developed to guide the dialogue process. In 2017, the Global Mentoring Initiative (GMI) developed the 'seven dimensions' framework for localisation during its work with the START Fund of the START Network and identified a set of 'emerging indicators' during its subsequent work with the Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP) of the START Network. The seven dimensions framework draws on the Grand Bargain commitment 2 to localisation and commitment 6 to a participation revolution, Charter4Change commitments, and consultations with local, national and international actors.



The framework has been tested with various local and national CSOs. It is actively used as such, or has been the source of inspiration for, e.g., the START Network, the Dutch Relief Alliance[1], the Humanitarian Advisory Group in Australia and PIANGO (Pacific Islands Association of Nongovernmental Organisations), UNICEF[2], the NEAR network and others, and in localisation conferences in, for example, Jordan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and the DRC[3].

Online survey

[1] http://www.dutchrelief.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/4-page-A4-localisation-report-v05-digitaal11.pdf

[2] UNICEF Humanitarian Policy Section 2019: *A Review of UNICEF's Approach to Localisation in Humanitarian Action. Executive summary*. New York

[3] HAG and PIANGO maintain seven dimensions but dropped visibility and added leadership. NEAR reduced seven to six dimensions by merging visibility into policy and influence.

The seven dimensions' framework will be used to map the state of localisation. The online survey questionnaires were developed using the seven dimensions. Separate questionnaires were developed for LLNGOs/ NNGOs and private sector and INGOs and the UN agencies. The guide was also developed for Focus Group Discussions with communities affected by disasters.

Multi-stakeholder dialogues

The results of the surveys and FGDs will be used to start the discussions for the country level dialogue. Online dialogue or face to face meeting will be organised between local and national organizations, INGOs and UN agencies and other actors.

Each dialogue session will be 2hrs with maximum 30 participants to ensure wide participation.

1) The findings of the survey will be made by PowerPoint presentation. (15 mins)
2) The larger group will then breakout into smaller groups of 4 to discuss one or two dimensions to explore what needs to change, what obstacles can be anticipated and how to overcome them. Google Jam boards will be created so it can be documented online by each group or flip charts will be created to document the discussions. (25 mins)
3) The key points will be shared with the group in the plenary (20 mins)
4) Second part to the exercise will entail exploring what would success look like and identify progress markers. (25 mins)
5) The key points will be shared with the group in the plenary (20 mins)
6) Wrap up of key points and next steps

Dimension	Where are we now	What needs to change	What obstacles can we anticipate & how will we overcome them	What would success look like?	What progress markers can tell us whether we are advancing?
Relationship quality Decision making					
Participatory Approaches					
Funding and Financing					
Capacitates					
Coordination, local leadership					
Visibility					
Influencing national and international policy and standards					

Outcomes of the dialogue will be used to explore A Broader Systemic Framework to explore what collective action is required to make progress.

Planning workshop to move localisation forward by key stakeholders

Broader systems level dialogue Humanitarian Country Team (HTC) and others (these dialogues were held twice to ensure wide participation and buy-in)

The Grand Bargain commitments, including the ones on localisation and a participation revolution, aim at a more wholesale reform of the practices of the international humanitarian system. Operational improvements by individual and sets of collaborating agencies are not enough to effect systemic change. A broader perspective therefore is needed, that asks more strategic questions.

Annex 3: Consultation Dialogues (April to September 2021)

Organizations	Date
Philippine Misereor Partnership Inc (PMPI)	21 April 2021
Philippine International NGO Network (PINGON)	11 May 2021
Citizens Disaster Response Network (CDRN)	15 May 2021
National Anti-Poverty Commission Basic Sectoral Representatives	24 May 2021
Sub-national networks (CLEARNet, BMCSOP, MERN, WEVNet, BALAOD-GROWTH)	24 May 2021
DRRNet-Philippines	25 May 2021
Private Sector/Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF)	27 May 2021
SAFER, Balik-Lokal, PHILSSA, AKKMA	27 May 2021
Mindanao Humanitarian Team (MHT)	1 June 2021
UN agencies/Humanitarian Country Team	5 June 2021
National and Local Government Agencies with basic sectors	8 June 2021
Inter-agency Agency Dialogue	10 June 2021
HCT Presentation on Dialogue Key Actions	17 June 2021
Adhoc HCT TWG on Localisation	14 July 2021
CSO Core team meetings for moving forward	July – September 2021

Annex 4: Community FGD Guidance Note with Photos of FGD sessions

STEPS IN PLANNING AND CONDUCTING AN FGD

Step 1: Goal and Topic of the FGD

The goal of the FGD is to find out about the experiences of the community, their insights, views and perspectives regarding the humanitarian responses done by governmental/ local/ national CSO/ International agencies/ UN agencies, private sector, among other responders to the crisis and disasters affecting vulnerable population in the target communities.

The FGD will tackle 8 topics that covers the 7 dimensions of Localisation:

1. Community context
2. Visibility of Humanitarian Responders
3. Modality of Assistance
4. Participation
5. Capacity of Responders
6. Relationship of Responders and Survivors
7. Coordination among Responders
8. Policies and Standards

Step 2: Target participants

The target participants of the FGD are internally displaced persons or affected population of humanitarian crisis. Each FGD group shall be composed of 7-10 persons representing either an organised or unorganised affected population in target areas. Target groups shall be representing different disaster contexts, as possible: armed conflict; typhoon; flooding; landslide; earthquake; volcanic eruption; drought; and others. As much as possible, FGD will be inclusive of women, men, youth, elderly, children, IDP and non-IDP disaster affected, IP and affected in both rural and urban contexts.

Step 3: Preparing the FGD Guide

The FGD Guide is drafted following the 7 dimensions of Localisation developed by the Global Mentoring Initiative and cooperation with Start Network and other CSO networks advocating for localisation. The guide consists of guide questions, worksheets, guide for facilitators and documenters.

This guide is developed by ECOWEB and A4EP based on the consultations with ECOWEB staff and partners with humanitarian experience. The draft guide was tested by ECOWEB with groups of IDPs from the Marawi IDPs in Iligan City, Philippines. The learning from the test run served as basis in the preparation of this Localisation FGD guide with communities affected of humanitarian crisis.

To facilitate efficient conduct of the guided FGD, prepared worksheets and pre-identified titles are advised to be prepared ahead including identified titles of topics that could be written in meta-cards.

Facilitators to also prepare the necessary materials in the checklist:

- Prepared Worksheets and pre-identified titles of topics
- Blank manila paper, metacards, masking tape, pentel pens
- Name tags
- Stand for manila paper and that could serve as wall for metacards
- Health protection supplies and materials as required under the pandemic condition

Step 4: Location of the FGD

The venue should be conducive for a group discussion, ideally in the community where the participants are coming from. It should have a space where participants of FGD numbering 7-10 could sit around to face each other with the facilitators and documenter. A space where participants could focus in the discussion without disturbance is ideal. A space for posting of prepared Worksheets is also advisable so participants can visually see results of the discussion.

But when face to face is not possible, especially this pandemic and when there is no facilitator that can be tapped in the target area, virtual FGD can also be facilitated in two possible settings: 1) facilitator and documenter meeting virtually participants who would gather in one place with one community-based facilitator to assist; 2) participants spread from different areas with good access to Wi-Fi connection and facilitator to facilitate the FDG virtually. Approach could be adjusted between face to face, blended approach and virtual approach.

Step 5: The Actual Participants (incentives)

The actual participants who would be attending would be provided with meal/snacks, and transportation allowance, when needed or communication allowance for virtual FGD.

Step 6: Actual Conduct of the FGD Session

Actual conduct will have the following parts:

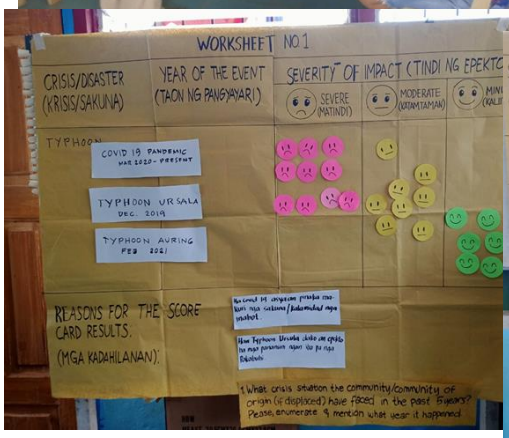
1. Preliminaries and Introduction, to include
    - Greetings, prayers and any other culturally required start-up activity

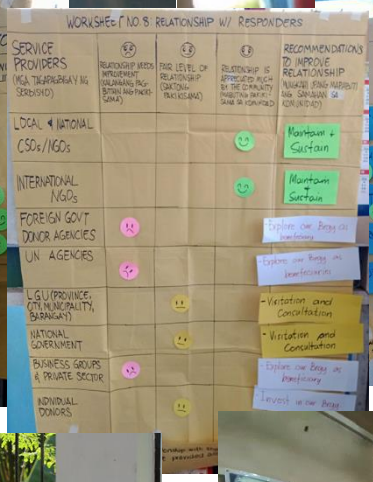
- Introduction of the facilitating and documenting team
- Introduction of participants
- Reminders on the protocols/COVID-19 precautions as a requirement under the pandemic condition: physical distancing, face mask, hand washing, alcohol, etc.
- Start with a smiley temperature check of the participants.
- Provide background and purpose of the FGD
- Inform participants that attribution of results of the discussion would be made confidential, unless they agree to be quoted. Facilitator will ask signed consent from participants for audio and written documentation of the proceedings and for documentation of answers in the worksheet/ manila paper posted on the wall for visual capture of discussions; photo documentation, their signed attendance, and for the consent for citing stories and quotes, when necessary, that could be made anonymous when preferred.
- Orientation of the process flow for the next two hours – the estimated time frame of the FGD
- Use of Magic ball/wand for time management or other approach
- Focus group discussion to follow the prepared guide questions and make use of the worksheets in the following section. Guide for documenter is also indicated in the guide.
- Each section is allocated a number of minutes. As much as possible, process of discussion shall be mindful of the time to be able to finish the FGD in around 2 hours
- The process would be including score card on views, feelings and perspective on certain question or statement. Some deepening follow-up questions are to be asked to gather reasons, examples and particular experience in relation to the score card result, or initial view shared in response to questions asked.
- Each session shall be ended by a summary of results to bridge to the next topic/question.
- At the final end of the 2-hour FGD, facilitators shall thank the participants for their time, willingness and openness to share in the discussion. Remind them of the purpose of the FGD and how the results will be used.
- Facilitate feedbacking about the process and content of the FGD using a smiley temperature.
- Make a final closure observing cultural practice in the community.

Step 7: Report Preparation

1. Include documentation consent
2. Signed attendance sheet
3. Written and photo documentation (for filing purposed and for possible reference to report if consent is given to allow quotation or referencing of particular important experience/story)
4. Proceedings and highlights/summary of the FGD results including feedback from the participants regarding the process and content of the FGD

PHOTOS of COMMUNITY FGDS






Very Satisfied


Satisfied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BARANGAY
POLIO








Annex 5: Major Questions for the Online Survey

A. Selected Questions from the Localisation Survey for INGOs/UN

PARTICIPATION REVOLUTION

Q 19. Does your agency always endeavour active participation of population affected of crisis in your programming/planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of crisis response actions?

- Never in all aspects (planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation)
- Rarely but not in all aspects
- Rarely in all aspects
- Sometimes but not in all aspects
- Sometimes in all aspects
- Most of the time but not in all aspects
- Most of the time in all aspects
- Always but not in all aspects
- Always in all aspects
- N/A – No program for crisis affected population

Please elaborate your answer _____

Q 20. Does your joint programme or project with national/local CSO actively seeks out the views, priorities, and preferences of the populations you seek to assist?

- Never with all our partner CSOs
- Rarely but only with one/few of our partner CSOs
- Rarely with most of our partner CSOs
- Rarely with all our partner CSOs
- Sometimes but only with one/few of our partner CSOs
- Sometimes with most of our partner CSOs
- Sometimes with all our partner CSOs
- Oftentimes but only with one/few of our partner CSOs
- Oftentimes with most of our partner CSOs
- Oftentimes with all our partner CSOs
- Always but only with one/few of our partner CSOs
- Always with most of our partner CSOs
- Always with all our partner CSOs
- N/A - No collaboration with any CSO

You may please elaborate your answer _____

Q 21. Does your joint programme with national/local CSOs involves members of the populations it seeks to assist in important project decisions that will affect them?

- Never with all our partner CSOs
- Rarely but only with one/few of our partner CSOs
- Rarely with most of our partner CSOs
- Rarely with all our partner CSOs
- Sometimes but only with one/few of our partner CSOs
- Sometimes with most of our partner CSOs

- Sometimes with all our partner CSOs

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP

Q19. Does your organisation and the international agency you collaborate with spend time building trust and identify common goals you want to achieve together?

- Not at all
- Yes, but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Yes, with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Yes, with all our partner international agencies
- N/A – no collaboration with any international agency

You may please elaborate your answer _____

Q20. How do you define the relationship between your organisation and the international agency/ies you collaborate with?

- All sub-contractual relationship
- More sub-contractual, one or few real partnership
- Some sub-contractual, some real partnership
- More real partnership, one or few sub-contractual
- All real partnership
- N/A – no collaboration with any international agency

You may please elaborate your answer _____

Q21. Is your organisation having long term strategic partnerships with international agency/ies you collaborate with?

- None with our international partners
- One international partner
- Some of our international partners
- All international partners
- N/A – no collaboration with any international agency

You may please elaborate your answer _____

CAPACITIES

Q35: In the past 5 years, has your agency hired staff who were with national/local CSOs prior to hiring?

- We hired no staff from national/ local CSOs
- We hired between 1-5 staff from national/ local CSOs
- We hired between 6-10 staff from national/ local CSOs
- We hired more than 10 staff from national/ local CSOs

Please elaborate your answer _____

Q36: How do you view your local/national CSO partners' over-all organisational effectiveness in designing, implementing, and monitoring humanitarian program?

- Highly effective, no need for further capacity development support
- Effective but still need additional capacity development support in some aspect

- Not so effective, needing more capacity development support
- Not effective at all
- No experience at all
- N/A – not a humanitarian response organisation

Please elaborate your answer _____

Q 37: How do you view your partner CSOs' current capacity in implementing community-based approaches in humanitarian programming?

- Highly effective, no need for further capacity development support
- Effective but still need additional capacity development support in some aspect
- Not so effective, needing more capacity development support
- Not effective at all
- No experience at all
- N/A – No humanitarian program

Please elaborate your answer _____

B. Selected Questions from Localisation Survey for CSOs

LOCALISATION COMMITMENTS

Q10: Have international agency/ies your organisation collaborates with informed you about the Grand Bargain commitments agreed at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, and the practical meaning of the localisation commitment?

- None of them every mentioned it
- Some mentioned it but didn't provide much explanation
- Several mentioned it but I don't yet fully understand what it means for local/national organisations
- Many international agencies we work with mentioned it, and I am very clear what it means for local/national organisations
- N/A – no collaboration with international agency

You may please elaborate your answer _____

Q 11: Do you agree with the statement, "International agencies that come to Philippines to help have supported and reinforced non-governmental organisations so that soon we will manage most of our humanitarian work with our own local/national capacities."

- I totally disagree with this statement
- I disagree somewhat with this statement
- I agree somewhat with this statement
- I totally agree with this statement
- N/A – no collaboration with international agency
- Prefer not to answer

You may please elaborate your answer _____

Q12: Do you agree with the statement, "International funding support is needed, but international expertise should be provided more on our demand and explicit request."

- I totally disagree with this statement
- I disagree somewhat with this statement
- I agree somewhat with this statement
- I totally agree with this statement
- Prefer not to answer

You may elaborate your answer _____

QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP

Q 17. Does your organisation feel you are an equal partner in your collaboration with the international agency/ies that you work with in designing and implementing programs?

- Not at all with all international agencies
- Rarely but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Rarely with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Rarely with all our partner international agencies
- Sometimes but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Sometimes with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Sometimes with all our partner international agencies
- Always but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Always with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Always with all our partner international agencies
- N/A - No collaboration with any international agency

You may please elaborate your answer _____

Q 18. Does your organisation and the international agency you collaborate with, proactively discuss possible risks (financial, reputational, legal, safety and security, conflict, environmental, PSEA)_in the project you jointly implement? (You may select more than 1 answer).

- None of these risks is ever discussed proactively
- Some of these risks were discussed but not with all international agencies
- Some of these risks were discussed with all international agencies
- The financial risks are discussed proactively, the other risks are not
- The PSEA is discussed proactively, the other risks are not
- The PSEA and financial risks are discussed proactively, the others are not
- Most of these risks are discussed proactively but not with all international agencies
- Most of these risks are discussed proactively with all international agencies
- We intentionally assess all possible risks together and discuss how we can reduce or manage these risks but not with all international agencies
- We intentionally assess all possible risks together and discuss how we can reduce or manage these risks with all international agencies
- N/A – no collaboration with any international agency

You may please elaborate your answer _____

Q19. Does your organisation and the international agency you collaborate with spend time building trust and identify common goals you want to achieve together?

- Not at all
- Yes, but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Yes, with most of our partner international agencies but not all

- Yes, with all our partner international agencies
- N/A – no collaboration with any international agency

You may please elaborate your answer _____

PARTICIPATION REVOLUTION

Q 24. Does your joint programme or project with international agency actively seeks out the views, priorities, and preferences of the populations you seek to assist?

- Never with all international agencies we collaborated with
- Rarely but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Rarely with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Rarely with all our partner international agencies
- Sometimes but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Sometimes with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Sometimes with all our partner international agencies
- Always but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Always with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Always with all our partner international agencies
- N/A - No collaboration with any international agency

You may please elaborate your answer _____

Q 25. Does your joint programme with international agency actively involves members of the populations it seeks to assist in important project decisions that will affect them?

- Never with all international agencies we collaborated with
- Rarely but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Rarely with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Rarely with all our partner international agencies
- Sometimes but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Sometimes with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Sometimes with all our partner international agencies
- Always but only with one/few of our partner international agencies
- Always with most of our partner international agencies but not all
- Always with all our partner international agencies
- N/A - No collaboration with any international agency

You may please elaborate your answer _____

Annex 6. List of organisations that contributed to the process

A. Participating National and Local NGOs/CSOs and Private Sector

No.	Name of the CSOs and Private Sector
1	Aksyon sa Kahandaan sa Kalamidad at Klima (AKKMA)
2	Alay Bayan, Inc. (ABI)
3	Alliance of Sphere Advocates of the Philippines (ASAP)
4	A Single Drop for Safe Water, Inc.
5	Assistance and Cooperation for Community Resilience and Development (ACCORD)
6	Baguio Benguet Public Information Civic Action Group Phils. inc.
7	Balay Rehabilitation Center, Inc.
8	BALAOD Mindanao for GROWTH project
9	BALC-RAT
10	Balik Lokal
11	Bangon Marawi CSO Platform (BMCSOP)
12	Barangay Calube Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative (BACFA MPC)
13	Basilan Informal Economy RWA
14	BDEV Child Protection
15	Binangonan Ondoy Solidarity Association (BOSA)
16	Bohol Integrated Development Foundation, Incorporated (BIDEF)
17	Cagayan Valley Disaster Response Center Inc.
18	Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP)
19	Center for Emergency Aid, Rehabilitation and Development, Inc. (CONCERN)
20	Center for Empowerment and Resource Development, Inc. (CERD)
21	Citizens Disaster Response Center, Inc. (CDRC)
22	Citizens Disaster Response Network (CDRN)
23	Coalition for Bicol Development
24	Coalition of Services of the Elderly (COSE)
25	Community-led Empowering Actions for Resilience Network (CLEARNet)
24	CO-Multiversity Multiversity
26	Cordillera Disaster Response & Development Services, Inc.
27	Cordillera Network of Development NGOs and POs
28	Davao Episcoal Area – The United Methodist Church
29	Differently-Abled Women Network (DAWN)
30	Dios Mabalos Po Foundation, Inc.
31	Disaster Risk Reduction Network Philippines (DRRNet Phils)
32	Duyog Marawi, Inc
33	Ebgan, Inc.
34	Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits (ECOWEB), Inc.
35	Federation of person with Disabilities in the Municipalities of Maramag
36	Food for the Hungry Philippines
37	Green Forum - Western Visayas, Inc.
38	Iligan City Council of Women, Incorporated
39	IMCC Center for Community Extension and Social Development (ICES-DEV)
40	Ilocos Center for Research, Empowerment and Development (ICRED)

41	Iloilo City Urban Poor Federation, Inc.
42	Iloilo CODE NGO
43	INABEL
44	Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao
45	IYAMAN INC
46	Kalimudan sa Ranao Foundation, Inc.
47	KAMI SUNOI, Incorporated
48	Kasilak Development Foundation Inc.
49	Lanao del Sur Peoples Council (LDSPC)
50	Lanao Youth Council Inc.
51	Leyte Center for Development, Inc. LCDe
52	Magungaya Mindanao Incorporated
53	Manila Observatory (MO)
54	Maranao People Development Center (MARADECA), INC.
55	Mindanao Interfaith Services Foundation Inc.
56	Mindanao Migrants Center for Empowering Actions, Inc. (MMCEAI)
57	Muslim Womens Rural Worker Association Inc.
58 59	NAPC-Victims of Disaster and Calamities Sectoral Council (NAPC-VDC SC)
60	National Urban Poor Sectoral Council (NUPSC)
60	OFW Organization of Bulalo, Incorporated (OFWOBI)
61	PAGLINGKAWAS Women Federation
62	Palawan NGO Network Incorporated
63	Pambansang Katipunan ng mga Samahan sa Kanayunan (PKSK)
64	Panaghiusa Alang Sa Kaugalingnan Ug Kalingkawasan Inc (PASAKK INC)
66	Panay Center for Disaster Response (PCDR)
66	Partnership Mission for People's Initiatives (formerly Phil. Misereor Partnership Inc.)
67	Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA)
68	People's Disaster Risk Reduction Network, Inc. (PDRRN)
69	Philippine Campaign to Ban Landmines
70	Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF)
71	Philippine Miseseor Partnership, Incorporated (PMPI)
72	Prelature of Infanta-Community Organization of the Philippines (PI-COPI), Inc.
73	Provincial Women Council of Lanao del Sur
74	PwC Philippines – Isla Lipana & Co.
75	Ranao Technical Institute Inc.
76	Ranao Watch for Empowerment Network Incorporated
77	Ranao Women and Children Resource Center, Inc (RWCRC)
78	Ranaw Bay Mindanao Emergency Response Network (RB-MERN)
79	Ranaw Disaster Response and Rehabilitation Assistance Center
80	Responsible Citizens Empowered Communities in Solidarity for Social Change (RECITE)
81	Rural Development Initiatives in the Islands of Leyte
82	Rural Development Institute of Sultan Kudarat, Inc
83	SAFER Philippines
84	Samahang Responsableng Anak ng Nayon (SARANAY Inc.)
85	Samar Women Action Network (SWAN)

86	San Agustin Urban Poor Organization
87	San Jose ISF Farmers Association, Inc.
88	Save Mindanao Volunteers Inc. (SMVI)
89	Senator Ninoy Aquino College Foundation
90	Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan
91	Social Action Center of Zambales
92	Suara Kalilintad
93	SUCCESS Initiatives, Inc.
94	SUMPAY Mindanao Incorporated
95	Tagum Association of Person with Disabilities
96	Tiyakap Kalilintad, Incorporated (TKI)
97	TRIPOD Foundation, Inc.
98	Western Visayas Network of Social Dev't NGOs, Inc. (WeVNet)
99	WISER8

B. Participating National and Local Government Agencies/Units

No.	Government Agencies
1	City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO) of Marawi City
2	City Social Welfare and Development of Ormoc City
3	City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (CDRRMO) of Ormoc City
4	Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT)
5	Department of Foreign Affairs
6	Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)
7	DSWD - Dasmarinas, Cavite
8	Ministry of Social Services and Development of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (MSSD-BARMM)
9	National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC)
10	Office of the Civil Defense (OCD)

C. Participating UN Agencies and International NGOs

No.	Participating UN & INGOs
1	Alliance for Empowering Partnership (A4EP)
2	Action Against Hunger (ACF)
3	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)
4	Adventist Development & Relief Agency (ADRA)
5	AWO International
6	Build Change
7	CARE Philippines
8	Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
9	Caritas Germany
10	CBM International-Philippines

11	ChildFund Philippines
12	Fundacion InteRed
13	FundLife
14	GlobalGiving UK
15	Global Mentoring Initiative
16	Good Neighbors International Philippines
17	Habitat for Humanity Philippines
18	Handicap International
19	International Labor Organization (ILO)
20	Just Projects Philippines
21	Malteser International
22	Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF)/Doctors Without Borders
23	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
24	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)
25	United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator UNRC/HC)
26	OXFAM Pilipinas
27	Relief International
28	Save the Children Philippines
29	UN-Habitat
30	United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR)
31	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
32	World Food Programme (WFP)
33	Philippine International Non-Government Organization Network (PINGON)

Collaborating agencies forging ahead on localisation

From among the dialogue partners, Smruti Patel of the A4EP noted that the immediate next step is not only to come up with the report, but for the different stakeholders to concretely take forward the actions in their own work in a holistic way so actions are taken at all levels. A4EP can share the process with other countries and share some of the findings with the Grand Bargain signatores.

From Oxfam Pilipinas, Ma. Rosario Felizco recognised the importance of the processes over the last few months, leading up to the roadmap planning, in revisiting what localisation meant across stakeholders and be able to input them into the global discussions that are happening relative to the future of the Grand Bargain.

While the global discussions are very important, they will only be meaningful if they can be adopted and practiced at the country level, thus requiring more concrete and more actionable resolutions. Oxfam expressed its commitment to carrying on the conversation with all the stakeholders to make the localisation roadmap meaningful and be something that can be implemented.

From UNOCHA, Manja Vidic, reiterated that localisation is about complementarity not competition - about partnership and relationship building, and not replacing one another. In order for the Philippines to take on the localisation agenda, there is a need to continue creating safe spaces for open dialogue. Ms. Vidic expressed UNOCHA's commitment to walk the talk, especially in coordinating the HCT, in which some of the activities on the action plan will be discussed and put into action.

Regina Salvador - Antequisa, Executive Director of ECOWEB, acknowledged all the partners who contributed to the localisation dialogues, including the trust given to ECOWEB in leading the dialogue process – this is localisation in action. She encouraged continuing vibrant collaboration among stakeholders "to show to the global community how localisation is done in the Philippines. " She, together with other CSO leaders, are leading the continuing process among CSOs to move forward the identified key actions for moving forward the localisation agenda in the Philippines.

In cooperation with:

Government and basic sector participation

UN agencies, INGOs and member NGO participation

- Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)
- Mindanao Humanitarian Team (MHT)
- Philippine International Non-Government Organization Network (PINGON)

National and local CSO actors participation

GROWTH
RB-MERN
WEVNet
BMCSOP

With support from: