

PHILIPPINES

Crispina B. Abat

Chief, Planning Division, Office of Civil Defense
National Disaster Coordinating Council

“Breakthroughs on Disaster Risk Reduction”



Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2008

I. Make Disaster Risk Reduction [DRR] a Priority

Activities and Results

- Conduct of National Multi-stakeholder Dialogues and Consultation Workshops on DRR
- Crafting of Strategic National Action Plan (SNAP) on DRR
- Adoption of Strategic Plan to Integrate Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) into Socio-Economic and Development Processes
- Mainstreaming of DRR into the education, local governance, infrastructure, and development planning sectors

Gaps and Challenges Identified

- Existing DM law does not reflect a comprehensive approach on managing disasters
- Inadequate government budget appropriation to support DRR activities
- Most local government units have weak organizational and institutional capacities to implement DRR activities on a regular basis

Future Priorities

- Intensify efforts to advance the enactment of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Act
- Provide policy support to incorporate DRR into other sectors (i.e. tourism, budget)
- Institutionalize DRR at local levels through the establishment of permanent Disaster Risk Management Office and mobilization of resources through risk transfer options
- Increase opportunities for information exchange, dialogues, and other fora on DRR



II. Improve Risk Information and Early Warning

Activities and Results

- Development of multi-hazard maps and establishment of community-based early warning systems through the implementation of the READY Project
- Continuous upgrade of monitoring and forecasting capability of early warning agencies through procurement of instruments and equipment
- Nationwide installation of rain gauges and inexpensive tsunami sensors

Gaps and Challenges Identified

- Breakdown of vital communication facilities during strong typhoons
- Public awareness on transboundary risks (i.e. avian influenza, global climate change,) is low
- Inadequate media involvement in communicating risks

Future Priorities

- Establish common methodology on data collection, documentation, and reporting
- Create an integrated information database system on hazards and risks at all levels
- Develop standardized IEC materials and risk maps (overlay of multi-hazard and vulnerability maps)
- Invest government funds on maintenance of forecasting equipment and infrastructure



III. Build a Culture of Safety and Resistance

Activities and Results

- Incorporation of disaster topics into primary and secondary public schools
- Conduct of study on the impact of disasters to the education sector
- Documentation and advocacy of good practices on DRR
- Annual observance of July as “National Disaster Consciousness Month” and recognition of excellence in DRM through the “Gawad KALASAG”
- Maintenance of DRR-related websites (i.e. DROMIC, CALAMIDAT.PH, NDCC)

Gaps and Challenges Identified

- Existing body of knowledge (i.e. assessments, research studies) on DRR in different offices and organizations have not been systematically packaged to advance DRR in a significant way and information is not widely disseminated
- Computer access remains poor in many parts of the country

Future Priorities

- Support the integration of DRR in the educational system particularly in the tertiary and advanced levels
- Development of a comprehensive research agenda on DRR



IV. Reduce the Underlying Risk Factors

Activities and Results

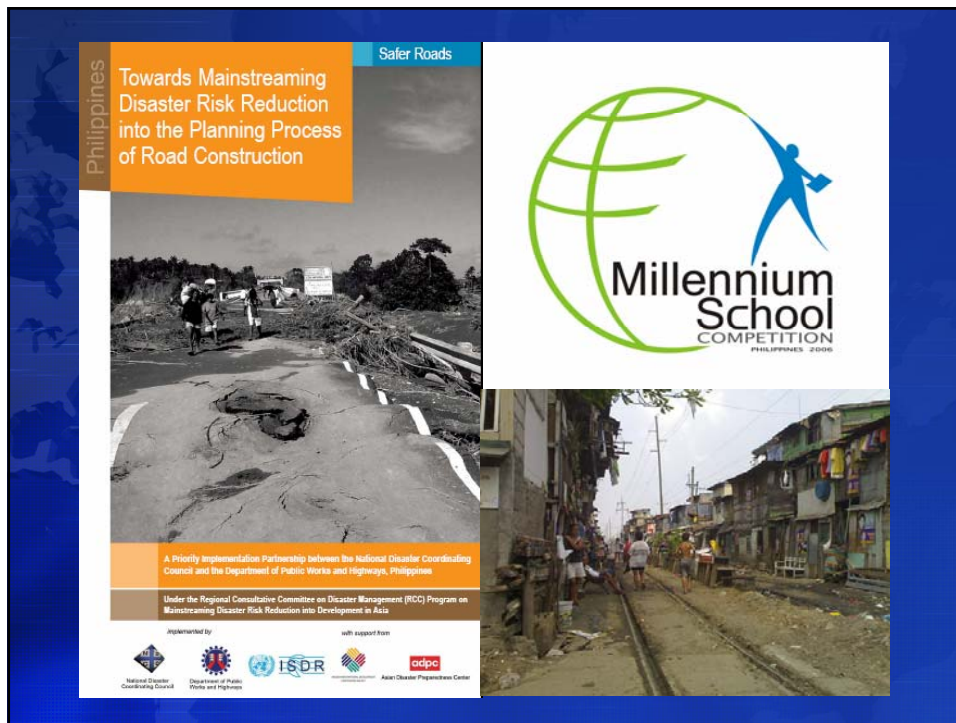
- Integrating DRR in land-use and physical framework plans
- Development of a GIS Cookbook which promotes DRR into spatial planning
- Implementation of Building Safe Learning Environments (BLSE) Project and hosted the "Millennium Schools Competition" to promote safe school buildings

Gaps and Challenges Identified

- Only few financial institutions (i.e. micro-finance services) provide emergency loans to residents especially to the poor whose livelihood are affected by disasters
- Poor enforcement of easement zone regulation encourages informal settlers to continue inhabiting areas along river banks and coastlines increasing their exposure to disaster risks

Future Priorities

- Blend DRR into poverty reduction strategy; peace building process and advocacy measures; and socio-economic development framework, plans, and policies



V. Strengthen Preparedness for Effective Emergency Response

Activities and Results

- Institutionalization of cluster approach at all levels
- Continuous conduct of seminars on DRM for local chief executives, workshops on contingency planning, and emergency preparedness trainings (i.e. SAR, DANA)
- Capability upgrade of NDCC Operations Center
- Regional cooperation through the hosting of INSARAG Exercise and ARDEX

Gaps and Challenges Identified

- Post-event reviews that involve various stakeholders are not regularly conducted

Future Priorities

- Improve content of DRM-related trainings including web-based courses
- Expand the space for private sector and civil society to further contribute in DRR
- Standardized IEC materials
- Promote diffusion of DRR knowledge at the community level through mass media and other channels

