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## 2-2. Report on typhoon Haiyan

In December 2013, a team of researchers and experts from ADRC/IRP visited some areas in the provinces of Leyte and Samar that were impacted by typhoon Haiyan (local name Yolanda) in the Philippines. The objective was to draw information on preparedness, response, and plans for recovery in order to provide greater understanding of the disaster, including what gaps and challenges need to be addressed.

The team found that essential preparations were made in anticipation of the super typhoon, such that preemptive evacuations to schools, churches, stadiums, and public buildings were made. Additionally, relief goods and services were ready in most command centers. However, the preparations did not match the magnitude of the unexpected super typhoon which caused massive storm surge that destroyed the evacuation and command centers, specifically those located near the coast. Among of the immediate impacts were high casualties, relief goods washed away, and command centers became dysfunctional. Subsequently, the response effort



[Livelihoods of fishermen were affected]



[Province of Leyte Recovery Team]

had no choice but to be delayed. As island provinces, there were challenges in the operational capacities of airports and seaports as well as communication/coordination because most infrastructures were damaged. In fact, most relief goods and services were stranded in some islands before reaching the impacted areas.

In terms of recovery, the local governments and communities acknowledged that greater challenges in housing, livelihoods, and infrastructure are expected. Since most areas were flattened, people immediately need shelter. Communities also need alternative livelihoods because assets from original activities such as coconut harvesting, farming, and fishing were gone. Furthermore, the local market, transportation, energy, and communication infrastructure were also urgently needed. The findings from the visit suggest that in terms of preparedness, public awareness on storm surge needs to be strengthened, location of evacuation and command centers need to be reviewed, and policies and activities on preparedness (e.g. early warning systems) need to be reassessed. In terms of response, the capacities of local governments and communities to provide immediate relief goods/services need to be enhanced in anticipation of the delays from external agencies due to logistical challenges. In terms of recovery, it is crucial that communities are actively engaged in planning and implementing the programs and

projects.

In view of these suggestions, IRP/ADRC plans to organize a workshop in the Province of Cebu in February 2014 to be participated by local government officials and key stakeholders to



[Tacloban Airport]



[Covered Court, Baras, Palo, Leyte]

re-assess the needs for drills and proper information dissemination, re-evaluate early warning systems, and provide technical assistance for recovery planning at the provincial/city/municipality levels. The output of the workshop was shared with ADRC member countries on occasion of “ACDR 2014” to be held at Tokyo in March 2014.