NRC NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL

CHALLENGES OF ADDRESSING DISASTER-INDUCED URBAN DISPLACEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

BRIEFING PAPER

September 2014

DISASTERS
CLIMATE CHANGE AND
DISPLACEMENT **>** **EVIDENCE
FOR ACTION**

CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This briefing paper presents key findings of research into how to better protect people displaced by disasters and how to improve disaster management in urban areas of the Philippines. Intended to support the Nansen Initiative, this study is part of a research project commissioned by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) – entitled 'Urbanisation, disasters and displacement in Central America and Southeast Asia' – which combines a global desk study with country studies on the Philippines and El Salvador. It explores challenges related to protection of the displaced and disaster management in urban areas before, during and after disasters and how humanitarian actors address them in policy and practice.

Focusing on the prevention of displacement, protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and facilitation of durable solutions, it explores complexities of disaster management in urban areas characterised by:

- rapid growth driven by rural to urban migration and displacement

- densely populated marginalised and informal settlements

- inadequate infrastructure that does not match the needs and the settlement patterns of the population

- populations vulnerable both to disasters and social protection challenges that accompany poverty and marginalisation.

This paper provides a Filipino perspective on the challenges of disaster management, which is hopefully of relevance in other countries also experiencing rapid urbanisation, highly prone to disasters and facing the daunting challenges of the human mobility implications of climate change. In the Philippines and elsewhere government and non-state disaster management (DM) actors will face more frequent and more intense disasters, triggering further displacement in urban areas. In order to most effectively protect populations before, during and after displacement, they will have to adjust their policies and protection interventions to meet the intricacies of the urban landscape, the needs of IDPs and those who might be displaced across borders.

This paper identifies emerging policy and practical challenges confronting humanitarian actors in the Philippines. It does not seek to apportion blame in how actors currently provide protection but, rather, seeks to help

governmental and non-governmental actors throughout Southeast Asia understand the challenges that humanitarian actors and communities face in the Philippines, identify commonalities and differences and discuss how they may address them in policy and practice.

In the wake of the November 2013 category 5 super-typhoon Haiyan (locally designated as Yolanda) – one of the strongest tropical cyclones ever recorded – the government of the Philippines requested Temporary Protected Status (TPS)[1] for Filipinos then living in the USA. To date, there has been no decision. The fact that the government of the Philippines made the request indicates recognition of its limited capacity to protect citizens in the wake of disasters.

The Philippines has a long history of emigration, in search of work, family reunification and for other reasons. Although outside the scope of this study, it seems possible that disasters might stimulate emigration and that IDPs might choose to emigrate after not finding a satisfactory solution to their displacement. Further research is needed.

Findings presented below are based on qualitative key actor interviews with representatives of government, national civil society and international agencies involved in the disaster management system in the Philippines. A small number of IDPs and returned IDPs were also interviewed in Tacloban City.[2] Interviews were conducted in Metro Manila – also known as the National Capital Region (NCR) – and Tacloban City in March 2014. It should be noted that the research particularly focused on the NCR and did not explore characteristics that might differentiate one city from another.

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[1] When a country has been designated for TPS its nationals may remain in the USA and legally seek employment.

[2] In order to respect promises of confidentiality please note that the names of individual informants are not given.

2. DISASTERS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND URBANISATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

2.1 BACKGROUND

The Philippines has one of the world's highest urban growth rates.[3] By 2050 it is projected to have the tenth highest urban population in the world and the 20th highest percentage of its population living in urban areas.[4]

In the Philippines, there are 33 officially designated Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCs), urban areas with a population of over 200,000. Three of the four cities with populations in excess of a million are coastal cities located within the NCR.

Due to lack of affordable land and housing, many low-income urban Filipinos have built homes on such high-risk areas as riverbeds, flood plains, mountain slopes and canals.[5] Government and private developers have also built housing and commercial projects in such vulnerable locations. In addition to putting residents at risk of flooding, such developments encroach on waterways, impede maintenance and disrupt water flows, thus increasing the probability of city-wide flooding.[6]

2.2 DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines, a country of 7,000 islands in the Pacific Ring of Fire and the Pacific typhoon belt, is prone to multiple natural hazards, including storms, floods, earthquakes, drought and volcanic eruptions. The 2013 World Risk Index ranked the Philippines as the third-most risk prone country in the world and the third-most exposed to natural hazards.[7] Climate change has caused an increased rate and intensity of disasters, and has expanded the area affected by disasters.[8] The Philippines is continually exposed. An average of 13 typhoons has hit the country each year since 1985. During this period the average number of people affected by disasters per year has exceeded five million and the average annual economic damage has been calculated to be US$ 721 million.[9]

Disasters cause extensive displacement in the Philippines, and severely impact homes, property and livelihoods. Armed conflict is also a cause of displacement: populations already displaced by armed conflict are among those most vulnerable to disaster displacement. Although displacement figures vary

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[3] Llanto, Gilberto, 2007, "Shelter finance strategies for the poor: Philippines", *Environment and Urbanization* 19(2), p. 402, http://goo.gl/VmyqAX

[4] United Nations Population Division, 2012, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2011 Revision,* United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, http://esa.un.org/unup/

[5] Sajor, Edsel, 2003, "Globalization and the Urban Property Boom in Metro Cebu, Philippines", *Development & Change* 34(4): 713-42 and Shatkin, Gavin, 2005, "Colonial Capital, Modernist Capital, Global Capital: The Changing Political Symbolism of Urban Space in Metro Manila, the Philippines" *Pacific Affairs* 78(4): 577–600, http://goo.gl/2YxVit.

[6] Bankoff, Greg, 2003, "Constructing Vulnerability: The Historical, Natural and Social Generation of Flooding in Metropolitan Manila," *Disasters* 27(3): 224–38, p.232, http://goo.gl/ElvtuL

[7] World Risk Index data, http://www.worldriskreport.com/Tables.364.0.html?&L=3

[8] UNDP Philippines, *UNDP Fast Facts: AdapTayo, Building Resilience to Climate Change and Disaster Risk*, http://goo.gl/3jKS74

[9] EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database, www.em-dat.net

Residents have rebuilt in an informal settlement in Tacloban City that was declared a No Build Zone following Typhoon Haiyan. The ship in the background was washed ashore by the storm. Photo © Jeremy Harkey

from year to year, the period from December 2012 to November 2013 provides an example. Three major disasters as well as armed conflict and human rights violations forced the internal displacement of up to eight million people and affected approximately 23 million.[10] Super-typhoon Haiyan displaced approximately four million of the 14 to 16 million people it affected. The needs of the affected and displaced population were not efficiently met in the wake of the disaster, and IDPs with specific needs remained vulnerable for weeks.[11]

The Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction Management Act of 2010 (PDRRMA)[12] incorporates the priorities of the Hyogo Framework for Action[13] and establishes the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) as the national coordinating body. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER)[14] is a relevant regional document. The AADMER Work Programme for 2010-2015[15] addresses urban issues.

The disaster management system relies at a sub-national level on local government units (LGUs) to establish provincial, city, municipal and barangay Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils (LDRRMCs) and Offices (LDRRMOs). The former provide oversight while LDRRMOs design and implement disaster preparedness, mitigation, risk reduction and response policy and programmes. These institutions formally exist throughout the country as required by law but their technical capacity and performance vary. One of the challenges in local disaster preparedness is the sheer number of LDRRMCs and LDRRMOs that must be created, overseen and strengthened. Manila has more than 800 barangays while the fifteen other cities and one municipality in the NCR have hundreds more. Many barangays have fewer than 10,000 residents, but one has more than 50,000. There can be significant variation in LDRRMO capacity within an urban area, and even between contiguous barangays that experience the same risks.

[10] International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 2013, *PHILIPPINES: Comprehensive response to wave of displacement crises needed,* http://goo.gl/G2zNvT

[11] Government of the Philippines, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), SAS, 2009, *The Evolving Picture of Displacement in the Wake of Typhoon Haiyan,* http://goo.gl/bPm9cf

[12] See: http://www.ifrc.org/docs/idrl/878EN.pdf

[13] See: http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/hfa

[14] See: http://goo.gl/ef6Ek3

[15] See: http://goo.gl/mMYrFu

3. PROTECTION CHALLENGES FOR DISPLACED PEOPLE IN URBAN AREAS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER DISASTERS

The extent to which LDRRMOs exist and fulfil their responsibilities has a significant impact on preventing and preparing for disaster-induced displacement. Key challenges facing LDRRMOs in urban areas include:

- **Variable capacity:** There may be a lack of local government prioritisation of the offices' duties and insufficient technical ability to create customised local tools. The Department of Interior and Local Government has the responsibility to ensure local governments comply with responsibilities to support LDRRMOs but its capacity to do so is limited. This impacts the extent to which LDRRMOs are able to effectively prepare for displacement and comprehensively protect IDPs in disaster situations.

- **Political will:** City and barangay officials do not consistently prioritise disaster preparedness and risk reduction. This can lead to insufficient allocation of financial and human resources for preparedness and response. Local officials often do not fund or conduct preparedness and DRR activities in communities that have not supported them politically. Such politicisation of preparedness funding and interventions can have a particularly significant impact on risk prone communities such as informal settlements.

- **Funding:** City, municipality and barangay disaster management funding is calculated as a percentage of local revenue. Wealthier cities and municipalities are better able to fund disaster preparedness while areas with the most vulnerable populations are less able to mitigate risks and prevent displacement.

- **Difficulties in community mobilisation:** Government and non-governmental actors face difficulties conducting community preparedness and DRR activities, including vulnerability assessments, training and simulations. In barangays with large areas and populations it is difficult to comprehensively communicate key messages to large portions of the population. In some urban areas there is a lack of community cohesion, under-prioritisation of disaster preparedness relative to other needs such as livelihoods and little time to dedicate to disaster preparedness initiatives.

3.1 DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Certain disaster preparedness tools work well in urban areas, such as early warning systems that rely on accessible communication methods like radio and television. Other preparedness tools that are more technical and process-based, such as risk maps and evacuation plans, require a higher degree of community-level information and involvement and LDRRMO leadership. These tools can fail when the responsible actors do not have sufficient capacity to develop and apply them, do not prioritise them or fail to include densely-populated at-risk informal settlements.

- **Risk maps:** LDRRMOs do not consistently maintain accurate and comprehensive disaster risk and population vulnerability maps. This is, in part, the result of a lack of technical capacity – particularly in barangay LDRRMOs – to create maps and interpret data made available to them by agencies of the Philippine government or international development actors. Maps do not consistently consider the risks of residents of informal settlements or the vulnerability of individuals with specific needs. While barangays are required to track residents who have specific needs on an on-going basis they do not consistently do so. Some community officials know the location of individuals with specific needs, such as pregnant women, but, overall, the failure to systematise mapping causes the needs of many to be overlooked and risks excluding them from DM and protection plans.

- **Disaster management plans:** LDRRMOs do not consistently maintain locally customised disaster management plans, share them with residents or conduct simulations. This has direct implications for the extent to which populations know how they should behave and where they should go if they become displaced during disasters. This, in turn, contributes to ineffective evacuation, overcrowding of shelters and difficulty for DM actors in monitoring and responding to the needs of IDPs with specific needs.

- **Shelters:** LDRRMOs use installations such as schools, sports facilities and community meeting halls as evacuation centres. These facilities are not consistently prepared to ensure the protection of IDPs. Population density in urban areas and limited space in each facility requires that many be used in each disaster. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities may be limited and there is insufficient space to meet the needs of families, women and older people. Some shelters are exposed to disaster risks. Minimal funding and lack of available building space prevent LGUs from building dedicated evacuation facilities. Resistance to using schools as evacuation centres prevents LDRRMOs from retrofitting installations so as to improve conditions. Ensuring LGUs and relevant government ministries have sufficient well-trained staff to manage the high number of shelters in urban areas is problematic, with serious implications for providing protection for IDPs.

3.2 DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

LDRRMOs are required to consider disaster risk reduction (DRR) in their Comprehensive Land Use Plans and conduct a number of other DRR activities. One of the greatest challenges is related to informal settlements built along waterways and in other disaster-prone locations. There may be preparedness activities in informal settlements yet infrastructural DRR needs get overlooked when LGUs do not want to be seen to be formalising their existence. Relocation programmes are slow and in many ways ineffective, causing informal settlements to remain exposed to natural hazards.

- **Relocation of populations at risk:** As noted, informal settlements are often located in disaster-prone areas and housing is built of flimsy materials, thus leaving residents at repeated risk of displacement in disaster situations. LGUs are legally required to facilitate the relocation of informal residents to a safe destination within the city, or to another location if this is not possible. However, the government has faced many difficulties in achieving intra-urban relocation. This is because urban development space is limited and LGUs cannot afford to buy land for relocation or allocate land they own. Relocation programmes have been implemented in an insufficiently participatory and rights-based manner. Informants

from international NGOs reported instances of people being relocated outside urban boundaries to areas lacking adequate services, sufficient and appropriate livelihood opportunities and which may themselves be risk prone. Some of those relocated end up returning to informal settlements in cities. Current programmes to relocate informal settlements from waterways in Metro Manila, implemented within the Manila Bay Clean-Up Rehabilitation and Preservation Program, are being prepared in a newly participatory manner. They use People's Shelter Plans to identify communities' needs and priorities in relocation destinations. These plans are used to craft relocation plans that best suit the beneficiaries. State and civil society informants reported that, despite the programme's substantial budget there has been slow progress with few tangible results.

- **DRR in development plans:** LGUs do not consistently consider disaster risk in local land use plans as required by law. Local governments encounter limitations in their ability to identify and interpret risk factors and incorporate them into development plans. The government has created what are known as No Build Zones, both pre-emptively and in the wake of disasters but there are enforcement constraints. Both international and Filipino informants reported criminal involvement in the administration of informal settlements, inability to provide alternative living sites and poor coordination with local officials. Continual migration into cities sustains demand for such vulnerable housing.

- **Risk Mitigation:** Local governments do not consistently prioritise funding for disaster risk mitigation. Cities do undertake such necessary interventions as building flood walls, pumping stations and dikes. Much of this is done with funding and technical support from international donors and development actors but is often not city-wide and across administrative boundaries. Few LDRRMOs appear to allocate funds for mitigation projects in poorer, more marginalised communities and do not implement risk mitigation projects in informal settlements.

- **Facilitating disaster resilience:** There is minimal emphasis on bolstering urban populations' resilience to disasters. Those employed in the informal sector may be particularly affected by disasters yet have little or no access to livelihoods recovery assistance. The same may be true of those with formal employment: in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan business enterprises in Tacloban City remained closed for weeks, if not months, but provided no compensation to their employees.

3.3 DESTINATIONS OF DISPLACEMENT

Urban populations determine their place of displacement according to perceptions of comfort and safety and accessible alternatives. In the Philippines there appear to be five main destinations:

- **Official shelters** recognised in local disaster management plans are managed by local officials and are humanitarian assistance distribution points. Used mainly by poor inhabitants of informal settlements, they become overcrowded.

- **Home shelters** are used by those who seek refuge in with friends or family. Such IDPs are largely out of reach of the disaster management system, in terms of tracing, provision of services and protection. Informants mentioned cramped sleeping quarters, food insecurity and the risk of sexual violence and gender-based violence (GBV).

- **Spontaneous and unofficial evacuation sites** may include outdoor spaces such as fields, or churches with which IDPs are affiliated. The official disaster management system may not acknowledge those who thus seek shelter.

- **Corporate evacuation centres,** often small hotels, are used by large enterprises to ensure that the needs of their employees are met and that businesses may continue operating.

- **Inter-city or urban-rural displacement** occurs when people sense that their needs are not and/or will not be responded to in their urban area of residence. In the wake of Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 and in response to delays in humanitarian assistance and looting, residents of Tacloban City went to Manila, Cebu City and other urban destinations. Some received humanitarian assistance and shelter but others did not. Those who sought refuge in rural areas were not eligible for individual assistance but could benefit if host families had been similarly affected by the disaster. They could also return to the urban area to receive food and non-food assistance and return to their rural location of displacement. It is likely that such back-and-forth movement was complicated by blocked roads, disrupted transportation and IDPs' inability to meet transport costs.

3.4 PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

Cities and municipalities offer advantages in terms of the number and variety of actors that can contribute to disaster response but can also undermine effective humanitarian action.

- **Advantages:** Urban areas have a notable presence of state and non-state DM actors. Those contributing to disaster response include actors from the private sector and from line ministries and humanitarian actors particularly present in metropolitan areas of the NCR. Cities may seek assistance from unaffected neighbouring cities which may have complementary resources. The media can play a greater role in urban areas, highlighting gaps and inefficiencies in the disaster response and informing the public on how to access support.

- **Challenges:** The large number of actors can create coordination challenges for the official disaster management system. As they are located in urban areas state and non-state DM actors can find themselves affected by disasters and unable to respond. A multitude of actors requires greater coordination and poses challenges to ensuring effective spatial distribution of response efforts. Failure to regulate the type and quality of assistance that is donated and distributed by private sector and NGO actors was acknowledged by informants as a potential risk, undermining humanitarian actors' efforts to consistently and comprehensively deliver aid on the basis of need.

3.5 PROTECTION CHALLENGES FOR THE DISPLACED PEOPLE

Given the size of urban populations, the range of displacement patterns and coordination challenges, many protection risks remain unaddressed. This is exacerbated by emphasis that the disaster management system places on servicing official shelters, insufficient capacity among disaster management personnel to focus on protection and inefficient and inadequate systems to identify and respond to needs of those who do not seek refuge in official shelters.

The respective protection challenges of each choice of displacement location may be summarised thus:

- **Official shelters:** They cannot provide comprehensive protection, evidenced by the fact that some leave to return to their homes even if they are destroyed or unsafe. Overcrowding in shelters leads to illness and difficulties in preventing GBV or other violence. Inadequate sanitation and hygiene – with facilities

not segregated by gender or age and inadequate lighting near latrines – create further risks of sexual violence and GBV. There are portable toilets in some shelters, but there are not enough. Shelter management officials are limited in their ability to prevent, identify or respond to GBV and intra-family physical violence. Crimes remain under-reported and inadequately investigated by shelter management or law enforcement officials. A further challenge is a lack of training of local government officials and line ministry staff in shelter management and protection. In addition there is a risk of city or barangay LDRRMOs not providing required humanitarian assistance to shelters located in communities in political conflict with those in power. Informants with response responsibilities indicated that these situations are eventually resolved but may cause a delay in the delivery of assistance.

- **Home shelters:** IDPs in home shelters may not have access to assistance or protection support. This is especially true if local authorities consider such responses to displacement to not be their responsibility or beyond their capacity to support. Officials may cross-reference shelter registration lists with lists of community residents, doing house-to-house verifications and working with barangay officials and community leaders to identify families hosting displaced individuals. This verification system allows governmental and non-governmental actors to deliver assistance or inform individuals of their right to request assistance at shelters while ensuring they are eligible for recovery assistance. In practice, however, there are challenges. Residents of informal settlements are not always considered in master lists and thus not tracked or able to easily access assistance. Tracking may not be systematic and assistance to displaced population may cause tensions with non-displaced neighbours. In any case, assistance for those sheltering at home is limited to provision of food and non-food items. There is no needs assessment or protection monitoring, so needs may remain unidentified and not responded to.

- **Unofficial and spontaneous evacuation sites:** Unofficial shelters such as churches are not consistently staffed by trained officials. This creates challenges in aligning shelter registration with the official system, appropriately meeting needs and dealing with problems that may arise such as linking IDPs to health service providers. DM and humanitarian actors are not able to immediately respond to the needs of IDPs sheltering in outdoor shelters who may be food insecure and lacking healthcare.

- **Inter-city or urban-rural displacement:** It is difficult for disaster management officials to track those seeking shelter outside urban areas. Following Typhoon Haiyan, government authorities and the International Organization for Migration established 'migration outflow desks' at the airport in Tacloban City and at key points of entry and exit to the region. Officials

gathered information on individuals who had left the disaster-affected region, including demographic data and potential vulnerabilities. The information did not distinguish between forced and voluntary movement. In most cases there is no system in the destination of displacement through which individuals can access assistance or humanitarian actors monitor protection needs. Some individuals who seek such shelter have a network in the destination city of family or friends but not all have this support to rely on. Some stay in shelters in the destination set up to receive them but these are impromptu and not managed like official shelters. Non-governmental organisations such as the Philippine Red Cross are only inconsistently able to identify and monitor displaced individuals. INGO and academic informants reported that protection problems such IDPs risk include having to sleep in public and risk-prone places, difficulties in accessing employment, exploitative labour, having to resort to survival sex or being trafficked.

3.6 DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Informants indicated that the disaster management system is much more effective in immediate post-disaster response than in recovery, especially for inhabitants of informal settlements. Failure to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development assistance in urban areas, leaves disaster-affected and returned IDP populations to largely fend for themselves.

- **Consultation and information:** Shelter managers need to be transparent about the timing of cessation of shelter services. There is a problem of shelters prematurely closing before residents can access a safe alternative. Many shelters are housed in schools and school directors are keen to close them so as to resume schooling. The director make decisions without regard to achieving shelter solutions for IDPs or consistently seeking the approval of government DM actors. Thus many IDPs have either to return to their original homes, even if they are destroyed or dangerous, or move to other locations where their needs are unlikely to be met.

- **Humanitarian assistance:** Returnees do not consistently receive humanitarian assistance following disasters. Government actors appear to generally assume that once populations have returned to their homes and urban economies are active, populations will be able to fund their own needs. Following major disasters such as typhoons Ketsana/Ondoy and Haiyan, government and non-governmental actors distributed food or cash assistance only for an arbitrarily pre-determined number of months. In smaller disasters, non-governmental actors have provided humanitarian assistance during the recovery phase but in limited quantities and without regard to broader needs.

- **Psychosocial support:** Informants indicated that services are offered to IDPs during disasters but are inadequate. Following disasters, psychosocial services appear to be even less available to populations dispersed to urban areas.

- **Livelihoods support:** Cash for work and cash grants are the main methods of facilitating livelihoods recovery in urban areas. Official informants consider these to be particularly effective because they stimulate the broader urban economy as well as benefitting recipients. Informants emphasised the importance of coordination between actors. It appears that livelihoods support is generally provided only in large-scale disasters. Informants emphasised that if at-risk populations are not able to re-establish their livelihoods, there is a particularly high risk in urban areas of their having to resort to crime or survival sex.

3.7 HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY

HLP issues are important to ensure IDPs' ability to return to their place of origin and recover. Residents of informal settlements face the greatest challenges.

- **Eviction and declarations of inhabitability:** IDPs who previously lived in informal settlements may face eviction from their homes, as landowners take advantage of disasters to clear settlements and local governments declare "no build" or "no habitation" zones. Local governments may not appropriately consider the rights and needs of residents of such areas or alternatives to relocation that would allow them to remain in their place of residence. Although the government must provide them with relocation housing, it may not be ready to do so immediately after IDPs have to leave official shelters. If transitional housing is limited, IDPs may not have a safe intermediate alternative. Evictions may disrupt their networks and livelihoods.

- **Transitional housing:** Government programmes to provide temporary housing solutions for those relocated from informal settlements may be inadequate. Temporary housing may pose protection problems of its own. In practice, if they have no alternative or if they otherwise prefer to, in the wake of disasters such as Haiyan some will ultimately be relocated to their places of origin in informal settlements as a transitional solution. Some IDPs do this because it is necessary while waiting for relocation housing to become available. They do so even if in defiance of public orders and in spite of on-going exposure to natural hazards. This is obligatory for some IDPs because local government can face difficulties in identifying and securing space for transitional housing within the city. Reasons for this include private landowners having to use the properties for other purposes or reclaiming them out of fear that the displaced population will remain as squatters. Transitional housing, are commonly bunkhouses – multiple one-room-per-family living spaces on a tract of land – or tent cities. They cannot consistently meet protection standards. Protection challenges include the risk of sexual violence, GBV and intra-family violence. Restricted living quarters, inadequate privacy, doors that cannot be locked and insufficient lighting of public spaces contribute to these risks. Transitional housing may be utilised for extended periods of time, as the building of relocation facilities can take up to two years and in some cases is never completed.

- **Reconstruction and rehabilitation of homes:** Residents of informal settlements, including IDPs, do not receive any official assistance in rebuilding their homes. When transitional housing options are few, such as in the wake of Typhoon Yolanda in Tacloban City, the government allowed non-governmental actors to provide basic materials such as tarpaulins or light construction materials. IDPs complement these materials with others of their own. Formal landowners may have access to building materials, but they are not consistently available to all those who need them and are instead given to the worst affected. Particularly in the wake of disasters that garner extensive international support, residents may receive cash vouchers to purchase construction materials. Such landowners may be able to access public rebuilding loans but the process is complicated and long.

- **Relocation:** In the wake of disasters, particularly in regularly affected areas, a rush to find solutions can compromise the quality of relocation solutions offered.

4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RISK REDUCTION

- Municipal, city and barangay LDRRMOs should receive training and funding to serve as effective disaster management actors in IDP protection.

- The Department of the Interior and Local Government should strengthen its ability to support the capacity building of LDRRMOs and ensure that they are able to develop and implement preparedness and DRR tools.

- Given the prevalence of informal settlements, risk maps should comprehensively include them. Risk maps should also consider the vulnerabilities of those displaced by disasters who have special protection needs.

- Urban disaster management plans should consider all disaster risks factors and adjust tools accordingly.

- The national and local governments should ensure that facilities used as shelters are appropriate for the needs of the displaced population and that shelter management staff are adequately trained in protecting IDPs. The government should build adequate shelters and/or retrofit other facilities to consider the protection needs of the population that they regularly receive. Schools should not be used as shelters.

- LDRRMOs and humanitarian actors should improve training and communication methods for communities, so as to ensure awareness and preparedness for disaster situations.

- Urban planning and local development planning should be participatory and comprehensively consider disaster risk reduction needs.

- Relocation programmes should be participatory and rights-based and should meet the livelihoods and protection needs of potential beneficiaries.

4.2 PROTECTION FOR DISPLACED PEOPLE

- Humanitarian actors should understand protection gaps in shelters and work closely with LDRRMOs and community actors during disasters.

- Systems should be developed to provide assistance to those who chose to seek shelter in homes and in rural or in other urban areas.

- Partnership and coordination protocols should draw on private sector expertise and capacity.

- NGOs and the private sector should coordinate their disaster assistance through the government disaster management system.

4.3 DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- Humanitarian actors should work with LDRRMOs to effectively assess and respond to recovery assistance needs in communities following both major and minor disasters.

- Livelihoods assistance should be provided to participants in the informal economy.

- Grants and micro loans for housing reconstruction and repair should be made available.

- The government should improve preparedness for transitional housing needs after disasters.

- Post-disaster relocation programmes should be participatory, comprehensively consider in-city solutions and be sensitive to the socio-economic and protection needs of potential beneficiaries.

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DISASTERS
CLIMATE CHANGE AND
DISPLACEMENT

> ## EVIDENCE
> ## FOR ACTION

This is a multi-partner project funded by the European Commission (EC) whose overall aim is to address a legal gap regarding cross-border displacement in the context of disasters. The project brings together the expertise of three distinct partners (UNHCR, NRC/IDMC and the Nansen Initiative) seeking to:

1 › **increase the understanding** of States and relevant actors in the international community about displacement related to disasters and climate change;

2 › **equip them to plan for and manage** internal relocations of populations in a protection sensitive manner; and

3 › **provide States and other relevant actors tools and guidance** to protect persons who cross international borders owing to disasters, including those linked to climate change.