

## ABSTRACT

The Philippines is included in the list of countries most devastated by disasters worldwide based on recent global statistics on disasters and its impacts for the year 2017. Consequently, as a result of the extreme disaster events in the previous years, disaster policies in the Philippines were formulated which progress upon decision-making that is top-down in approach. This means that the strategies being utilized in the field of disaster risk reduction are dependent on military chains of command and technocratic methods. Granted, these methods are effective in addressing large-scale disasters, however, they fail to integrate the marginalized sectors and their capacities such as local knowledge, in the decision-making process from the national level down to the local level. Thus, there are still numerous IP communities being disregarded in development plans and policymaking in terms of disasters, even if they are the ones immensely affected by disaster risks.

To investigate and substantiate this problem in a particular context, this research study analyzes the planning, policy formulation, and implementation of the local DRRM Plan of the municipality of Porac, Pampanga, where Aeta communities can be found. Gaillard's road map towards an inclusive and integrated disaster risk reduction is used as a guide and reference in producing the interview questions and in conducting a thematic analysis of the findings of the study.

A nonprobability sampling method, specifically purposive sampling, is used by the researcher for the selection of the key informants. A desk review and key informant interviews with four local government officials are conducted for the primary and secondary data collection. This research study only considers local knowledge as one of the human capacities and resources used by local communities in facing natural hazards, and does not include the other capacities which comprise of physical, natural, social, political, and economic resources. This research study does not delve into the specific local knowledge of the Aetas, but just the role of it in DRR and the DRRM Council's opinion on its integration.

The findings of the study indicate that the Aeta community is integrated in the programs and activities of the local DRRM Plan of the municipality by means of their representatives such as the Barangay Captains and the Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative, who are included in the implementation of the plan. However, the participation accorded to them is limited to the dissemination of information and knowledge coming from those at the top. Hence, the transmission of information and knowledge is one-sided and there is no mutual exchange of both scientific and local knowledge between the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council and the Aeta community. The municipality is at an early stage of integrating the Aeta community in the DRRM Plan, and for them to take it a step further, it is imperative to focus on the root causes of disasters and to enhance the existing capacities of the Aeta community.