



Community Engagement and Accountability in Action: Working with communities to enable a dignified recovery

1. Introduction

This case study outlines the learnings and experiences in engaging communities by Philippine Red Cross (PRC) during and after Super Typhoon Haima.

It highlights the development of community committees in the recovery after the disaster, called Barangay Recovery Committees (BaReCom).

2. Issue

On 19 October 2016, Super Typhoon Haima made landfall in the Philippines. The typhoon caused vast damage and destruction to homes, roads and health infrastructure, affecting more than two million people.

3. Response

The PRC engages with people affected by crisis to increase their overall resilience.

As part of the PRC's strategic objective of providing equal access of services through social inclusion and participatory approaches, community committee, called BaReCom, was developed after Super Typhoon Haima. These committees involve a cross section of community members in the recovery within the affected villages.

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) at a glance: Philippines Red Cross (PRC)

Formed in 1947, the Philippine Red Cross is a leading humanitarian organization in the country, committed to provide quality life-saving services that protect the life and dignity especially of indigent Filipinos in vulnerable situations. At present, the Philippine Red Cross provides six major services: Blood Services, Disaster Management Services, Safety Services, Health Services, Red Cross Youth, and Welfare Services.

Trusted and preferred channels of communication in Philippines include radio, newspaper, hotline, SMS, social media, help desks and printed materials. PRC utilizes these multiple channels to ensure that the affected people had access to information and can provide feedback through their preferred and trusted communication channels. Some of these include community focus groups, notice boards, social media and Barangay Recovery Committees

Cover photo: The Aeta – one of the indigenous group in the Philippines – affected community of Typhoon Haima in the province of Isabela were one of the shelter and livelihood beneficiaries of the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Through the PRC and IFRC Shelter Repair Assistance Program, the beneficiaries were able to participate in rebuilding their shelters through deciding what materials to avail. They were also informed about the Shelter 8 Key Messages on how to build safer houses. The beneficiaries were also engaged in deciding what resources they need for their livelihood. In the case of the Aeta community, they use the cash grant to avail farming tools and carabao to help them in agriculture.



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**“We are given the freedom to decide the priorities in our community.
We act as eyes and ears for the Red Cross in the community”**

— Paterno Cadacan, Barangay Recovery Committee, Province of Isabela, Philippines.”



Barangay Recovery Committee (BaReCom) assisting the Red Cross Typhoon Haima beneficiaries in the distribution of shelter materials in Barangay Camasi Tumauni, Isabela, Philippines.

PRC conducted rapid assessments after the landfall to 58 municipalities from 11 provinces affected followed by a detailed assessment to the four hardest hit provinces; Apayao, Cagayan, Isabela, and Kalinga.

Based on the results of the rapid assessment, PRC provided food and non-food items to the affected communities. Plans, activities and timelines were also developed in partnership with the community. Initial orientation and information meetings were also held with local communities to provide information on the mandate and services of the National Society, and partners, Red Cross Fundamental Principles, formation of BaReCom, beneficiary selection and validation process, and contact information of the local PRC Chapter

4. Impact: working in partnership with communities

People were at the centre of the response. Information on community selection criteria and activities, distribution

of shelter construction materials and livelihood items, were shared in the Barangay Recovery Committees. This strengthened two-way communication between communities and the Red Cross ensuring community ownership.

5. Lessons Learned/Way forward

One of the gaps that need to be addressed is how to engage the BaReCom to PRC activities after the project closure.

The practice of the PRC from its previous operations is to recruit the BaReCom as Red Cross 143 (RC 143) volunteers. RC 143 is a network of volunteers that will be trained by the PRC to prepare for disasters and respond rapidly to emergencies. Presently, there is still no existing guideline or formalities about this.

Developing a guideline about the BaReCom structure and roles will be considered by the Red Cross in their next operations.



Philippine Red Cross CEA (PRC) Officer —Maria Roxanne Nicolas— listens to people's feedback about the Red Cross Typhoon Haima shelter and livelihood programs in Isabela, Philippines.

For more information, please contact:

Philippines Red Cross

April Bulanadi

Manager, Communications

Email: aprilann.bulanadi@redcross.org.ph

Catherine Larracas

Manager, Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation,
Reporting (PMER) Office

Email: catherine.larracas@redcross.org.ph

Maria Roxanne B. Nicolas

CEA Project Officer

Email: roxanne.nicolas@redcross.org.ph

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of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Sandra Romero Ruiz

Disaster Risk Management Delegate

E-mail sandra.romero@ifrc.org

Caroline Austin

Community Engagement and Accountability

E-mail: caroline.austin@ifrc.org