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Acknowledgement

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CDP is grateful to the active involvement of different participating organizations (POs) and communities covered by the action-research project in the islands of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. The POs’ commendable effort in facilitating the conduct of focus group discussions (FGDs) and one-to-one surveys had paved the way for the development of this report. The following POs and their representatives played a significant role in realizing the objectives and endeavors of Frontline Project:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating Organization</th>
<th>Focal Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2D Project- Research Group for Alternatives to Development, Inc.</td>
<td>Ms. Kaira Zoe Alburo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buklod Tao, Inc.</td>
<td>Mr. Manuel Abinales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caritas Manila, Inc.</td>
<td>Mr. Arnel Obcemia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits, Inc.</td>
<td>Mr. Rey Tanzo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri-People Organization Against Disasters</td>
<td>Ms. Eulit Torres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UP Visayas Foundation, Inc.</td>
<td>Mr. Juhn Chris Espia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, CDP is indebted to the time and efforts devoted by 723 respondents across the Philippines whose valuable contribution made it possible to draft this report. The respondents, comprised of women, men, persons with disability, elderly, and youth, came from eight different municipalities identified as risk zones and these included the following: Tabogon, Cebu; San Mateo, Rizal; Calauan, Laguna; Guiuan, Mercedes, and Salcedo, Eastern Samar; Cotabato City, Maguindanao; and Carles, Iloilo. Without the input of these individuals, this engagement would not be possible.

Finally, CDP is thankful to the enthusiastic and hardworking Frontline Project Team composed of Ms. Jesusa Grace J. Molina, Ms. Santina Joy B. Lora, Ms. Elyse Rafaela A. Conde, Mr. Jose Mari Pineda, and Mr. Michael Vincent DC. Mercado.

LOREINE B. DELA CRUZ
Executive Director
Center for Disaster Preparedness
## Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2D</td>
<td>Research Group for Alternatives to Development Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFL</td>
<td>Actions from the Frontline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARMM</td>
<td>Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIFF</td>
<td>Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBDRRM</td>
<td>Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Climate Change Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Center for Disaster Preparedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDRRMC</td>
<td>City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRR</td>
<td>Disaster Risk Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSWD</td>
<td>Department of Social Welfare and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWEB</td>
<td>Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNDR</td>
<td>The Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HFA</td>
<td>The Hyogo Framework for Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGU</td>
<td>Local Government Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTO</td>
<td>Land Transportation Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDA</td>
<td>Mindanao Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDRRMO</td>
<td>Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDRRMC</td>
<td>National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCO</td>
<td>National Coordinating Organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NCR  National Capital Region
NEDA  National Economic Development Authority
NGO  Non-Government Organisation
NHA  National Housing Authority
NSO  National Statistics Office
OSWDS  Office of Social Welfare and Development Services
PNP  Philippine National Police
PO  Participating organization
PWD  Persons With Disability
RA 10121  Republic Act 10121
REDAS  Rapid Earthquake Damage Assessment System
TRIPOD  Tri-People’s Organization Against Disasters
UNISDR  The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
VFL  Views from the Frontline
WHO  World Health Organization
Glossary

Adaptation
The adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.

Barangay
The smallest administrative division in the Philippines and is the native Filipino term for a village, district or ward.

Capacity
The combination of all the strengths, attributes and resources available within a community, society or organization that can be used to achieve agreed goals.

Climate Change
(a) The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines climate change as: “a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use”.
(b) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defines climate change as “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods”.

Civil Society Organisation (CSO)
Non-state actors whose aims are neither to generate profits nor to seek governing power. CSOs unite to advance shared goals and interests. They have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, and are based on social, ethical, cultural, scientific, religious or philanthropic and other circumstances. CSOs include non-government organizations (NGOs), professional associations, foundations, independent research institutes, community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations, peoples organizations, social movements, and labor unions.

Disaster
A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.
Disaster Risk
The potential disaster losses, in lives, health status, livelihoods, assets and services, which could occur to a particular community or a society over some specified future time period.

Disaster Risk Management
The systematic process of using administrative directives, organizations, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of disaster.

Disaster Risk Reduction
Minimising vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development.

Early Warning System
The set of capacities needed to generate and disseminate timely and meaningful warning information to enable individuals, communities and organizations threatened by a hazard to prepare and to act appropriately and in sufficient time to reduce the possibility of harm or loss.

Emergency Management
The organization and management of resources and responsibilities for addressing all aspects of emergencies, in particular preparedness, response and initial recovery steps.

Frontline
A programme by the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) that uniquely finds out from local people what threats they face.

Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)
The Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction, responsible for the global implementation of the ‘Views from the Frontline’ project.

Hazard
A dangerous phenomenon, substance, human activity or condition that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage.

Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)
Adopted by 168 governments at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in 2005 in Hyogo, Japan, focusing on building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.
Natural Hazard
Natural process or phenomenon that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage.

Mitigation
The lessening or limitation of the adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters.

National Coordinating Organisations (NCO)
The National Coordinating Organisation is tasked with implementing the project at the country level. It is led by a Country Coordinator assisted by a supporting team.

Participating Organization (PO)
Participating organisation in the VFL project, typically one of several CSOs in a country working with an NCO.

Preparedness
The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions.

Prevention
The outright avoidance of adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters.

Public Awareness
The extent of common knowledge about disaster risks, the factors that lead to disasters and the actions that can be taken individually and collectively to reduce exposure and vulnerability to hazards.

Recovery
The restoration, and improvement where appropriate, of facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of disaster-affected communities, including efforts to reduce disaster risk factors.

Republic Act 10121 (RA 10121)
The Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010.

Resilience
The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions.
Response
The provision of emergency services and public assistance during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected.

Risk
The combination of the probability of an event and its negative consequences.

Risk Assessment
A methodology to determine the nature and extent of risk by analyzing potential hazards and evaluating existing conditions of vulnerability that together could potentially harm exposed people, property, services, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend.

Risk Management
The systematic approach and practice of managing uncertainty to minimize potential harm and loss.

Structural and Non-Structural Measures
Structural measures: Any physical construction to reduce or avoid possible impacts of hazards, or application of engineering techniques to achieve hazard-resistance and resilience in structures or systems;
Non-structural measures: Any measure not involving physical construction that uses knowledge, practice or agreement to reduce risks and impacts, in particular through policies and laws, public awareness raising, training and education.

Sustainable Development
Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Views From the Frontline (VFL)
A participatory monitoring process conducted biennially by GNDR

Vulnerability
The characteristics and circumstances of a community, system or asset that make it susceptible to the damaging effects of a hazard.

Reference:
I. Executive Summary
I. Executive Summary

Primarily, the Frontline program was launched by the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) to capture the perceived threats, consequences, barriers, and proposed actions of various communities at the forefront of disasters. This is not only parallel to GNDR’s vision of improving the lives of disaster-affected populations, but also helps to empower them by letting their voices be heard on a more inclusive, global scale. To encapsulate these vital information, GNDR’s member organizations at the local level conducted participatory focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), and detailed surveys with the selected ‘risk zones’ at the fore of natural and human-induced hazards.

In the Philippines, the Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP) has piloted various studies under the Frontline program namely, Views from the Frontline in 2009, 2011, and 2013; Actions at the Frontline in 2014; and its ongoing action research titled Frontline in 2015. In partnership with local partner organizations, CDP engaged a total of eight (8) municipalities in six (6) major ‘risk zones’ in the country. Principally, these chosen risk zones cover the diverse physical, geographical, and socio-economic aspects of the country which influence the existence of the apparent threats in these areas. Fundamentally, these crucial information form part of the shared voice that will drive action to alleviate risk and build the resilience of the most vulnerable sectors.

Essentially, the participatory survey drew out substantial results and findings that echoed the paucity and vulnerability of communities at the grassroots level. Among the most prominent threats in both rural and urban settings include hazards such as floods, typhoons, earthquakes, unemployment, drug abuse, and poverty. A plethora of causal factors attribute to the prevalence of the aforesaid threats which mainly include dire socio-economic conditions, people’s unscrupulous values and practices, and other natural processes. However, blatant scarcity and joblessness remain as perennial and interlinking threats that confront the Filipinos on a daily basis, significantly affecting their standard of living albeit their seeming normalcy. Indeed, these hazards threaten Filipino communities every day, with their socio-economic status gravely exacerbated by disasters that have struck their homes in past years.
In quintessence, the *Frontline* program has not only helped to elicit the most glaring issues in the Philippine locale, but has also contributed toward the awareness and empowerment of the people in reducing their own risks and formulating actions that can appease, or possibly eliminate, these seemingly ubiquitous threats. Overall, this program has pioneered a groundbreaking approach in disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) by closely engaging the communities at the *Frontline*, providing an avenue for the most vulnerable sectors to voice out their problems and the solutions that they deem most appropriate to address the latter.

Running the gamut of natural to human-induced threats, the urgency of the multiple underlying dangers that exist in the country reveal that there is a pressing need for the communities at the foreground to be empowered to govern themselves toward resilience and development. Above all, there is an apparent necessity for the government to put the safety and welfare of the *barangays* (villages) at the core of all its governance strategies and actions. Essentially, it is in realizing that DRRM is a developmental agenda that relevant stakeholders and duty-bearers can begin to attain the resilience and sustainability that can spark transformative change.
II. Introduction
II. Introduction

The Philippines has chronically been highlighted as a disaster-prone country, having endured countless storms and typhoons in past years. Primarily situated along the Pacific Ring of Fire\(^1\), an average of 20 storms hit the country every year, laying waste to numerous livelihoods, infrastructures, and households. Ultimately, the archipelago is at the forefront of disasters as it braves both colossal and conventional disasters that impact not only their means of survival, but also their way of life.

With a poverty incidence rate of approximately 20 percent\(^2\), most Filipino households are indeed at the *Frontline* of disasters. It is undeniable that most Filipino families are not only exposed to natural hazards but also experience profound susceptibilities that significantly affect their standard of living. As both exposure and vulnerability are amplified, *barangays* (villages) at the grassroots are subjected to greater disaster risk, which they learn to weather through their extensive local knowledge. Due to their typical exposure to disasters, they gain deep knowledge on the common hazards they face, their environment, local capacities, socio-economic milieu, and political context.

Communities at the *Frontline* are thus more adept at braving various disasters, may they be large or small-scale. Albeit their moniker, small-scale disasters or 'everyday disasters' are actually threats that instigate larger disasters in the long term, generally obscured into normalcy as families continue to be entrenched in the same problems over time. As is the case in the Philippines, more and more households are made to cope with these ‘everyday disasters’, which they manage to do with their local knowledge on the threats they are normally confronted with, along with their damaging effects, while determining the actions necessary to address them and the underlying impediments that can hamper it.

Essentially, this knowledge and understanding is the authentic basis of action at all levels of government and society - the foundation of transformative change that emanates from the ground. This fundamental knowledge serves as the true catalyst that can spark development, encompassing the real issues that beleaguer the populace. Sadly, the people at the grassroots level are often the most marginalized sectors in the country, deemed simply as mere constituencies that help to propel prominent elites and bureaucrats to power.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) The "Ring of Fire" (map) is an arc stretching from New Zealand, along the eastern edge of Asia, north across the Aleutian Islands of Alaska, and south along the coast of North and South America. The Ring of Fire is composed over 75% of the world's active and dormant volcanoes.\(^*\) (Source: http://geography.about.com/cs/earthquakes/a/ringoffire.htm)


Realizing that these sectors normally bear the brunt of diverse 'everyday' threats in a society that continuously disregards them, the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) launched the research study dubbed *Views from the Frontline* in 2009, 2011, and 2013; further conducting two (2) relevant research initiatives titled *Actions at the Frontline* in 2014 and *Frontline* in 2015 in an attempt to capture the pertinent views and perceptions of those at the forefront of disasters.

On the whole, GNDR has brilliantly implemented these research studies by partnering with local organizations in the chosen countries. In the Philippines, CDP was selected to facilitate all the aforesaid studies, engaging other local organizations that represent the sectors at the *Frontline*. Last year, CDP sought the assistance of six (6) partner organizations that have directly partnered with disaster-affected communities in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao to muster the quintessential threats, consequences, actions, and barriers that they experience at the *Frontline* of disasters.Outlined below are the specific partner organizations, localities, risk zones, and number of respondents that were involved in the *Frontline* action research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating Organization</th>
<th>Covered Areas</th>
<th>Type of Community</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buklod Tao</td>
<td><strong>Province</strong>: Rizal <strong>Municipality</strong>: San Mateo <strong>Barangays</strong>: - Banaba - Ampid 1 - Ampid 2 - Sto. Nino</td>
<td>Peri-urban (Informal Settlements)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caritas Manila</td>
<td><strong>Province</strong>: Laguna <strong>Municipality</strong>: Calauan <strong>Barangays</strong>: - Lamot - Lamot II - Santo Tomas - Southville 7 NHA Resettlement Site</td>
<td>Rural (Lowland)</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2D Project</td>
<td><strong>Province</strong>: Cebu <strong>Municipality</strong>: Tabogon <strong>Barangays</strong>: - Caduawan - Ilihan</td>
<td>Rural (Upland)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Province:</th>
<th>Municipality:</th>
<th>Barangays:</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Barangays:</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Barangays:</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UP Visayas</td>
<td>Iloilo</td>
<td>Carles</td>
<td>• Asluman&lt;br&gt; • Gabi&lt;br&gt; • Granada&lt;br&gt; • Lantangan</td>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>• Timala&lt;br&gt; • Banahao&lt;br&gt; • Buyayawon&lt;br&gt; • Iberan</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>• Bagua 2&lt;br&gt; • Mother Barangay&lt;br&gt; • Notre Dame Village&lt;br&gt; • Poblacion 1</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWEB</td>
<td>Eastern Samar</td>
<td>Guiuan, Mercedes, Salcedo</td>
<td>• Timala&lt;br&gt; • Banahao&lt;br&gt; • Buyayawon&lt;br&gt; • Iberan</td>
<td>Coastal</td>
<td>• Timala&lt;br&gt; • Banahao&lt;br&gt; • Buyayawon&lt;br&gt; • Iberan</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>• Bagua 2&lt;br&gt; • Mother Barangay&lt;br&gt; • Notre Dame Village&lt;br&gt; • Poblacion 1</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIPOD</td>
<td>Maguindanao</td>
<td>Cotabato</td>
<td>• Bagua 2&lt;br&gt; • Mother Barangay&lt;br&gt; • Poblacion 1&lt;br&gt; • Notre Dame Village&lt;br&gt; • Poblacion 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Bagua 2&lt;br&gt; • Mother Barangay&lt;br&gt; • Notre Dame Village&lt;br&gt; • Poblacion 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Bagua 2&lt;br&gt; • Mother Barangay&lt;br&gt; • Notre Dame Village&lt;br&gt; • Poblacion 1</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primarily dedicated to enhancing the lives of people affected by disasters, GNDR alongside CDP and its partner organizations fervently take on the challenge of empowering the civil society by letting their voices be heard not only locally, but also globally through the *Frontline* program. Using their collective voice, the communities at the forefront can stimulate transformative actions that add to the resilience of the most vulnerable sectors in society. It is through the conduct of the *Frontline* program that GNDR has not only managed to launch a groundbreaking study, but has also established a platform that can effectively communicate the threats that afflict those at the forefront and link them to a broader global scale, building on the foundations for a resilient and sustainable tomorrow.
III. Background & Approach
III. Project Background and Approach

Background

Since 2009, CDP has been implementing the Views from the Frontline (VFL) in the Philippines biennially, in partnership with civil society organizations, people’s organizations, and local government units all over the country. For the longest time, the VFL program has allowed CDP to draw out issues on the local implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), the then global roadmap for DRRM agenda. Furthermore, the program also paved the way for the country to identify the gaps in the provisions of its Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 (Republic Act 10121), and its execution in the communities by the local government.

However, the implementation of the same program has been reformed beginning 2014. For one, it was entitled Action at the Frontline for it seeks not only to elicit point-of-views, but to strengthen local relevance and local action as well. This was after members and evidences from the review of VFL 2013 have pointed out that there is a need to contribute to successful national policy implementation as well. To do this, members are not only tasked to look at the views of the frontliners in DRRM implementation, but also to support local actions, to understand risks of communities (including “everyday risks”) and how social-economic groups treat and confront these risks, and finally, to empower locals and local governments to act on their own, by building on their capacities and knowledge. Come 2015, the program has embraced an action-research approach which prompted the birth of Frontline.

Frontline identifies risks, its magnitude, impact, and frequency through local risk profiling done in qualitative surveys. The survey is simple and is designed to support local action and learning by allowing people in the community to describe their realities in their own terms. It looks at the point-of-views of different stakeholders regardless of age, gender, and ethnical background. Specifically, the Frontline action research project aims to:

- To profile, in a participatory way, the local realities impacted by disasters large and small: particularly multi-hazard, small scale, recurrent “everyday” disasters;
- To strengthen community and civil society’s resilience through learning and action;
- To contribute towards developing a more integrated multi-sectoral, multi-hazard approach to disaster risk reduction/management; and
- To influence local, national and international actors in support of the above.
Approach

The Frontline action research project intends for the civil society organizations and local communities to learn and share with each other, and to work together on strengthening local capacity and leadership to build resilience. It also aims to create that space where they could inform and influence local, national, and global institutions on policies, and practices that affect stakeholder’s resilience, security, well-being and dignity.

Instead of large-scale random sampling, Frontline has selected key communities, representative of the country’s context from which meaningful information could be gathered. As the National Coordinating Organization (NCO) for the Philippines, CDP led the conduct of the undertaking. It played a vital role in determining key areas of varying milieu or risks - coastal, urban, informal settlers, agricultural communities, and conflict prone. Furthermore, CDP considered working with organizations across the Philippines to which it has strong partnership with. These organizations were tapped as participating organizations (POs) which did significant work on the ground.

The POs mainly acted as enumerators and facilitators for the data gathering and they were trained by CDP to conduct local risk profiling and handle communities in action and learning. As the NCO, CDP takes care of the organization, collection of data, writing of the baseline study, and production of reports.

There were three stages in the survey process. The initial stage involved focus group discussions in each of the risk zones, with at least 8 participants in each group representing various sectors such as women, youth, the elderly, and other key respondents. This focus group went through a risk profiling exercise to generate a list of locally appropriate responses for coding and collation by the GNDR global hub. These codes were to be utilized in the next stage of the process.

The second stage entailed the conduct of one-on-one surveys where the respondents were 15-30 individuals from each area, which included village government officials and community representatives divided in different age groups, and with representative from both genders as seen below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group/Sector</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Young person, 10-17 years old</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Young person, 10-17 years old</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Young adult, 18-25 years old</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Young adult, 18-25 years old</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age Group/Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Adult, 26-60 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Adult, 26-60 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Older adult, 61+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Older adult, 61+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Persons with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Persons with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Indigenous Groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third stage involved focus group discussions where the understanding of the views of the community based on the one-on-one stage were enriched and validated. It is important to discuss the results of the individual surveys to bring the varying perspectives and understand diverse contexts. The individual surveys at the community level formed the basis of the focus group discussions, planning, and action.

The approach adopted in the Frontline endeavor attempt to shift the attention from projects implemented by organizations external to the community to a more transformative actions undertaken by local leadership and capacity-building. The earlier VFL surveys incorporate an external, often technical, and expert-defined view of risks. Hence, the respondents find the surveys with little relevance in their day-to-day living. Frontline utilizes risk profiling which are largely based on conversations that start with the question, “what are the threats you face in leading your life?”

The detailed steps on how the tools were utilized in the process are presented below:

**Initial Focus Group Discussion for Coding**

The initial focus group discussion facilitated a preliminary risk profiling exercise to gather responses from the communities which would serve as the basis for the codes that would be used on a global scale on the one-to-one surveys.

It was ensured that the focus groups would generate responses to the risk matrix that are representative of the communities views to guarantee that their voices are heard, with representation from those belonging from the vulnerable sectors.
**One-to-One Surveys**

Respondents are asked what threats they encounter individually, as member of their households, and as member of their community. The answers could range from disasters brought about by natural hazards affecting them perennially, to accidents, or even small-scale disruptions that create shocks and stresses such as unemployment, domestic violence, and food shortage. They are made to select which among their answers are the top five priority threats. The threats are then ranked by the respondents in the order of priority. This means the top priority is ranked 1.

With the threats already ranked, the respondents are then asked the challenges they face or three consequences or impacts of said threats to them as an individual, as a household, and as a community. For each impact identified by the respondent, an appropriate action should be provided too; or what they, their household, and their community can do to reduce the threat. Finally, the barriers that could potentially hinder them from taking action to reduce the threat should be established.

Effectively, this new format records people's own unique experience of risks - the threats (hazards), its consequences or impacts (losses and harm), actions that could be taken to address such threats, and the barriers or underlying causes that are out of their control but are perceived as impediments in taking action towards a solution.

**Focus Group Discussion for Validation**

Through a focus group discussion, information collated from the one-to-one surveys are represented in simple maps and tables to stimulate further dialogues in the community on how they view each threat, impact, action, and barrier. The first of the maps is the Prioritizing Impacts Map where the impacts are listed (the same or similar impacts are treated as the same), number of occurrence of impacts is tallied, and how the respondents ranked each impact are scored. This will provide the participants an opportunity to identify which impacts are of highest priority to the community.

Another helpful matrix is the Local Actions Map which is basically a bar chart showing how many times an action was referred to by the respondents. The local actions map is designed to encourage discussion about the options available to the community to take action on the impacts they have identified.

Similar to the local actions map, the Barrier to Actions Map is also a bar chart showing how many times the barrier was mentioned.
The maps and tables will show what threats people regard as their highest priorities by presenting the grouped and ranked threats, what the impacts are, what options for action have been highlighted, and what barriers to action have been mentioned.

Specifically, the focus group discussion is guided by the following questions:

- Does it reflect their own priorities and their own view of the options for action? Do they agree with the barriers to action that have been highlighted?
- If they have a different view, what is it? How would they rank the different impacts, actions and barriers?
- Why are there different views about this? Discuss the concerns of different stakeholders.
- What is the consensus view of impacts, options for action, and the barriers to action that are faced?
- As a result of this discussion what new actions might the community consider?
- As a result of this discussion what messages might the community want to send, and to who, about the barriers to action that they face?

The survey data are then given to the local groups so that they may have informed decisions especially when it comes to their action planning and implementation. Partnering and communicating the program’s relevance with household associations, people’s organization, and other local groups are given special attention to strengthen local engagement. In the national level, the survey data may be used to identify underlying causes which could serve as basis for joint advocacy and planning to build and strengthen national coalitions to action. In the global level, Frontline aggregates the risk profiling data and combines this with case study experience from the Action at the Frontline program forming part of VFL2015, in order to present strong evidence regarding the impact of everyday risks, the multi-risk environment, the impact of underlying causes, and the poverty dimension of risks.
IV. Analysis & Findings

- Tabogon, Cebu
- San Mateo, Rizal
- Calauan, Laguna
- Guiuan, Mercedes, and Salcedo, Eastern Samar
- Carles, Iloilo
- Cotabato City
San Mateo, Rizal
Area: San Mateo, Rizal

Community Information

San Mateo is a first class municipality in the province of Rizal in CALABARZON (Region 4-A), part of the Luzon group of Islands, Philippines. Located advantageously adjacent to the National Capital Region, San Mateo rapidly became the fastest growing Rizal municipality adjacent to the Greater Manila Area with a population of 205,255 inhabitants, or 8.26 % of the provincial population (NSO).

The municipality lies in the Marikina Valley, bounded by mountain ranges of Sierra Madre, Quezon Province in the east, Laguna in the southwest, Bulacan in the north and Metro Manila in the west-northwest portion while Nangka River runs through the south. Being known for its spacious and hilly terrain, the municipality now boasts of hosting land development firms, residential realties, and industrial centers. Many establishments are now thriving in the area - fast-food chains, schools, business and commercial establishments. It is divided into 15 barangays, four of which participated in the conduct of one-to-one surveys and focus group discussions under this action-research initiative. The participating barangays in the research are as follows:

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<th>Municipality</th>
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<td>San Mateo</td>
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<td>• Banaba</td>
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Due to massive urban sprawl and population expansion, San Mateo quickly embraced a peri-urban status in early 2010s. In fact, the pouring of several key industries comparable to the establishment of the country’s largest mall developer SM Prime holdings in the area is manifestation of its rapidly changing socio-economic landscape. Though massive development is taking place, its sufficient spacious parks, tree-lined streets and vast green scenery convey its rural vitality.

Despite having a first class municipality status, the utmost population remained in urban slum or informal communities due to far-reaching socio-economic limitations in the region. With high incidence of flooding, soil erosion and urban fire, coupled with inadequate programs on poverty reduction, housing program, and crime prevention are the respondents’ top clamors pigeonholing San Mateo as informal communities. In the first eight months of 2015, the provincial police listed an average of 23.89% crime rate classifying San Mateo as one of the municipalities with the highest level of crime rate in Rizal province (Rizal PNP).
The respondents covered by this study have regarded their community to be of high risk. One immense factor is the lopsided topography of the municipality making it highly susceptible to extreme flooding. During heavy downpour, the municipality serves as a catch basin for floodwater causing massive destruction of communities along with their livelihood and facilities. In the respondents’ recent flood encounter, they have described the frequent coming of floodwater with strong current even when there is no precipitation over the area – associating that precipitation is present in nearby areas of Rizal. In September 2009, 80% of San Mateo was submerged in muddy water brought by Typhoon Ondoy paralyzing the whole community for weeks.
One-half of the respondents (51%) feel that they are equal in socio-economic status compared with others in their municipality while one-third of the respondents (34%) feel worse off. San Mateo being the fastest growing municipalities in the Rizal Province, according to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) and the Provincial Government of Rizal, is considered a suitable dwelling place for many working in the Greater Manila Area. Several industrial establishments found in the vicinity can be classified as light to medium industries. Welding shop, car repair, motor pool, rubber factory are among predominant industries, while agribusiness such as poultry and piggery do exist as small-medium businesses in the municipality.
Respondent Information

Gender

Based on the 2010 Census of Population, San Mateo has a total population of 205,255. In this study, most of the respondents (56%) are women while the remaining (44%) are men.

Age

Respondents who have the most substantial figure are adults, comprising 48%, aged 26-60. While 19% is young adults aged 18-25 followed by the elderly (more than 60 years old) at 18%. A significant number of the population, 11% and 4%, are composed of the youth and the children respectively. The varied results in the age bracket prove that this study tends to be impartial to different age representations.
None of the respondents from the community (San Mateo) registered that they are from an ethnic group. Originally, the province is inhabited mostly by Tagalogs. Other ethnic groups include Visayans, Ilocanos, and other local groups.

Most of the respondents (94%) registered having no disability, while 6% of the respondents categorized themselves into persons with disability. The consideration of this study to vulnerable groups is of utmost importance as their sharing of experiences with disasters is highly valued.
Impacts and Perceptions

What has happened in your community with relation to losses and damage since 2005?

Over the last decade, it is worth noticing that majority or 42 of the respondents found small reduction in losses and damage. They belong to the young adult group that can be attributed to the working class, which has a higher coping capacity.

Twenty-five respondents however believe some increase in losses. San Mateo was one of the hardest hit areas when both Typhoon Ondoy (2009) and Pedring (2011) dumped heavy rains in Luzon including Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Moreover, fourteen respondents felt that there was no change in the community relative to losses and damage since 2005, while five respondents believed that there was a significant reduction in losses, and one respondent thought that there was a substantial increase in losses.
What type of risk most affects you?

To eighty-one percent of respondents, small-scale threats affect them more than large-scale threats. These small-scale local threats include crime, poverty, and unemployment experienced by community members on a daily basis. These threats could be attributed to the rising urbanization of the community without good governance and lack of opportunities.

Alternatively, nineteen percent of the respondents feel that it is large-scale threats that greatly affect them more than small-scale local threats. These include the flooding and major typhoons that have devastated the community in the past decade.
**Threats, Consequences, Actions, Barriers**

**Top 5 Threats**

Flooding caps as the prime threat among 72 respondents. Distinctly, most of the barangays covered by the study—Banaba, Ampid 1, Ampid 2, Sto. Nino—are low-lying communities where waist-deep floodwater repeatedly subsided the residents’ houses, affecting more than 1,000 families. The onslaught of Typhoon Ondoy (2009) and Typhoon Pedring (2011) remain striking. Eighty percent of the whole San Mateo was shattered and lifeline services were paralyzed.

Apart from disasters induced by nature, poverty upheld as a secondary threat next to flooding, as registered by 57 respondents. Poverty, identified as a major threat, can be commonly attributed to displacement, lack of education, and land loss, hindering the communities’ coping skills, making the impact of natural hazards more enduring.

Drug abuse was found to be a major threat, instigating other crimes such as rape, child-abuse, robbery, and murder. Forty-two respondents believed in the rampant illegal drug deal in the area as a consequence to the rising crime.

Disease was mentioned to be the fourth priority among the threats. This was linked to different barriers such as the increasing number of the elderly, distant access to health facilities and a limited government support. According to them, they have lost their confidence in the health care system. Emergency patients had to be transported to the metro because of deficiency in immediate health care providers.
The rising of crime, an average of 23.89% in the first half of 2014, is considered as the top consequence (35 respondents) of increasing poverty incidence experienced by the community. The exponential growth in the population who do not have decent jobs due to lack of formal education is of major reason to the peoples’ wrongdoings. If this persists without appropriate solutions, the community will remain at risk to threats and this might impede favorable growth in the area.

Relative to the abovementioned consequence, 35 of the respondents find insecurity as next to rising crime. By such, other residents expressed low level of self-esteem due to lack of education and skills, incompetent governance, corruption and deprived tenancy. It is worth noting that most respondents who have answered falls under ages 26-60, belonging to the working sector.

Most respondents (N=14) relate the increasing diseases and health effects in urban areas to the rising incidence of communicable diseases. Dengue Fever and leptospirosis among children and the elderly were the main cause of hospital admissions. In year 2010 alone, San Mateo was considered to have the seventh highest mortality rate in Rizal reaching 697 deaths (PSA, 2010).

As the urban sprawl of rapid urbanization expands outwards and upwards, land loss came to be fourth top consequence among fourteen respondents. A significant number of respondents expressed worry about the rapid land conversion from arable to commercial use that is currently taking place. The proposed Southeast Metro Manila Expressway (C6) Project aims to ease traffic by building road network from Taguig City to Batasan Complex however displacing a significant number of the population.
The sudden events that caused widespread destruction brought by both natural forces and acts of man, Loss of life marked the fifth consequence among 9 respondents. According to them, as threats increase, life gets harder thus causing despair to the community. Whenever there is an inundation of flood, residents have to be evacuated. It is a vicious cycle and residents are already more than tired.

**Top 5 Actions**

![Bar Chart]

Having identified the threats, several actions were considered. Most of the respondents (51) believe that reliance to local government is insufficient, thus seeking external support could be their response to the problems at hand. Consequently, the presence of several non-governmental organized groups brought programs in their community such as livelihood, education, health and sanitation, boosting their competence. In Banaba alone, they have identified more than fifty organizations of frequent help especially in times of disasters. These are: Caritas, Cares Inc, Christian Aid and CDP, together with some people’s organization and local groups such as SAMAKABA, Felicidad Homeowners Association, North Libis Dulo Neighborhood Association, Buklod Tao, Buklod ng Kabataan, Senior citizen and Parent Teachers Association (PTA). These organizations are readily accessible to the members of the community.

Relative to seeking external support, people also consider strict law enforcement as secondary top action. The rampant incidents of robbery, drug addiction, and child exploitation have noted to have a sizeable contribution at the municipal crime rate. Though police efforts have been doubled, the lack of community participation in reporting crime should also be reinforced.
Having been exposed to several hazards in the past, the residents find disaster preparedness (32 respondents) as a third apt action. These include trainings on life support, livelihood, early warning system and simulation exercises. Over the years, there had been community-driven initiatives banking on the importance of disaster preparedness in saving the communities livelihood and properties. Agribusiness such as poultry and root cropping are still the community’s leading source of income. They have regarded disaster preparedness to be of great instrument in securing their resources every time they experience flooding that cause destructions of crops and losses of poultry animals. As of 2013, the community registered thirty-five families with piggery, 230 households with sari-sari store and 40 room for rent businesses. That is why it is not anymore surprising to find 30 respondents who believe that advancement should be initiated to restore the current livelihood in the community.

Health promotion is being suggested as the fifth action by 23 respondents. According to them, health advancement, primarily in the local authorities, would improve health services in the area. Moreover, the establishment of more community health centers, the increase of healthcare providers and providing enough medicines would greatly improve their wellbeing.
Limited government support found to be the foremost barrier for a large number of respondents (45). This can be attributed to the lack/insufficient people’s access to government’s basic services. Respondents aspire for more transparent governance with extensive proliferation of services such as livelihood, job opportunity, free education and skills training and health care assistance that will greatly improve peoples’ lives. Though limited government support seems to be broad, this was further reinforced with the interlaced relation of the next barriers such as lack of education (39 respondents), corruption (26 respondents); weak law enforcement (26); absence of legislation (22).

The community sought greater reliance from those who handle public office when it comes to facilitating progress in the municipality. They found government initiatives as influential agents in helping their present conditions through the provision of opportunities for better living. Still, the people cannot deny the fact that the government plays a pivotal role in significantly changing peoples’ conditions with greater capacity and power that might become barriers if misused.

On the other hand, it was noted by some of the respondents that sole dependency in the government must not be one-way. They have noticed the poor people’s participation in government initiatives as well as moral degradation and lack of self-control and perseverance as aspects to factor in on the peoples’ end. With sufficient government support, people at the forefront of disasters are very much capable of increasing their resilience against potential threats and natural hazards.
Calauan, Laguna
Area: Calauan, Laguna

Community Information

Calauan is a second-class municipality in the province of Laguna, Region 4-A, Philippines with a population of 74,890 people (National Statistics Office, 2010). Calauan is politically subdivided into 18 barangays, and four of these have been chosen to participate in this action research’s focus group discussions and one-to-one survey, and these are the following:

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<td>• Southville 7 NHA Resettlement Site</td>
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Calauan, Laguna is a rural area wherein the primary livelihood is agriculture. It is located at the bottom of three interconnecting mountains, Mount Banahaw, Mount Tamlong, and Imok hill (Moya, 2013). It used to be a settlement of farmers; however, a few years back, it was selected as the resettlement site of informal settlers from Metro Manila who were situated in riverbanks. These residents were at risk of flooding due to their risky living conditions, and this was especially highlighted during the onslaught of Typhoon Ondoy. These previous informal settlers have migrated to the Southville 7 NHA Resettlement site, one of the communities that is part of this action research. In addition, the site has also been welcome to survivors of Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan). Originally in 2007, the population of Calauan was 54,248; when the relocation took place, the population expanded to 74,890 (Ager, 2015).
The risk zone that has been identified for the municipality of Calauan, Laguna is lowland, or an area of land that is of a lower elevation in relation to surrounding areas. Because of its positioning, the area has been at risk of flooding.
Respondents revealed that the risk level for the municipality of Calauan, Laguna is medium. While the area is prone to typhoons and flooding, it is not at the same level as other more disaster-prone areas. In a way, due to its status as a resettlement site, it is supposedly in a much better condition than the areas from which the resettlers migrated, although admittedly still at risk of other major threats and concerns. In a study by Searca and the University of the Philippines Los Banos which covered the Calauan municipality, it was found that while “[T]he province of Laguna has relatively low exposure to threats of climate change ... its capacity to adapt to typhoons and floods has been found ‘woefully lacking’” (Galvez, 2013).
Three-quarters of respondents (75%) of the respondents feel that they are equal in socio-economic status compared with others in their municipality. Most of the residents are relocates from different locations in Manila, Makati, Pasay, Pasig and other waterways around Metro Manila. In this way, they may have developed the same experiences in the area; for instance, the massive unemployment due to inattention of the government to address concerns within the municipality, such that community members have to travel to the Metro to earn their livelihood.
There were almost an equal number of male and female respondents, with the former garnering 49%, and the latter having 48% of the amount of respondents. This equal gender split is ideal for garnering the unique perspective and concerns held by both genders.

More than half of the respondents are comprised of adults aged 26-60 years old. This was followed by those aged 18-25 years old with seventeen percent, and those over 60 years old with thirteen percent. There were only a few children respondents, with 12-17 year olds and those lower than 11 years old garnering six percent respectively. The dispersion of respondents from different age groups is deliberate in that it ensures the participation of people from various developmental age groups as each group has its own vulnerabilities, capacities, and needs that need to be addressed.
As mentioned, many residents of Calauan have come from relocation sites from Metro Manila, and thus, many of the respondents originate from urban settings. Still, the participation of a member from an ethnic group highlights the importance of the involvement of vulnerable sectors to share their perceptions regarding the risks and threats within their communities.

Three percent (3%) mentioned that they have disabilities. Persons with disabilities usually experience a disproportionate amount of effects during times of disasters. Thus, serving as respondents in such action research gives them the opportunity to broadcast their concerns regarding their vulnerabilities and capacities.
Impacts and Perceptions

What has happened in your community with relation to losses and damage since 2005?

Fifty-five respondents (N=55) stated that in relation to losses and damage since 2005, they have experienced a small reduction in losses. This may be attributed to residents’ efforts to further adjust and integrate within their communities. In addition, they may possibly be comparing their experiences in the resettlement area to their previous high-risk informal settlements. Moreover, national government and non-government organizations have extended aid and support to the resettlement areas.

Other respondents, however, noted that their losses have increased, with 42 respondents stating that they have some increases in losses, and 35 registering substantial increases in losses. Indeed, there is still a host of concerns to tackle within the relocation sites; flooding is still prevalent, and risks such as unemployment and electricity shortage have served as additional burdens. Furthermore, the residents as previous urban dwellers may have had difficulty adapting to their environment which is mostly rural and agricultural; beyond that, as Moya (2013) has stated in an examination of the conditions of the resettlement sites, “Migration from the urban to the rural is not just a matter of adaptation, but of survival.”
What type of risk most affects you?

Eleven percent of respondents conveyed that what affects them most are large-scale local threats, and these are indeed reflected in the priority threats that have arisen through the threat analysis as large-scale natural hazards were pointed out to be potent concerns for the communities.

However, more than three quarters of the respondents (77%) stated that it is small-scale threats that most affect them. This may represent so-called “everyday risks” that besiege community residents on daily bases. Belonging to these types of risks are some concerns that the respondents have raised such as unemployment, drug addiction, crime, sexual violence, alcoholism, and electricity shortage among others.
Threats, Consequences, Actions, and Barriers

Top 5 Threats

As can be observed, the top priority threats for the four respondent communities in Calauan are all natural hazards: typhoons, floods, earthquakes, landslides, and fire.

Typhoon is the foremost threat as perceived by the respondents. In the past decade, the communities have experienced some of the strongest typhoons in the country including Typhoon Senyang in 2006, Typhoon Frank in 2008, Typhoon Yolanda in 2013, and Typhoon Glenda in 2014. These typhoons have heavily burdened the communities as these disasters have destroyed homes, agricultural fields, and public structures, thereby causing the loss of assets, livelihoods, and lives.

As a result of strong typhoons as well as the low-lying location of Calauan, flooding is another top threat to the respondent communities. According to the respondents, every time there is a thunderstorm or heavy downpour, flooding always occurs, although the water usually easily subsides. It is concerning that these resettlement areas were provided for safe occupation of the residents away from their previous dwellings in high-risk areas; however, they are once again at risk of inundation.
Earthquakes also emerged as one of the top priority threats in the Calauan respondent communities. However, in the focus group discussions it surfaced that while the possibility of an earthquake may happen, the participants felt that the threat may not majorly affect the community residents because of the structure of their houses—single detached type of housing—and the lack of high rise buildings in the area. According to the participants of the focus group discussion, electrical posts and overhead tanks may be the only structures that will be affected during such incidents. However, they also noted that while infrastructure destruction may not have major effects, the occurrence of earthquakes may also cause loss of natural resources and social order interruption.

Due to the mountainous location of the area, the communities in Calauan are also at risk of landslides. In 2006, Typhoon Milenyo caused landslides in the province, leaving two casualties from a family in Calauan whose house was completely covered by rocks and mud from the mountains (Ozaeta and Cantos, 2006).

Fire was also raised as a priority threat within the communities, although no major fire events have been reported, the residents may be exposed to fire hazards. Due to the lack of electricity in some areas, the residents use such materials as kerosene, candles, and firewood to generate light (Asian Development Bank, 2016). This practice endangers them to the risk of fire incidents.
Building destruction was found to be the foremost consequence of the given threats. This was especially highlighted during Typhoon Glenda in 2014, as NHA found that “the typhoon completely damaged 339 units where the roof and walls had completely collapsed. Partially damaged units totaled 1,203 – galvanized iron sheets were torn off, fire walls collapsed, some needed vulcaseals to patch holes on their roof” (Lowe, 2014). Because of this, residents have stated that their previous dwellings were in a much safer state than the houses provided to them in the resettlement sites (Takumi, 2014).

In addition to building and infrastructure destruction, the occurrence of natural hazards also results in the loss of residents’ assets and property. For instance, during Typhoon Glenda, resettlement homes in Site 3 in Calauan collapsed, damaging furniture, materials, and other valuable assets of the residents. As a consequence, they had to scavenge for their belongings (Takumi, 2014).

The natural hazards that the communities experience also bring about disease and health effects, and this may be due to several reasons. For one, typhoons and flooding bring about water-borne and vector-borne diseases unfortunately afflicting community residents. For another, due to the status of the communities as resettlement areas, it has been reported that there has been a lack of potable water, thereby bringing harmful effects on the health of
residents and affecting the hygiene and sanitation within the communities (ADB, 2016). In addition, in a study done by Searca (Mendoza, 2014), Barangay Dayap was found to be low in terms of flooding, but still showed high overall vulnerability. It was discovered that the latter was due to the barangay having a high malnutrition rate as well as “low adaptive capacity as a result of low scores on technological, social, and human indicators” (Mendoza, 2014).

As a consequence of the numerous natural hazards within the respondents’ midst, the communities experience environmental damage. Typhoons, for instance, destroy plants and cause trees to be uprooted. Flooding events also cause wastes to be scattered, clogging waterways. Moreover, the occurrence of earthquake and fire leave debris, polluting the environment; likewise, fires affect air quality which may have significant impacts on health.

Aside from environmental damage, crop damage is also the result of the destruction caused by natural hazards. Since Calauan’s, main source of livelihood is agriculture, crop damage leaves residents with a heavy blow. According to respondents due to unplanned and unexpected numbers of relocatees in the area, the food production or supplies cannot sustain the needs of the people. Crop damage aggravates this condition further, possibly causing food insecurity to the communities.
Respondents have identified disaster risk reduction and management-related activities—disaster preparedness and awareness raising on disaster risk reduction—as some of the primary actions to address the threats that beleaguer their communities. Several initiatives have already been initiated by community leaders of Southville 7 in Barangay Dayap as they have participated in trainings conducted by the Climate Change Commission (CCC) regarding Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction (Climate Change Commission, 2015). Likewise, several partnerships have been forged with non-government organizations, for instance, the project JuaNation held in Bayanijuan, Southville 7, Calauan aspired to empower community members, particularly the youth, through education and trainings on disaster risk reduction activities (ABSCBN Foundation, 2013).

In conjunction with the abovementioned DRR actions, respondents also believe in the importance of cleaning the environment to address environmental damage concerns. For example, in the aftermath of Typhoon Glenda, the residents already had the initiative to clean their surroundings as well as repair their dwellings (Baraoidan, 2014).

Since agriculture is one of the main industries of Calauan, and the agricultural field has been found to be one of the most vulnerable sectors when it comes to disasters, agriculture rehabilitation has been suggested as a significant movement towards addressing the pressing concerns of the communities. Indeed, communities must preserve their crops and products, and be able to tend to their poultry and livestock in the aftermath of disasters to be able to ensure food security and maintain their livelihoods.

Other actions suggested by the respondents were towards addressing socially driven threats such as drug addiction and crimes. To combat these, they suggest the conduct of values formation activities, including counseling and socialization strategies.
The barriers to the actions specified by the respondents are mostly regarding deficiencies in certain community aspects: logistics, resources, and education.

Actions towards achieving disaster preparedness understandably need both material resources and manpower. Hence, the lack of logistics and resources are a considerable hindrance towards capacitating members of the community towards disaster risk reduction and management. Similarly, efforts towards environmental care and agricultural rehabilitation necessitate resources that may not be easily available to a resettlement site.

By the same token, respondents admit that lack of education among community members serves as a deterrent towards enacting plans for the alleviation of the threats that overcome their community. They believe that the community is in need not only of basic educational services, but awareness-raising programs that may elevate the consciousness of the community towards working for the sustainability of community plans and actions.

Fortunately, for these paucities in the community, disaster risk reduction and management programs, including awareness raising and education and training programs from government and non-government agencies have been forthcoming.

While the abovementioned shortage on resources may be provided concretely by external agencies, the lack of interest and participation by community members serve as psychological barriers which may be more difficult to overcome. Indeed, it is only through sincere concern and motivation towards a goal can communities achieve resiliency and sustainability. Hence, it is a challenge for community members of Calauan to step up and act upon the threats that plague them, to be able to take significant headways towards community empowerment and development.
Tabogon, Cebu
Area: Tabogon, Cebu

Community Information

Primarily, the locality of Tabogon is a third-class municipality in the Central Visayas Region in the Philippines. Classified as the seventh region (Region VII) in the archipelagic country, the main sources of income and livelihood in the area are agriculture, fishing, and general trade and commerce. The general topography in the area is hilly and mountainous, making farming and agronomy one of the most viable ventures in Tabogon.

Physical Profile

According to the nationwide census in 2010, the overall population in the locale is 33,024, with the chosen community areas comprising about 29 percent of the general populace. To wit, the population of Barangay Caduawan is at 2,221, while that of Ilihan is at 3,280. On the other hand, the communities of Libjo and Mabuli consist of 2,338 and 1,538 people respectively. Reaching a total of 9,377, the four (4) aforementioned barangays are located predominantly in the uplands, parallel to the general topographical situation of the whole area. As such, the municipality of Tabogon falls under the Upland Risk Zone, which accounts for one of the six risk zones that were determined and studied in the Frontline research.

For this specific area of study, a total of 120 respondents were interviewed from the four (4) communities to gather, document, and assess the current difficulties they face alongside remedial actions that can aid toward its resolution and obstructive barriers that may deter the latter. Using systematic tools and methods to muster the said data, the following responses and insights were recorded and formed:
With an annual income of approximately 35 to 45,000,000 Pesos, Tabogon is categorized as a third-class municipality. Lying in the median of the spectrum, the municipality fares relatively lower than other areas in the region such as Mandaue City, Lapu-Lapu City, and the “Queen City of the South” Cebu City, which remains to be the most thriving metropolis in the region.

However, even if the municipality earns more than its adjacent localities, 23 of which in particular, the risk level continues to be on a high at 100%. Essentially, this percentage is caused by the blatant poverty and dearth of resources in the aforesaid communities, which will be further discussed in the latter part of this report.
Fundamentally, the myriad causal risk factors and drivers have been perennially existent due to underlying problems in various developmental aspects such as governance and socio-economics, among many others. Because of these enduring and indecipherable issues, attaining development becomes more and more difficult, as deeply ingrained corruption seeps through the multitude of classes in Filipino society, even down to the most marginalized of sectors.

Inevitably, the most distressing impact of these fundamental problems is the seemingly stagnant growth and development of the archipelago, as its progress is continually impeded by the furtherance of the aforesaid societal issues. Such is also the case in Tabogon, Cebu, as the locality is also subjected to similar trials and tribulations that remain to hinder its improvement.

As seen in the succeeding graph, 47 percent of the total number of respondents feel that they are ‘Equal’ to the rest of the barangay, followed by the 37 percent stating that their situation is ‘Worse Off’, the 12 percent pronouncing that they are ‘Much Worse Off’ than the whole barangay, and the meager 4 percent saying that they ‘Better Off’.
Socio-Economic Profile

Since the municipality of Tabogon is apparently located in the hinterlands, it is categorically labeled as a rural locale. Ultimately, this can be seen in the chart below, where the four (4) selected communities are tagged as rural areas, which differ greatly from the highly urbanized hubs of Cebu.

Observably, the country’s heartlands – particularly those in Cebu – are perpetually brimming with migrants from different provinces hoping to land lucrative jobs in the city, leaving remote areas even more neglected, with (private and public) investors assiduously devoting more money into these key areas than anywhere else. This then creates further congestion and saturation in most cities in the Philippines, prolonging the suffering of these migrants who, instead of improving their lives, find it even harder to survive in these overpopulated capitals. Verifying this is the record of the Philippine Census stating that “[t]he total population of Metro Manila as of 2010 is already at 11,855,975 which is almost 12% of the total population of the Philippines, while the total land area of Metro Manila (638 square kilometers) is only 0.21% of the total land area of the Philippines (300,000 square kilometers)."
Having lived in scarcity for a long time, these urbanized megalopolises are where they turn to, seeing the latter as a pool brimming with opportunity; unlike their hometowns that continue to be deprived by a plethora of growth-related problems that thwart its potential for success. To wit, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) averred that "the number of informal settler families in Metro Manila is already more than half a million. This number is already 20% of the total number of household in Metro Manila. 41% of these informal settlers are located in government owned lands while 34% are in privately owned lands." Aside from the abovementioned socio-political factors that impede the growth in far-flung provinces, the catastrophic impact of natural and human-induced hazards also impinges on the rural areas' attainment of development, which is evident in the figure seen below demarcating the impact of large-scale and small-scale threats.
**Disaster Impacts**

As seen in both charts below, a total of 67 respondents noted that they encounter about 1 to 5 small-scale disasters, which can be regarded as localized ‘Everyday Disasters’ that are not given much focus nationally, yet impact their way of life dramatically. The latter - deemed as the factors that spur greater disasters putting onerous weight on the shoulders of the common public as it puts increasing pressure on livelihoods, health and well-being by "factors such as crime, violence, insecurity, corruption and government failures, extreme price volatility and income disparity, climate change and environmental mismanagement". "The majority of people most affected by disasters bear the cost of multiple inter-related risks in a complex, fast changing, uncertain and impoverished environment. Affected communities have little choice but to take responsibility for the security and protection of their lives, livelihoods and assets" (GNDR, 2014). Essentially, these are menial threats that have endured for several generations and continue to plague and hinder growth in rural areas like Tabogon which suffers through problems like the lack of potable water sources, the lack of sustainable livelihood opportunities, and suffocating debt.

A graph depicting the total global damage from natural, complex, and technological disasters from 1994 to 2014 (GNDR)
Over the last year how many small disasters have you had in your community?

On the other hand, among those who averred that they hadn’t experienced any small-scale disasters were those who noted the great impact of large-scale disasters in their community. Most of the respondents stated that one of the largest threats to their community is drug addiction, corruption, theft and insecurity, poverty, unemployment, and natural hazards such as typhoons, earthquakes, and landslides.
Over the last year how many large disasters have you had in your community?

In quintessence, Tabogon may seem relatively well-to-do than its contiguous municipalities as it places third on the income class rank, yet poverty and scarceness remain inherent elements in the locality. As was mentioned previously in this report, the high saturation of enterprise and investment in the highly urbanized centers of the country instead of proportionately distributing these ventures across the state continues to be a pivotal reason for the indifference and disregard of remote areas such as Tabogon. To wit, the Land Transportation Office (LTO) "documented a total of 2,101,148 motor vehicles in 2013 that were listed in NCR or 27% of the country’s 7,690,038 total registered motor vehicles. In 2015, the total number of motor vehicles in Metro Manila had already reached 2.5 million."

Indeed, it is in the prevalence of issues like this that everyday disasters such as limited sustainable livelihood prospects as well as the lack of proper social services continue to abound and persist. While this need for the decentralization of the urban sprawl remains, deep-rooted problems such as poverty, corruption, crime, illegal drugs, and unemployment still proliferate in the (urban and) rural areas due to the inaction and venality of local authorities. Thence, this decrepit system fosters a vicious cycle where the poor remain poor and underprivileged, bereft of the knowledge and skills needed to appease their current situation. In this day and age, it is in conducting thorough community-based initiatives like the Frontline research that the initial steps toward a major solution can be brought together, because it is in giving voices to those who are usually unheard that the empowerment of the grassroots level begins.
Respondent Information

Mainly, the graphs below provide a succinct yet clear picture of the respondents who were involved in the *Frontline* study, starting with the gender of the sample which outlined that out of the 120 respondents, 56% of it were female respondents and 44% were male.

Gender

Apart from this, the demographic for the sample showed that the study was dominated by respondents aged 26-60 years old at 51%, followed by those aged more than 60 at 23%, then those at 18-25 years old at 12%, with respondents at 12-17 years old and those less than 11 years old trailing behind at 7%.

Age

Along with this, the bulk of the study sample consisted of members from ethnic groups, which represents a larger minority in the country, the indigenous peoples. This, in conjunction with the preponderance of respondents aged 26-60 years old, makes both the responses and results descriptive of the ills beleaguering both the majority and minority of the population, thus offering a more inclusive yet diverse set of insights and perspectives that are focused particularly in the context of Tabogon, Cebu.
Belongs to Ethnic Group

Additionally, the acuities and observations of Persons with Disability (PWDs) in the municipality were also recorded, shedding light in the issues that afflict and distress the aforesaid community. Giving a voice to another significant sector that necessitates further empowerment, the study had managed to interview 42 PWD respondents, which comprised of 35% of the total sample. Basically, the Frontline research stays true to its goal of nurturing a participatory and inclusive discourse toward the attainment of a principal solution to the key issues that the all sectors are confronted with.
Has a Disability

Ultimately, the overall demographic of the study sample for the municipality of Tabogon mirrored that of GNDR’s ideal research participants, representing the diversity of the populace yet still provided a cohesive and meaningful representation of the local milieu and context. In totality, the responses given by the study participants not only illustrate the problems that have besieged them for a long period of time, but also depict the seemingly perennial vulnerabilities that have long been obscured into normalcy – threats that have become ‘everyday disasters’ which can provoke a greater disaster if not given focus by the authorities and stakeholders concerned.
Impacts and Perceptions

A disaster is generally defined as “[a] serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources (UNISDR, 2009).” Thence, disasters are more likely to occur if the disaster risk is magnified, which can only result in the confluence of a multitude of factors, specifically the onslaught of and exposure to hazards coupled with immense vulnerabilities that are dependent on various economic, social, technological, and cultural aspects.

Hence, disasters are, as defined by the UNISDR, events that disrupt the equilibrium of a community, entailing unanticipated damages and deficiencies that the latter is unable to recover from with its current means of survival. However, it is important to note that for developing countries such as the Philippines, the languorous state prior to the onslaught of a hazard is neither a relaxed nor balanced state, such that the plethora of deep-rooted vulnerabilities have caused heightened disaster risks which render any affected area in a perpetual state of susceptibility and predisposition to hazards – a state that is indeed utterly obfuscated yet has been deemed natural because of its permanence in the daily lives of the general public, especially the residents of Tabogon.
What has happened in your community with relation to losses and damage since 2005?

Clearly, it is seen in the graph above that the municipality of Tabogon has suffered great losses (caused by both small and large-scale threats) in the past ten (10) years. Gaining a firm 65% of the total sample, a number of 79 respondents remarked that they underwent a ‘Substantial Increase in Losses’, while 28 participants noted that they, on the other hand, only experienced ‘Some Increase in Losses’. Apart from this, about 10 people averred that there was ‘No Change’ in their overall state for the past decade, while only three (3) people said that there was only a ‘Small Change in [their] Losses’.

This only infers that, essentially, the situation the respondents are in has gone on a steady decline, resulting in severe losses through the years. Primarily, this denotes the preponderance of long-term vulnerabilities that have long been entrenched in the communities’ way of life, further deterring and weakening not only their ability to cope, but also their capacity to live.
What type of risk most affects you?

Furthermore, the respondents averred that large-scale threats have affected them most, as depicted in the chart above where the response ‘Large-Scale Threats’ took 67% of the total sample and the answer ‘Small-Scale Threats’ gained 33%. To elaborate this more vividly, the eloquent charts and graphs in the next segment of this report rigorously depict the threats and hazards that the respondents have endured alongside the actions that they propose to address them, and identifying the barriers that may serve as obstacles in the process.
Predominantly, the respondents were asked what kinds of threats distressed them on a regular basis, given no restriction on the specific nature of hazards, which left the participants free to disclose whichever they perceived as threats to their community - threats like those deemed as ‘everyday disasters’. By providing an avenue for the participants to fully divulge their difficulties, the responses covered not only the commonplace scope of threats, but also delved into threats which are influenced heavily by socio-cultural factors, such as traffic accidents, drug addiction, defective law enforcement, and so on.

In particular though, the five (5) topmost threats that the respondents noted are Typhoons (82 respondents), Earthquakes (59 respondents), Illnesses/Diseases (47 respondents), Road/Traffic Accidents (45 respondents), and Floods (43 respondents). These threats, according to the sample population, were actually the most pressing and disturbing of all, noting particularly the severe shocks they incurred from natural hazards like typhoons, earthquakes, and floods. This subsequently gave rise and furtherance to the lack of resources, sustainable income sources, and basic social services in the municipality.

Amongst the most devastating disasters that blitzed the Northern part of Cebu, which is where Tabogon is located, is Tropical Storm “URING” (known internationally as Thelma) that made landfall on 2-7 November 1991 and traveled at a wind speed of 95 kph, which resulted in approximately 5,101 deaths (with an unofficial estimate up to 8,000 +) and incurred about PhP 1.045 Billion in damages.
Apart from the latter, probably the most catastrophic deluge of all time struck Cebu on November 8, 2013, rendering a huge death toll as well as colossal damage in the Visayas region, affecting Tabogon in the Northern part of Cebu. The typhoon, dubbed as one of the greatest storms to ever hit the country, was recorded with wind speeds of over 300 kph and storm surges of over four (4) meters, leaving a fatality count of 6,300 people, with 28,689 injured and 1,061 still missing to this day. A total of PhP 89,598,068,634.88 in damage to property was recorded, which when broken down includes the following figures: a) Infrastructure: P9,584,596,305.69; b) Productive: P21,833,622,975.09; c) Social: P55,110,825,740.69; and d) Cross-sectoral: P3,069,023,613.41.

Quintessentially, the destruction and damage wrought by the aforementioned typhoons cogently illustrate how grave the impact is of typhoons. To elucidate this more clearly, the graphic map shows the 100 KM storm track of Typhoon Yolanda that depicted the typhoon’s onslaught in Cebu right after it hit Samar and Leyte.

Consequently, the predisposition of Tabogon to typhoons causes vulnerable areas to flood, entailing flood disasters in its wake that affect numerous households in the said areas. In effect, problems such as poor evacuation center management and schemes, massive physical and infrastructural damage, loss of livelihood, and even the deferral of schooling and academic activities take place.
As averred by the respondents in the study, river inundation is a common yet unrelenting threat in their localities, leaving them not only stranded in their homes but also deprived of basic necessities, social services, and much-needed assistance especially during disasters. According to them, because of this persistent flooding during typhoons, most of their houses are either washed out almost entirely or their livelihoods are destroyed or drowned (particularly when they raise livestock and poultry for a living). They also state that because there are no bridges or any infrastructure that can help them to cross the body of water safely in times of flood disasters, they feel as though they’re helpless and deserted since they can’t evacuate to safer ground.

Similar to this, the occurrence of earthquakes is also a critical hazard that has become a cause for concern, even alarm, essentially when a 7.2 magnitude earthquake shook the Central Visayas region, with its epicenter located two (2) kilometers southeast of Carmen, Bohol (09.80°N, 124.20°E). Basically, the great tremor was sensed all throughout the Visayas and Mindanao regions, rendering at least 28 people dead along with myriad buildings and historical sites destroyed, most particularly in Bohol and Cebu.

Along with the severely damaged heritage sites, most of the households and public infrastructures in Cebu were ruined by the quake, halting and upsetting the conventional way of life as houses sunk into the ground, bridges collapsed, and basic social structures were wrecked and inaccessible. Since most of the respondents were residing in the highlands, a lot of them had experienced land erosion or landslides which had damaged their households and had left them displaced since they do not have other lands or properties to live in.

Mostly, the threats that were noted and placed by the respondents to be most threatening are the hazards that had beleaguered them constantly in more recent years, deemed as ‘everyday disasters’ that exacerbate their situation. Amid the natural hazards that they’re usually subjected to, most of the participants also brave certain illnesses that have incessantly affected their livelihood, economic status, and disaster preparedness. Other respondents state that their senility has made them more vulnerable to diseases/illnesses that it has also mired their standard of living, which has also impacted their financial status and preparedness.

On top of this, the respondents profess that road accidents have become commonplace in their area as it has often occurred in their communities. Most of the respondents claim that the drivers that pass by their roads are reckless, stubborn, and indifferent. In turn, the respondents have become more and more anxious about their children’s welfare and safety when crossing the roads, especially on their way back home from school.

**Top 5 Consequences**
Accordingly, the threats observed and endured by the respondents entail a plethora of consequences that may either become long-term risks or perennial vulnerabilities in their community if they are not addressed by the authorities and stakeholders concerned. In this light, the five (5) top consequences that the respondents had noted are: 1) Physical/Infrastructural Damage (106 responses); 2) Illness/Impairment (84 responses); 3) Loss of Livelihood/Unemployment (82 responses); 4) Panic, Anxiety, Fear, and Trauma (67 responses); and 5) Food Scarcity/Malnourishment.

These consequences, whether directly or indirectly, were caused by the innumerable threats that the respondents face day in and day out – threats that exist as well because of the vulnerable state they are in prior to the onslaught of the aforementioned threats. This signifies that these consequences are actually outlying threats to that which have already been existent before the threat struck them.

Having been struck by typhoons, earthquakes, and floods, most respondents averred that their households were damaged immensely by the latter. Some respondents claimed that the fallen coconut trees were to blame for the destruction of their homes, as the lofty plants were planted amid their houses. On the other hand, respondents stated that the aforesaid threats had caused them to be more anxious and stressed, fearful of what might happen to them should a similar threat blitz their community again.
Discernibly, it can be inferred that all of the consequences given by the participants are actually connected to the latter, as each one may cause the affected to stir in panic, fear, anxiety, and trauma. This can be stated as well regarding the loss of livelihood or unemployment in the chosen communities. Respondents mostly admit that the absence of alternative and sustainable livelihood opportunities have always been their problem, worsening their financial situation all the more. Because of this, other respondents have noted the heightening rate of poverty in their areas, which is caused in part by the inaccessibility of basic social services in the vicinity like potable water sources.

As another consequence of the abovementioned threats, food scarcity and malnourishment has become prevalent in their area as well, triggered by the ubiquitous poverty in the community. Understandably, the general result of these problems is impairment and illness, which is exacerbated by the lack of and inaccessibility to appropriate healthcare and medicines. Alongside this, however, is the prevalence of illegal drugs and drug users in the communities, which, according to the respondents, has sparked fear and trauma in the populace because the people behind this threat possess great influence in the locality.

Albeit the dread that the said threats and consequences have inflicted on them, they still see a tinge of hope that these can be addressed, given the diligence and dedication of the stakeholders and duty-bearers in their communities. Furthermore, the respondents have proposed courses of action to aid in the resolution of the aforementioned threats, which will hopefully appease their current situation and rid them of ‘everyday disasters’ that inhibit their development.

Top 5 Actions
Principally, the five (5) uppermost courses of action that the respondents suggested are Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (39 responses), Seeking help from the government or police forces (36 responses), Disaster Preparedness (32 responses), Looking for employment or sources of income (32 responses), and Securing healthcare/wellbeing (21 responses). Generally, the participants deem that these solutions are paramount to the improvement of their lives. It is in these suggested ideas that they see the appeasement and elimination of all the pressing threats they've come to experience in past years, which have greatly impacted not only their livelihood but also their overall wellbeing.

Firstly, the respondents perceive Disaster Prevention and Mitigation as the foremost solution to their problems, as solid preventive measures can radically decrease or alleviate the risk of huge losses in their households. Among the prevention and mitigation methods that they proposed are as follows:

1) Save money;
2) Assign a [crossing] guard who can help avoid road accidents;
3) Build more classrooms in the schools;
4) Clean the river and other bodies of water;
5) Install early warning devices;
6) Cut the huge coconut trees amidst the houses;
7) Build a river embankment and relocate people residing nearby;
8) Repair faulty public facilities (especially the school’s);
9) Build a bridge above the river so people can cross the river safely;
10) Build a playground so children won’t play in the streets;
11) Prevent the loss of livelihood by relocating the livestock away from the river;
12) Establish a drugstore so people get better access to medicines;
13) Implement an anti-speeding ordinance;
14) Repair damaged roads immediately; and
15) Don’t plant crops near the river

In essence, it can be concluded that most of the respondents are beset with many seemingly trivial yet truly weighty difficulties, which capture the nucleus of what everyday disasters really are. These hazards, albeit their apparent normalcy in the locality (or even in the country), are what contribute toward the occurrence of tragic disasters, like that of the 2013 earthquake, Typhoon Yolanda, and many other catastrophes of the past. Basically, by recommending these top solutions, the respondents hope that the underlying issues in their community can be given more attention, as it will only be a matter of time until the latter become disasters.

Apart from this, the participants also determined that seeking help or assistance from the authorities is imperative to their continued existence, since the authorities and stakeholders in their municipality should be able to address their needs primarily. Mainly, their concern is that the local government should provide them with alternative and sustainable sources of income to help them establish better livelihoods that can provide their basic daily needs. They also remarked that their municipal or respective barangay governments should aid them in establishing cooperatives to not only to improve their economic situation but also to foster solidarity in their village.

Another solution that the respondents suggest is to learn about Disaster Preparedness. Understanding that natural hazards are truly inevitable, the respondents expressed their need to be trained in the field of disaster awareness and readiness due to the immense damage wrought by disasters caused by the coupling of hazards, exposure, and vulnerability. However, some respondents are also oblivious to this need as they recognize disasters as an inexorable force that cannot be foreseen nor avoided. Identifiably, these respondents are the ones who need capacity-building most, as they fail to perceive how disasters are not natural yet a result of intricately woven driving factors that have long been neglected.
On the other end of the spectrum, seeing as their particular communities have been living in dire circumstances, they proposed that finding employment or sources of income is one of the key solutions to their persistent problems. Albeit this epiphany, the dismal need for livelihood and employment opportunities remain the chief deterrent to this resolution, leaving the communities bereft as well of the appropriate knowledge and skills to establish their own sources of income due to the lack of apt capacity development and training from the local authorities and relevant agencies. In actual fact, this is where the consciousness of the respondents to seek help from the government was founded on, recognizing that if they are to solve the issues that beleaguer them, they need a sound government structure to facilitate and guide them toward their progress.

Conversely, according to some respondents, another reason for their inability to find stable employment and income sources is their poor health and wellbeing, which is often compromised because of the substantial poverty and scarceness of resources. Therefore, it is deemed by the participants of this study that securing their wellbeing and their ability to access it as one of the most crucial solutions to their troubles. Yet, healthcare is again a major issue in these respective communities as the respondents affirm the remoteness of health centers, hospitals, and even pharmacies in their individual areas. Healthcare, which is the most basic of necessities, should definitely be a right that even the most distant provinces can benefit from and have unrestrained access to.
Finally, the participants of the study came to specify the many barriers that have constantly hampered them to govern themselves toward progress, and their most significant responses are: Poverty (94 responses); Lack of government resources (69 responses); Indifference and Laziness (66 responses); Disease and Poor Healthcare (45 responses); and Corruption (36 responses). From these answers, it can be concluded that most of the issues they face are mostly ascribed to the agenda of development and governance, which says something about the political milieu in the Philippines.

Above all, Poverty is the most threatening barrier for the respondents of the study, which already proves how uniquely cumbersome development has been for remote localities like Tabogon. Poverty is certainly burdensome issue for the whole archipelagic state, trickling down the lowermost rungs of society. Apparently, the latter is where most of the problems in this study are rooted, such that the lack of government funding and lack of opportunity can be traced back to the meager allocation of government funds and the lack of educational attainment, both of which are caused by scarcity of financial resources, respectively.

Moreover, the paucity of government funds can be ascribed to the fact that there is immeasurable corruption in the system which also emanates from the highest levels of the bureaucracy down to the bottom. According to a survey conducted by the Hong Kong-based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy in 2006, the sample composed of 1,476 expatriate executives in 13 countries and territories in Asia scored the Philippines a 9.40, where a score of
zero is the least corrupt and 10 is the most corrupt. Apart from this, the report noted as well that “local corruption monitors confirm that graft and bribery in the Philippines remain rampant. Corruption has penetrated every level of government, from the Bureau of Customs down to the traffic police officers who pull over motorists to demand bribes.” Parallel to this, corruption is seen as an unrelenting problem to the participants of this study with the deficiencies that they’ve come to perceive in their own communities.

Precisely, the respondents of this study stated the blatant need for infrastructure and sound housing structures which the local government is incapable of providing. Thus far, the respondents have averred that they observed inaction and indifference from the local authorities, alongside the lack of stringent law enforcement in their communities, since the current setting in their localities necessitate the stricter policing of problems such as illegal drugs, poor road and traffic conditions, and the increasing criminality and security threats. In conjunction with this, the participants also asserted the failure of the authorities to establish a detailed and organized evacuation management scheme, compelling evacuees and affected households to stay in their homes in times of natural hazards and disasters because of the deficient evacuation structures and facilities as well as the threat of theft and robbery.

In contrast, the other hurdles to the resolution of these prevalent threats, according to the respondents, is the commonness of diseases and illnesses in their communities, combined with the senility of the older participants in the study. As per the participants, they are often beset with illnesses due to the admixture of certain factors such as the already mentioned poor healthcare services, inaccessibility of needed medicines, together with the scarcity of potable water sources. Categorically, these factors mirror the health of the communities, reflecting how the locality is governed by its stakeholders, authorities, and duty-bearers.

On one hand, however, the respondents avowed that the populace has also been unconcerned toward their own welfare and development, with 66 responses claiming that their respective communities have been indifferent, stubborn, and lazy in many different aspects concerning their betterment. Many respondents averred that due to the lack of opportunity and educational attainment, some community members lack the effort and initiative to continue pursuing employment and income opportunities. Alongside this, other respondents state that there are other residents that remain inflexible toward certain guidelines, especially regarding traffic and road rules, like drivers and pedestrians who usually fare the municipal roads in Tabogon. Ultimately, participants aver that this has resulted in the complacency and inattentiveness to disaster sentence and alertness, as they often regard it as an auxiliary task to their burdensome schedule. Still, this stems from the cumbrous problem of poverty and the struggles the Filipinos brave to put food on their families’ table.
Finally, looking at it through the lenses of governance and development, it is perceived that the issues raised in this research are certainly interconnected and reliant on each other's success. Fundamentally, these incidents, which are the essential origins of ‘everyday disasters,’ are the issues that both stakeholders and duty-bearers should devote perennial focus to since these are the roots of vulnerability. Apparently, however, the Philippine government remains a ‘dole-out oriented’ and reactive entity which provides assistance on the basis of dire necessity. Albeit the existence of aid initiatives like the 4Ps or “Pantawid Para sa Pamilyang Pilipino” program by the national social welfare ministry, the obstinate risks and vulnerabilities experienced by the people are the issues that need to be addressed and not the matters that have sprouted in the outgrowth of the underlying issue. On the whole, the research team sees these concerns as an indignity to Filipinos who have been driven to live in squalor and dearth without access to the rights and services that they should be able to relish to begin with. In the end, risk reduction and management on the whole – not only risks related to hazards or disasters – should be an development agenda where the stakeholders and duty-bearers from the civil society, government, private sector, and the whole citizenry converge and contribute to the ecological progress of the country to attain not only economic development but a sustainable future where the Filipinos can govern themselves toward development.
Carles, Iloilo
Area: Carles, Iloilo

Community Information

Located in the province of Iloilo, Philippines, Carles is a second-class municipality in Region 6, Western Visayas, Philippines. It is the northernmost town in Iloilo, and has a total land area of 40.17 square miles (104.05 squared kilometers). Carles has a population of 62,690 people (National Statistics Office, 2010), and it is politically subdivided into 33 Barangays, with eighteen of these consisting of islands and islets. For this study, the following four barangays served as participants in focus group discussions and one-on-one surveys:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Barangay</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carles</td>
<td>• Asluman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Gabi</td>
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<td>• Granada</td>
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<td>• Lantangan</td>
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Source: Gonzalez (2005)
Carles is mainly a rural municipality, wherein the primary livelihoods are agriculture, trade and industry, and fishery.

Almost 50% of the total land in Carles is devoted to agricultural services. The leading agricultural product in the municipality is rice, followed by coconut, mango, banana and sugarcane.

Fishery is the province’s principal source of livelihood due to its archipelagic nature. The territorial waters in the municipality, as well as its thousands of hectares of fishponds abound with diverse fish and other marine creatures. The products of this marine industry are traded and exported to other countries.
Carles, being located on the northern most tip of Panay Island, has been considered a coastal area. Due to its location, the major source of income of community members is fishing. Unfortunately, Carles has been in the path of major typhoons, one of which was Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in 2013, a super typhoon which caused massive destruction in major islands in the country, disrupting the livelihood, damaging assets and properties, and killing the lives of at least 6,300 people.
Risk Profile

The four target communities in the municipality of Carles are considered as high-risk areas. Respondents have experienced at least four major disasters in their communities in the past decade, primarily typhoons of great strength. In 2008, Typhoon Frank (Fengshen) wrought havoc in Iloilo, the typhoon being at that time the most devastating disaster to afflict the province, with 80% going underwater as the flood affected 48,836 families or 244,090 persons (Philippine National Red Cross, 2009). In 2013, Carles was heavily afflicted by Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), destroying buildings and dwellings, and agricultural land, and leaving several casualties. In December 2014, two typhoons hit the province, Typhoon Ruby (Hagupit) and Typhoon Seniang, the former leaving three people dead in its wake, and the latter leaving thousands of passengers stranded in the Iloilo ports during its onslaught (Burgos, 2014; Gomez, Matus, Burgos Jr., 2014).
Respondents Information

Socio-Economic Profile

Half of the respondents perceive that they have an equal socio-economic status compared to their co-community members. It is possible that this is due to the notion that disasters affect everyone in general, although it targets the most vulnerable communities the most. As the barangays are located in coastal areas and thus may have the same exposure, most of the community members may be experiencing the same effects of major disasters.

However, thirty five percent of respondents remarked that they are in a better off situation compared to others in the community, and nine percent mentioned that they are much better off than others. Several factors may come into play, including the level of preparedness of the people as well as their personal vulnerabilities and capacities.
Of the total population in Carles, Iloilo, 33,856 are male and 32,530 are female (Municipality of Carles, n.d.). This statistic is similar to the gender proportion of the sample of respondents of this action research, wherein 52% are male, and 46% are female. This almost equal gender split is to ensure that both genders’ experiences and perspectives are heard and taken into consideration.

A wide span of age groups was targeted by this action research to guarantee that there is equitable representation among age groups. More than half of the respondents are aged 26-60 (58%), followed by those 18-25 (14%) and more than 60% (14%), and by minor children aged 12-17 (7%) and less than 11 (7%).
None of the respondents from the communities in Carles, Iloilo registered that they are from an ethnic group. However, most of the people from Iloilo are Ilonggo, and can be divided into two ethnolinguistic groups: Hiligaynon and Karay-a, with residents of Carles mostly speaking the former language.

Four percent of the respondents in this action research are persons with disability. Persons with disability are especially vulnerable during times of disasters, hence the significance of garnering their views in a subject matter wherein they are most affected—this is to ensure that their needs and capacities are taken into consideration.
Impacts and Perceptions

What has happened in your community with relation to losses and damage since 2005?

Sixty-five respondents pronounced that they had experienced increases in losses and damage in their community since 2005 in both minor and (N=29) substantial scales (N=26). It was within the past decade that major typhoons had struck Carles, and thus community members may still feel the vestige of the severe impacts of these threats.

On the other hand, twenty-nine respondents feel that there were marginal (N=25) and significant (N=25) reductions in losses, which may be attributed to internal and external aid and support during the stages of response and rehabilitation. Likewise, due to the occurrence of the abovementioned disasters in the past decade, the community council and residents may have mounted more robust preparedness and prevention and mitigation measures that may have alleviated losses by minor threats.

Twenty-one respondents, however, felt that there were no changes in their community with respect to damages and losses since the past decade.
To sixty-seven percent of respondents, small-scale threats affect them more than large-scale threats. These small-scale local threats are events which community members usually experience on an everyday basis; those which have been dubbed as “everyday risks”. These include motorcycle accidents, lack of access to health facilities, and crimes, which through daily exposure have had long-lasting negative effects on community members.

Alternatively, twenty-three percent of respondents feel that it is large-scale threats that affect them more than small-scale local threats. These include the major typhoons and storms that have devastated the province in the past decade, as well as earthquakes.
**Threats, Consequences, Actions, and Barriers**

**Top 5 Threats**

![Bar Chart: Top 5 Threats](chart)

The top priority threats as noted by the communities in Carles, Iloilo are mostly natural hazards, including typhoons and storms. Respondents have noted that usually from November to December, destructive typhoons and storms hit the island, bringing about other threats such as storm surge, flooding, and lightning. In 2013, Carles was one of the communities that was hit by Supertyphoon Yolanda (Haiyan) which led to massive destruction and casualties. Related to these, respondents reported being apprehensive of *halakay* or strong winds that would last for two to three weeks.

Aside from typhoons, storms, and strong winds, another natural hazard that has been deemed as a priority threat are earthquakes. Based on the Rapid Earthquake Damage Assessment System (REDAS), a hazard simulation software which aims to prepare for earthquakes, an earthquake with a magnitude of 8.2 could leave 4,700 casualties. Indeed, the apprehension of community members to such a major threat may be due to Iloilo being under the geographical area of the West Panay Fault. In January 1948, this was the area where the second biggest earthquake in the country was recorded (Yap, 2013). In 2014, a 5.1 magnitude earthquake hit Panay Island, Iloilo, hence being in the forefront of community members foremost concerns.
Another priority threat shared by the respondents is the spread of diseases within the communities. This may be attributed to the lack of access to health and birthing facilities, which was raised as a primary concern due to the isolation of the island’s location. Respondents have pointed out that the nearest hospital to the island is in Malbog, Balasan, Iloilo, which is approximately two to three hours by boat and land transportation. In relation to this, the respondents raised a two-pronged concern: first, the boats themselves lack first aid and basic life support equipment to address emergencies such as heart attacks, accidents and premature births; secondly, the patients do not have enough funds to pay for the boat transportation, nor do they have access to health benefits such as Philhealth. Possibly amplifying the distress of the communities over diseases is the lack of potable water supply and water system within the communities especially during the summer. Residents have to travel to a neighboring island Estancia to access potable water.

Other threats raised by respondents are man-made hazards. One of these is illegal fishing, consisting of cyanide fishing, dynamite fishing, and muro-ami. According to the respondents, illegal fishing causes livelihood loss due to the dwindling catches of fishermen; moreover, it causes environmental destruction due to the destruction of coral reefs which further leads to the extinction of marine species.

Another man-made hazard as broached by the respondents are motorcycle accidents. Respondents shared that in the community of Granada, Carles, there are 300 privately owned motorcycles, around 200 of which are for hire as motorcycles and are the sole means of transportation within the island. Half of the males in the community of Granada rely on these motorcycles to drive to their places of livelihood. However, many issues crop up in relation to the use of motorcycle: for one, the respondents noted that 90% of the drivers who operate these motorcycles do not possess any licenses nor registration; second, many of them are underage and have no accident insurance; third, many do not follow safety procedures such as wearing helmets and other safety equipment. On top of these, the roads in the community are narrow and dangerous, thus leading to motorcycle accidents, some of which have been fatal.
Most of the major consequences cited by the residents of the Carles communities are brought about by typhoons and storms that hit the municipality. Livelihood loss is a primary outcome of these natural hazards due to the damage to the boats of fisherfolks. This leaves the latter unable to fish, which leads to food insecurity and hunger within the affected communities. Loss of life is likewise another consequence of such hazards: in November 2013, Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) battered the municipality, leaving behind 13 casualties (Joven, Rendon, & Caoyonan, 2013). The wake of such massive disasters has led to a loss of assets and properties as typhoons damage houses and public facilities.

Aside from the abovementioned natural hazards, the lack of access to health and birthing facilities have also led to casualties. Because of the distant access to hospitals and health facilities and the lack of health professionals and doctors, there has been a high infant and maternal mortality rate, as well as death among emergency patients (heart attack, stroke and accidents). This was noted by the respondents as a reason for outmigration to mainland Carles and Estancia, areas which have better access to health services.

Loss of life has also been rooted in vehicular and structural problems. Respondents raised the issue of reckless driving among young unlicensed drivers who do not wear safety equipment, coupled with public work deficiencies (e.g. narrow and rough roads, lack of street lights and signages, no speed limits).
Top 5 Actions

While a number of respondents could not articulate actions to avert the undesirable consequences of the primary threats, some respondents were able to broach several key steps towards addressing these major community concerns.

The foremost key action area is structural mitigation. This action was suggested for consequences related to typhoons and storms. Respondents noted actions that have been conducted by those within their communities. These mitigation initiatives are driven by barangay-level preparedness, early warning, and pre-emptive evacuation led by the barangay council and disaster risk reduction and management offices. Respondents state that these officials disseminate early warning information to the residents. As a result, fishermen move their boats and secure them in safer areas. Other residents also begin “clearing” potentially destructive trees and branches and strengthen their homes with ropes and sandbags. The barangay council has also coordinated with the youth, empowering the latter towards preventing and mitigating the effects of the hazards through tree planting initiatives.

Community members deem seeking external support as a key priority action. While on their own, community residents look for other sources of livelihoods, they also ask for support from external agents including government and non-government organizations, and international humanitarian organizations. For instance, the barangay requests for medical missions from civil society organizations and government agencies.
Lastly, the adoption of village regulations was found to be a primary action by the respondents. There have already been ordinances addressing several community issues. In times of typhoons, a barangay patrol boat has already been converted to an emergency boat. To address the issues of health and disease within the community, the barangay has passed a resolution requesting a permanent midwife in order to have regular prenatal, immunization and vaccination services. In response to environmental concerns, ordinances have been instituted for proper waste disposal and segregation; an ordinance has also been passed to prevent illegal fishing. With regards to the issue of motorcycle accidents, regulation in terms of licensing and inspection, as well as safety measures through the establishment of signage have already been put into place.

**Top 5 Barriers**

Respondents pointed out several barriers—lack of resources, uneven aid distribution, psychological barriers, and others—that have served or may serve as obstacles towards addressing the major threats experienced by the communities.

Lack of resources has surfaced as a major limitation. This includes funding for livelihood and economic programs for the communities. Respondents also noted the shortage in supplies and stocks during typhoons. Due to the distant health facilities, the communities are deficient in pharmaceutical resources; the village of Granada for instance does not have a pharmacy that can dispense medication that requires prescriptions.
As Carles, Iloilo was ravaged by Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in 2013, many international and local government and non-government organizations came to provide aid and relief. Respondents pointed out that during these instances, they had observed or experienced uneven distribution of aid within their communities. This may possibly be due to duplication of efforts brought about by lack of coordination within the said agencies, thereby not being able to give equitable provisions to the community residents.

Psychological barriers were also indicated as a priority barrier within the target communities. During times of typhoons, some residents refuse to prepare and evacuate nor do they heed calls from barangay officials to move and secure their boats.

Other barriers declared by the respondents are mostly in relation to the distance and isolation of Carles to other areas. They pointed out that they have difficulty accessing basic services such as water and medicine as these have to be accessed in the mainland. Likewise, they revealed that because they were relocated from their homes, they now have trouble reaching their sources of livelihood.

Generally however, many of the respondents could not share any barriers to the actions they have presented. It is possible that the respondents may feel optimistic about facing the threats and the consequences that have afflicted their municipality. Despite the threats they have experienced, a positive outlook towards their future may already be a significant step towards community resilience and resistance to future risks.
Areas: Guiuan, Mercedes, and Salcedo, Eastern Samar

Community Information

Eastern Samar is one of the provinces comprising the Eastern Visayas Region (Region VIII). With a total land area of 466,047 hectares, the province is composed of twenty-two municipalities and one city inhabited by 461,300 individuals (2010 National Census). Of its twenty-two municipalities, three were covered by the research as risk zones and these include Guiuan, Mercedes, and Salcedo.

In particular, specific barangays (villages) in each municipality have participated in the conduct of one-to-one surveys and FGDs under the action-research initiative and these were the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Barangay</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guiuan</td>
<td>• Timala</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Banahao</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mercedes</td>
<td>• Buyayawon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salcedo</td>
<td>• Iberan</td>
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Majority of the covered barangays in the three municipalities are characterized as rural in nature. In the town of Mercedes, the research was conducted in a coastal community.

*Barangay Timala* is an upland farming community. As of June 2015, the barangay has a population of 137 households comprised of 565 individuals, 300 of which are men while the remaining 265 are women. The village of Timala was also selected to participate in the first round of FGD to initially identify significant threats that affect the local populace; actions that exist and/or could be carried out in response to the threats; and barriers that serve as challenges in addressing prominent risks.
The three municipalities fall under the high category in terms of risk level. All the survey respondents identified their respective localities as greatly susceptible to the risk of hazards and disasters. In recent years, the province of Eastern Samar has experienced disasters of varying magnitude due to a combination of physical and social factors including geographical location, climate change, and growing population. Eastern Samar is situated along the Eastern Seaboard, which makes it highly vulnerable to typhoon and other hydro-meteorological hazards. Furthermore, the evident phenomenon of climate change also exposes the municipality to greater risks such as sea level rise. Moreover, the incessant population growth has become apparent resulting in an increased number of vulnerable people. The municipalities of Guiuan, Mercedes, and Salcedo are among the at-risk towns every time a typhoon hits the province. This was evident when Supertyphoon Haiyan (Local name: Yolanda) battered the province in November 2013 and caused massive devastation in properties and livelihoods in the three municipalities. Other than damage to physical resources and belongings, the typhoon also claimed people's lives, brought injuries, and caused emotional distress. According to the locals, it was their first time to encounter such a typhoon with great intensity and unimaginable magnitude.
Respondent Information

Socio-Economic Status

Guiuan

Mercedes
More than half of the respondents from the municipalities of Guiuan (60%) and Mercedes (64%) have identified their socio-economic status as equal to the people living in other parts of the country. On the other hand, some of them (between 26% to 30%) perceive their socio-economic condition as much worse off in relation to other Filipinos given that they are confronted with difficulties in looking for sustainable livelihoods. The absence of long-term and flourishing economic opportunities is a plight that households in the covered areas bear. Such a reality is very apparent in the municipality of Salcedo where majority of the respondents (71%) identified their socio-economic status as worse off in comparison to other households in the Philippines. The impoverished condition of the people is further aggravated when disasters occur as damage to livelihoods and properties become inevitable.

As shown in the chart, only a small percentage of respondents (3% in Mercedes and Salcedo; 11% in Guiuan) claimed that their socio-economic condition is better in relation to the rest of the country.
The action research made an effort to target an equal number of male and female respondents. This is important to ensure that there is gender balance in gathering perspectives in the conduct of survey. Majority of the three municipalities were able to ensure equal participation of men and women, except for the town of Guiuan, which had a slightly greater number of female respondents.
Age

Guiuan

Mercedes

Less than 11 (3%)  12-17 (20%)  18-25 (28%)
26-60 (33%)  More than 60 (16%)
Less than 11 (0%)  12-17 (19%)  18-25 (16%)
26-60 (26%)  More than 60 (39%)
The action research encouraged the participation of individuals from varying age groups. This strategy ensured that children, adults, and older people are well represented and are able to express their voice. Majority of the respondents from the covered risk zones have ages that range from 26 to 60 years old. Respondents who are more than 60 years old follow. Children and youth with ages 12 to 25 years old were also active participants to the research and have shared their perspectives. In the municipality of Guiuan, 3% of the total respondents fall under the age bracket of less than 11 years old. This is particularly unique in Guiuan since Mercedes and Salcedo were not able to engage individuals under the said age group.
Among the covered risk zones, Guiuan was the sole municipality that has respondents belonging to an indigenous group. The inclusion of this group is deemed significant since indigenous people are among the most vulnerable groups that are often neglected and taken for granted in disaster risk reduction and management planning and decision making processes.
Each risk zone ensured that persons with disability were able to participate in the conducted survey. Of the total number of respondents, 16% are identified as disabled people. The involvement of persons with disability in the action-research is parallel to the increasing call for an inclusive and whole-of-society approach in DRRM in the global community.
Impacts and Perceptions

What has happened in your community with relation to losses and damage since 2005?

Guiuan

Mercedes
Respondents from the three covered risk zones have shared that there was increase in losses and damage due to disasters since 2005. The participating individuals from both Mercedes (24 of 29) and Salcedo (15 of 31) mentioned that the increase was substantial which significantly threatened their safety and welfare. This can be primarily accounted to their experience when Supertyphoon Haiyan ravaged the Visayas Region. The destruction caused by the disaster was unexpected and never did they imagine that a typhoon with such strength would batter the entire province. While they are used to experiencing typhoons in the past, Supertyphoon Haiyan was different. Even the elderly shared that it was their first time to have witnessed such a disaster. The force of the wind along with heavy downpour nearly wiped out their villages.

The strength of Supertyphoon Haiyan exceeded the typical typhoon scale that the country has and prompted the national weather bureau to make the necessary changes. Majority of the houses collapsed and got totally washed out; fishing boats and gears were damaged and left useless; farmlands (i.e. coconut plantation) were severely destroyed; buildings and infrastructures (i.e. church, bridges, roads, school, town/ village halls) were wrecked; some locals got injured while others even lost their loved ones and suffered from emotional distress. These detrimental and massive impacts left the communities with almost nothing and led them to struggle to continue living and regain their sense of normalcy.
What type of risk most affects you?

**Guiuan**

- Small scale local threats (57%)
- Large scale threats (43%)

**Mercedes**

- Small scale local threats (98%)
- Large scale threats (2%)
Respondents from the municipalities of Guiuan (56.83%) and Mercedes (98%) conveyed that small-scale local threats affect them more than the large scale ones. They encounter such threats on a daily basis and have significantly contributed to their high vulnerability to hazards and disasters. These small-scale threats are “everyday risks” that people have to deal with in their respective communities. In the case of Guiuan, lack of access to water, unemployment, poverty, alcoholism, and lack of access to basic health services are among the priority risks that need to be addressed. On the other hand, the town of Mercedes has identified poverty as a pressing concern that requires attention. If these threats are left unaddressed, the subsistence, safety, and the capacity of communities to cope with various disaster risks would be compromised.

On the other hand, large-scale threats also put the people’s welfare in peril. This is particularly evident in the case of Salcedo where 77% of the respondents claimed that these threats should be taken seriously. Respondents from the covered risk zones have identified typhoon as a major threat that has caused detrimental effects to people’s lives, livelihoods, and belongings. Apart from typhoon, earthquake and climate change are also perceived as hazards that pose great danger to their safety and wellbeing.
The respondents from Guiuan have identified typhoons and earthquakes as the top two threats that confront them. The recent experience they had with Supertyphoon Haiyan largely influenced this perception. When the said typhoon battered the municipality, the local people had to bear the brunt of strong winds and rain. Since the magnitude of the disaster was extraordinary, it was unforgettable for many of them since the destruction it caused was massive.

The locals identified earthquake as another significant threat as a result of the huge earthquake in Nepal that happened in 2015. This became an eye-opener not only to the communities in Guiuan but also to the entire Philippines as the country is situated along the Pacific Ring of Fire making it highly vulnerable to earthquake risks. In fact, the Philippines is already preparing for the “Big One” which could happen anytime based on the projections of the national seismic bureau.

Apart from natural hazards, the locals have also shared threats that are highly influenced by socio-economic factors such as access to water, alcoholism, and unemployment. The respondents from Barangay Timala conveyed that the distance of most households to the functional artesian well is approximately 500 meters. It would take an average of 1.5 hours in order to fill water containers enough for a day’s use per household excluding the 30-minute waiting time. This is a major concern to many of them since water is a basic need.
Unemployment and alcoholism are also common risks in the area especially after the onslaught of Supertyphoon Haiyan. The village residents used to depend on coconut farming as their main source of income. Since the disaster destroyed 95% of the community’s coconut plantation, they explored other livelihood options such as construction work and motorcycle driving. However, these economic opportunities are limited and not sustainable which affect the households’ capacity to meet their basic needs. In fact, the total monthly income of most households in Timala is far way below the PhP 8,877.00 family poverty threshold pegged by the Philippine Statistics Authority for the region. Males also resort to alcoholism as a coping mechanism from all the pressures and stress they need to handle to provide for their families.

**Top 5 Threats (Identified by Persons with Disability)**

Given the physical limitations of persons with disability, the absence of access to water was identified as one of the topmost threats that affect them. As previously mentioned, the location of the functional artesian is quite far from the households. Despite their physical restrictions, the disabled have to endure the long walks, exasperating waiting time, and heavy load just to get the water they need.

Poverty, which is aggravated by unemployment, was also regarded as a priority risk. The impoverished condition of many households greatly contribute to their vulnerability to hazards since they do not possess the necessary resources to make their houses durable and typhoon-resistant; protect their livelihoods; and secure their properties.

The changing climate, which triggers typhoons and other hydro-meteorological hazards with greater intensity, was also a common risk highlighted by persons with disability given their experience with Supertyphoon Haiyan.
The priority threats as well as the ranking of women are similar to those of the general survey respondents from the municipality of Guiuan. The two natural hazards namely typhoons and earthquakes topped the list and were followed by lack of access to water, alcoholism, and climate change respectively.
Top 5 Threats
Mercedes and Salcedo

Both the municipalities of Mercedes and Salcedo have highlighted typhoon as their primary risk which significantly causes adverse impacts to the lives of local people. Similar to Guiuan, typhoon is a common hazard that perennially strikes in the said areas. Wanton destruction is caused by typhoon events severely affecting people’s livelihoods and properties. This kind of scenario worsens their existing poverty-stricken condition. In normal times, many households are already confronted with destitution as they struggle to meet their basic needs. The occurrence of disasters is indeed a constant challenge that households have to endure given that it doubles their burden, especially now that the magnitude of typhoon has undeniably escalated.

Based on the income classification of the national government’s Department of Finance, Mercedes is a fourth-class municipality while Salcedo falls under the fifth-class category. This is a clear indication that limited economic opportunities and unsustainable livelihoods are apparent predicaments of the locals. Like other municipalities in the Visayas Region, the most unforgettable disaster for the people of Mercedes and Salcedo was Supertyphoon Yolanda, which brought unimaginable destruction posing a threat to their survival.

Flooding is also a common threat in both municipalities given its coastal and island environment. The occurrence of this risk is further intensified by episodes of sea level rise that trigger flooding especially in times of typhoon. Other natural hazards were also considered as major threats such as earthquakes and El Nino. Due to the huge losses and destruction that earthquake events would likely cause, the locals exhibit anxiousness and fear of its arrival. On the other hand, El Nino is also a risk that threatens both municipalities as the agriculture sector is detrimentally affected endangering one of their income sources.
Top 5 Threats (*Identified by Persons with Disability*)

**Mercedes and Salcedo**

The respondents with disability from Mercedes and Salcedo have identified poverty as the top threat that affects them. Given that both of these municipalities are at the lower scale of the national government's income classification, the locals are irrefutably confronted with issues that concern sustenance and survival. The burden of persons with disability is doubled since they have to think of their physical welfare other than their economic needs.

Similar to poverty, typhoon is also considered a priority threat that endangers the wellbeing of persons with disability since lives, properties and livelihoods are likely to be damaged when it strikes their locality.

Given the limited access of both municipalities to health services, the occurrence of diseases is also a key concern that defies the disabled residents of Mercedes and Salcedo. The presence of poor health condition is a significant barrier to their capacity to participate in activities that would promote their welfare and prepare them from life-threatening events.

Earthquake is also identified as an important threat given the possibility of huge destruction in the communities when it happens. The physical limitations of persons with disability are significant vulnerabilities that could hamper the protection of their security and safety in times of earthquake.
Top 5 Threats (Identified by Women)

Mercedes and Salcedo

The ranking of priority threats of female respondents is the same with the rating of the general survey respondents from both municipalities. Majority of women shared that typhoon is the topmost threat that brings in massive damage and losses to their communities. As repeatedly mentioned earlier, the wrath of Supertyphoon Haiyan caused widespread devastation in the province, which subjected locals to a more destitute condition because of heightened poverty. Since the disaster took away almost all of their belongings, the women as mothers had to bear the burden of coping and recovery together with men to continue with their lives.

Since both have coastal barangays, flooding is also predicament that contributes to the anxiety of women. When floods occur, properties and livelihoods are endangered. This scenario is a clear threat to their sustenance, which again aggravates their impoverished condition.

Women are also concerned with other natural risks which may happen in their localities such as earthquakes and El Nino. Both of these could cause adverse impacts to people’s lives as it can trigger physical, socio-economic, and psychosocial predicaments.
The manifold natural and human-induced risks identified by the people of Guiuan have significant effects that affect them as individuals and as a community in general. Among the consequences shared by the community respondents, loss of life emerged as the most common. Given the wanton destruction impelled by Supertyphoon Haiyan, the people have witnessed how the disaster led to the death of many people, not only from the municipality but also from the whole Visayas Region. In fact, it is known as the deadliest Philippine typhoon on record. According to the 2013 report of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, Supertyphoon Haiyan resulted in 6,300 fatalities, 93.68% of which were from the Eastern Visayas Region. In the town of Guiuan, 87 deaths were recorded, 931 were injured, and 23 others were identified as missing.

Following loss of life, diseases and health effects were ranked second as testified by 68 respondents. Disasters such as typhoons often lead to respiratory (i.e. cough and colds) and water-borne diseases (i.e. diarrhea and lose bowel movement). Children and elderly are among the groups that are vulnerable to these types of illnesses. The at risk condition of these groups is further aggravated by issues relating to limited medical personnel and distance of municipal health center from the village.

Due to the trauma and suffering that local communities experience when disasters happen, the people have to deal with psychological impacts that adversely affect their capacity to regularly perform their roles and tasks. Although disaster survivors do not explicitly admit that they have
psychological issues due to fear of discrimination, signs of emotional distress and depression are commonly observed. Such condition is triggered by death of loved ones and loss of properties that make them feel unsecured, helpless, and have no one to share their lives with. For parents, one manifestation of psychosocial problem is their tendency to physically abuse their children. Furthermore, with the impoverished condition of the households as a result of the disaster, children and youth are forced to work to meet the needs of their families. Many parents could hardly send their children to college due to high cost of tuition fees, school supplies, transportation, food, and accommodation.

Moreover, destruction of public facilities was also considered as an inevitable consequence of disasters. Such damage affects the everyday life of the locals since access to water, electricity, and other basic social lifelines become a problem.

### Top 5 Consequences

*Mercedes and Salcedo*

Insecurity emerged as the top consequence of various risks identified by 115 respondents from the towns of Mercedes and Salcedo. Physical, economic, social, and emotional instabilities are deemed as major challenges that typhoons and other hazards cause to the lives of community people.

Physical insecurity is prompted by the varying health risks that disasters instigate. As previously mentioned, children and elderly are among the at-risk groups to this type of risk. The presence of health issues affect the functioning of these groups and could also contribute to their permanent disability.
Livelihood loss was also highlighted as one of the consequences of being vulnerable to threats. According to the local people, this often results in economic insecurity, which is further aggravated by loss of assets. Given the impoverishment that many households already suffer during regular days, disasters undeniably exacerbate their condition. Furthermore, poverty also disrupts the schooling of children and youth. Since poverty leaves the children and youth with no choice but to help their parents in meeting their economic needs, they are forced to neglect their education to earn a living. For others, displacement also prompts them to leave school in search for safer locations.

**Top 5 Actions**

*Guiuan*

In response to the threats and its likely consequences, the respondents from Guiuan conveyed actions which they see as beneficial and effective in protecting their safety and wellbeing. Disaster preparedness was ranked as the topmost action that will equip the locals with necessary knowledge and skills in responding to the risks of hazards and disasters. As shared by 78 respondents, among the concrete disaster preparedness mechanisms shared by locals were skills trainings, information dissemination campaign, and DRRM planning.

Another action that the respondents highlighted was for locals to avoid living in risky areas. This emphasizes the importance of conducting risk assessment to identify which locations are safe and unsafe for habitation. A careful evaluation of the level of risk in the localities would help achieve proper zoning and planning.
The realization of community-self management was deemed as a crucial action for ensuring safety from disasters. According to the respondents, being able to act on their own using local resources also serves as a concrete indicator of resilience. Furthermore, this underscores the significance of collaboration that clearly reflects their “oneness as a community.”

Since the households’ economic condition is a key determinant of vulnerability, livelihood restoration is a priority action that needs to be realized. Access to economic opportunities would enable the locals to recover at a faster rate since they are provided with the necessary resources for meeting their basic needs. Furthermore, livelihood restoration offers an avenue to easily regain their sense of normalcy since they are able continue their conventional economic activities.

Since health is a crucial factor in one’s wellbeing, the respondents identified the promotion of wellness as a fundamental action to address the risk of hazards and disasters. When people are healthy, they are fit not only in responding to emergency situations but also in contributing to the greater development of their community.
Given the high incidence of poverty in both municipalities, a total of 151 respondents advocated for the implementation of actions for poverty reduction and employment generation. These actions would help curb impoverishment which significantly contributes to the communities’ vulnerability to hazards and disasters.

Similar to Guiuan, disaster preparedness was also identified as one of the priority actions in response to the threats. The locals see the value of trainings, public awareness and education campaigns, and drills as significant measures for equipping the community with appropriate preparedness practices. When people are prepared, they could better act during emergency situations, which is critical in minimizing deaths and losses.

Livelihood restoration after a disaster is a vital action that respondents identified to promote poverty and vulnerability reduction. The sustenance of affected families is a critical consideration in disaster situations. Apart from fishing, majority of the locals depend on agriculture for a living. Thus, agriculture rehabilitation was among the common actions which need to be taken seriously as shared by the locals.

Health is also a major consideration for the people of Mercedes and Salcedo. This is a clear reflection of the high regard that locals give to the promotion not only of physical health but also of psychological wellness. Since the community becomes more susceptible to health risks during emergencies, protecting the locals from any physical and mental illnesses is a good strategy in building their capacities in response to disasters.
While specific actions have been identified in response to the threats, the respondents from Guiuan also identified barriers that inhibit them from realizing safe and resilient communities. Dependency of the community people to authorities and service providers at all levels (barangay, municipal, and national) was ranked first among the barriers. Since these concerned groups are perceived to have the legal mandate in securing their protection and safety as duty bearers, the locals tend to be docile recipients of assistance coming from them. This prevailing scenario perpetuates a culture of dependency which limits the opportunities for active local participation. Furthermore, the local people are not provided with effective and sustainable avenues to hone their capacities not only in response to disaster risks but also as active agents in community development.

Besides dependency, disability is also a concern that respondents identified as a hindrance to their vision of safe communities. The presence of disabilities halts them from actively engaging in DRRM activities and development-related agenda. In addition, lack of preparedness and low awareness were also considered noteworthy obstacles in advancing a disaster resilient future. If the locals would not be capacitated to act as frontliners in times of disaster, a reactive framework and approach to DRR will prevail. Moreover, significant reduction of damages, losses, and casualties would be impossible if communities remain uneducated.
The respondents from Mercedes and Salcedo have identified fundamental challenges that are related to knowledge, resources, and governance. Majority of them conveyed that lack of risk awareness impedes them from realizing concrete and effective DRRM undertakings. Conduct of risk assessment is critical for communities to be aware of their threats and vulnerabilities. Having a clear and up-to-date risk assessment would aid the people in identifying their priorities and planning context-specific and sustainable actions.

Besides the abovementioned barrier, resource-related concern was also underscored. Given that poverty-stricken condition is evident in both towns, the communities struggle in mobilizing resources for resilience building. While the locals are keen to pursue tangible steps for their safety from disasters, they are hindered from doing so because of lack of resources. This reality explains why some of their plans only remain in paper and are not accomplished.

The issue of governance is also a critical barrier in pursuing DRRM agenda. The respondents articulated that limited support from the local government, technically and financially, is a serious challenge that needs to be addressed. The absence of clear systems, processes, and structure creates a gap in ensuring effective collaboration. This kind of scenario is further aggravated by the inadequate knowledge of both the government and the local people on the latter’s personal and collective rights. Knowledge on personal and collective rights is crucial to make the governments accountable as part of their role as duty bearers.
Cotabato City
Area: Cotabato City

Community Information

Cotabato City is one of the independent component cities located in the northwest portion of the Maguindanao province in the island of Mindanao in the Philippines. It is deemed as the regional center of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM); although for administrative purposes, it is considered a part of the region of SOCCSKSARGEN along with South Cotabato, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Saranggani, and General Santos City.

With a total land area of 176.0 square kilometers, Cotabato City is reported to have a population of 271,786 (National Statistics Office, 2010). It is politically subdivided into 37 barangays, four of which participated in the conduct of one-to-one surveys and focus group discussions under this action-research initiative. The participating barangays under the municipality of Cotabato City are as follows:

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<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Barangay</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cotabato City</td>
<td>• Bagua 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mother Barangay Poblacion I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Notre Dame Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>• Poblacion 7</td>
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Source: Gonzalez (2005)
Type of Community

Cotabato was declared as a first class municipality on July 1, 1950 under Executive Order No. 466. On June 20, 1959, by virtue of Republic Act No. 2364, it was officially declared as a chartered city. Now considered an urban type of community, it is the hub of economic activities in Central Mindanao in such avenues as trade and finance as well as other basic services including education, social, physical, and cultural welfare (National Statistics Coordination Board, n.d.).

Risk Zone

Due to multiple heavy threats on the peace process in this region, the municipality of Cotabato City has been considered a conflict area. The respondents of the study have noted that this province has been afflicted by a multitude of socio-political issues: political and non-political related bombings in public places, armed confrontations, and rampant killings related to drug issues. In addition, organized groups such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Moro National Liberation Front, BILF, and National Peoples’ Army affect the peace and order of the city. Political clashes and political dynastic conflicts also create fear in community members.
Three out of four barangays covered by this study—Bagua 2, Mother Barangay Poblacion I, and Poblacion 7—have been deemed by respondents to be of medium risk, while Notre Dame Village has been noted to be of high risk. Aside from Cotabato City being a hotbed of the armed confrontations and political conflicts, its low-lying barangays have also been at risk of flooding. In 2013, 28 barangays with more than 30,000 families were affected by severe flooding (OSWDS, 2013). In 2014, more than 15 barangays, including Mother Poblacion, were inundated due to continuous heavy torrents of rain which drove rising water levels in major tributaries (Cabrera, 2014).
**Respondents Information**

**Socio-Economic Profile**

**Socio-Economic Status**

Half of the respondents feel that they have equal socio-economic standing as the others in their community. However, 39% of the respondents feel that they are worse off, and only a few (8%) feel they are better off. Cotabato City was a thriving province when it used to serve as the capital of the Sultanate of Maguindanao during its prime. However, in the 1970s, it experienced civil conflicts which gravely affected its booming economic growth. Due to its struggles to overcome these difficulties, its communities are still striving to recover its former economic glory.
In general, based on the population study in 2010, men comprised 49.1%, while women accounted for 50.9% of the 271,609 population of Cotabato City. In this study, the gender split of the respondents was also almost equal, there being 44% men and 56% of women. Having an almost similar number of respondents for both genders ensures that both are given the opportunity to participate and share their experiences.
While more than half of the respondents are adults aged 26 to 60 years old (57%) and young adults (18 to 25 year olds) comprised 26% of the respondents, the researchers guaranteed that all age groups would also be represented such that the voices of the vulnerable age groups—the children and elderly—would be heard. As such, there were also a number of respondents aged 12 to 17 years old (9%) and elderly (those more than 60) respondents (5%).

**Belongs to Ethnic Group**

While majority of the respondents do not belong to an ethnic group (86%), it was ensured that persons from indigenous groups would be represented (2%). In Cotabato City, more than a third of the population consists of indigenous Iranon Muslims, followed by Cebuanos (26%), Tagalog (15%), Hiligaynons (11%), and Ilocanos, Maranaos, and Chabacanos (12%) (Cotabato City, 2016).
Many respondents (85%) registered having no disability, while 2% of the respondents answered that they are persons with disability. The latter were given the opportunity to participate in the research since their views and experiences as vulnerable persons during disasters are especially valuable.
Impacts and Perceptions

What has happened in your community with relation to losses and damage since 2005?

Fifty-six respondents deem that there is no change to their community in relation to losses and damage since 2005. The strife in Cotabato City has been ongoing since the 1970s, and while steps have been made by the government to ease the conflicts, negotiations have made only slight dents in the peace process and community members may feel that great strides may be needed to be able to change their fearful situation.

Thirty-five respondents feel that there were some increases in losses. This may be due to the typhoons and flooding that have ravaged the area in the recent years. Cotabato City was one of the areas afflicted by Typhoon Pablo in 2012 and Typhoon Glenda in 2014, both of which left many communities in the city inundated.

On the other hand, fourteen respondents said that they believe there was a small reduction in losses. It is possible that the communities attribute this to the intensification of the actions of the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, as it strengthens its cooperation and coordination capacities to be able to not only recover from disasters but also to prepare for, prevent and mitigate these.
What type of risk most affects you?

Natural hazards such as flooding and fire heavily afflict the city, and this was noted by twenty seven percent of respondents who said that it is large-scale threats which most affect them. However, more respondents (73%) actually shared that it is the small-scale local threats that most affect them. These small-scale threats include everyday risks such as unemployment, crimes (carnapping, holdups), drug addiction due to the hold of strong drug organizations, and the plight of informal settlers brought about by the lack of adequate housing.
**Threat, Consequences, Actions, and Barriers**

**Top 5 Threats**

The top threat for the respondent community members is flooding. The recent years have seen massive damage within the city's communities due to the wrath of typhoons traversing Mindanao. While the city is actually located outside the typhoon belt and protected by hills and small mountains surrounding it, flooding occurs during the onset of heavy rains as the city is a catch basin of waters from Maguindanao, North Cotabato and Liguwasan Marsh areas (Cabrera, 2014). When there are continuous rainy days, people report feeling anxiety, dread, and fear of the possible occurrence of folding. Community members attribute the risk of flooding to improper waste disposal which can cause stagnant water through flumes. Moreover, they believe that cutting of trees in different areas triggers environmental hazards like flash floods.

The respondents found unemployment as the second top threat. Community members attribute this to the insufficiency of job hiring, as well as the lack of good economic programs that are provided by the government. Likewise, they believe that corruption may be the root of this predicament. The worsening problem of unemployment coupled with the increasing price hike on people's basic needs such as food, medicines, electricity, and water) has led to poverty. Due to this unfortunate state, some people are pushed towards crimes such as stealing.
The third top threat pointed out by the community members is drug abuse. The number of people taking up drugs is expanding due to the drug market which has been said to be “red-hot” in a number of places. According to the respondents, illegal drug pushers, users, and dealers, may cause harm to their fellows. Most lured into the drug habit are the youth, especially those who are away from their families or who come from broken families. These occurrences have both grave psychological and social consequences: they lead to an increase in ‘psychologically ill’ people, along with an increase of the crime rate in the city.

Fire was mentioned as the fourth top threat in the city. In 2014 for instance, 100 people were affected by a fire which razed 12 houses. In 2013, around 50 stalls in a market were razed by fire. Community members are especially apprehensive of such incidents due to the destruction of their homes and loss of their assets, leading them to possibly be displaced to other areas.

Other notable threats are those of political and non-political killings and murder which are rampant in the city. People become fearful for their lives due to armed confrontations and the threat of organized groups and criminal organizations. Indeed, a respondent has conveyed that, “Cotabato has never been free from kidnapping incidents and bombing”. 
Disease and health effects brought about by flooding was the top consequence as rated by the participants. Indeed, the World Health Organization (2016) has conveyed that floods may facilitate the transmission of communicable diseases in the form of water-borne diseases (typhoid fever, cholera, leptospirosis and hepatitis) and vector-borne diseases (malaria, dengue). The poor state of the health system in communities due to the lack of community health clinics as well as adequate medical resources further aggravates the health conditions of community members.

Rated as the second top consequence, economic loss was mostly attributed to the problem of unemployment and poverty. In general, the Mindanao province has 418,000 unemployed persons as of October 2014 (Mindanao Development Authority, 2014). Because of this burgeoning issue, Secretary to the Mayor Aniceto Rasalan has communicated the city government’s plans to reduce unemployment: “The City Government is intensifying all its efforts in sustaining the developments that we have achieved in the past years so that we can invite more investors to come in and subsequently reduce the city's unemployment rate" (Adam, 2015).

The widespread damage of flooding and fire events have led to the top three to five consequences as shared by the respondents. Loss of assets, building and dwelling destruction, and livelihood loss were pointed out as major consequences of the experiences of community members during times of flooding and fire. During incidents of continuous rains, families often leave their houses to stay in evacuation areas, thereby leaving their houses and belongings damaged due to inundation. These incidents often result into loss of time at work, lessening their chances of stable livelihoods.
Many of the respondents could not convey actions to their perceived threats. Those who did suggested several measures, the top of which is cleaning the environment to avoid flooding. Since improper waste management has been pointed out as aggravating flooding events due to the clogging of drainage systems, community members believe that cleaning the environment will lessen the effects of the flooding hazard. Aside from wastes, however, water hyacinths have also been indicated as a source of clogging (Locsin, 2014), hence the need for awareness and alertness of community members as to the cleanliness of their surroundings.

Law enforcement was declared as the third priority action in response to the problem of drugs in the area. Community members recommend the vigilance of their law enforcement agencies particularly in catching and imprisoning drug dealers and drug lords who they believe are a menace to society, especially as the youth as a vulnerable group are the ones most affected.

Education is a priority consideration of community respondents. Through proper education, they believe they can address the multiple critical issues within their communities. Education, particularly regarding preparedness for floods and fire, is key in being able to increase their knowledge and capacities to prevent the high losses and damages brought about by these natural hazards.

Livelihood restoration was the fifth priority area identified by the respondents, which they believe is critical in the issue of unemployment. They aspire for the government’s provisions of jobs and livelihood with adequate monthly salary wages. These, they aver, will aid in alleviating their issues with poverty, and will avert them from the commitment of crimes and drug abuse.
While most of the respondents did not mention any barriers to the actions they propose, some respondents did note key obstacles. Thirty-five respondents mentioned that the barriers were of a psychological nature, manifested in such forms as laziness and hardheadedness of community members, particularly in following laws and ordinances and proper waste management. Indeed, thirty respondents pointed out that another barrier is actually poor waste management. The improper disposal of trash and wastes leads to clogged drainages which may cause flooding incidents.

Thirty-two respondents stated that the lack of resources including personal, community, and national are another barrier. It is the reality that there are limitations in addressing pressing community concerns due to issues of funding and mobilization of resources. In this kind of situation can one see the significance of addressing not just large-scale disasters, but small-scale local disasters which afflict communities daily. The poverty experienced by community members in a way restricts them from further actions that may enhance the resilience of their communities. It is possible that reforms may be needed in the areas of governmental funding to be able to help alleviate the economic burdens of these communities, and help them rise towards resilient and sustainable futures.
V. Conclusion & Recommendations
V. Conclusion and Recommendations

The participating organizations in the Frontline project have covered eight municipalities of varying physical, geographical, and socio-economic attributes across the Philippines. Identified as “risk zones”, the select municipalities are geographically distributed across the country’s major islands namely Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. A predominant feature among these areas is their high vulnerability to hazards and disasters, which threaten the wellbeing and survival of the local people. The coastal and upland municipalities in the provinces of Iloilo, Eastern Samar, and Cebu are faced with greater risk given the constantly increasing impacts of climate change especially in recent years.

Based on the survey findings, among the top threats evident in the rural and urban areas include floods, typhoons, earthquake, unemployment, drug abuse, and poverty. Varying factors are influential in the occurrence of these significant risks and some of the commonly identified triggers are as follows: natural processes; socio-economic condition; and people’s values and practices. Due to the country’s geographical location, the Philippines is a constant typhoon path. More often than not, strong typhoons result in massive flooding, which is considered as another major threat to many communities in the Philippines.

On the other hand, poverty and unemployment are intertwining threats. These risks confront the locals everyday and have considerably influence their way of life. In reality, many of the participating communities are already experiencing an impoverished state during normal times and the arrival of disasters is a great contributor in aggravating their destitution. One of the major causal factors to their poverty-stricken state is the menial and unstable economic opportunities available in their areas. The absence of sustainable income sources is a significant factor that inhibits households from doing disaster preparedness and coping from disaster impacts. The minimal income that locals earn is just enough for meeting their basic needs. Thus, the damages and losses that disasters bring further subject the locals to a more difficult dilemma as their survival is challenged. Furthermore, as a result of poverty, the incidence of drug abuse in the localities escalated. The use and selling of drugs have become prevalent as a way of escaping their plight and dealing with societal pressures.

Over the years, the communities have accounted that there has been substantial increase in losses which adversely affect people’s lives, community livelihoods and the environment. As reflected in the gathered responses, these losses are significantly prompted not by huge disasters but mainly by small-scale local threats, which the community people encounter on a regular basis such as poverty. Such a reality reveals the need for viewing disasters using a developmental lens.
As revealed by the research findings, the perpetual exposure of communities to both types of risk is aggravated by the following: (1) scarcity of resources; (2) corruption and limited government support; (3) lack of education; (4) absence of risk assessment; and (5) the persisting culture of dependency. These challenges are treated as barriers for various sectors in the communities to initiate actions towards vulnerability reduction and resilience building.

Although the abovementioned barriers may significantly hamper the communities’ path towards disaster safety, in terms of capacity to deal with threats, the different risk zones are not zero and have something to offer. With the support provided by various government and non-government organizations, some of them have already undergone capacity building activities such as trainings, awareness raising initiatives, community organizing, mitigation activities, and advocacy. The learnings and opportunities from these capacity enhancement endeavors coupled by the findings of this research provided a mechanism for the locals to think of concrete actions that could potentially provide an enabling environment for them to put forward safe, resilient, and developed communities. Among the actions underscored by the locals include the following: (1) intensify disaster preparedness campaigns; (2) promote actions for poverty reduction; (3) immediately restore livelihood activities after a disaster; (4) strengthen efforts to seek external support through partnerships and networking; and (5) secure people’s health through the promotion of physical and mental wellness.

From the gamut of valuable findings that emerged during the course of data collection, significant recommendations were developed. The recommendations are geared to promote the relevance of addressing everyday risks and influence various stakeholders at all levels to work together in advancing integrated, multi-sectoral, and multi-hazard DRRM agenda. The specific recommendations are as follows:

**Establish documentation and information dissemination mechanisms**

The presence of systematic documentation and information dissemination mechanisms would serve as an effective venue for the communities to highlight and share their current initiatives on collectively addressing their vulnerabilities and everyday risks towards safety and sustainable development. One strategy that could be employed in disseminating the empowering and inspiring experiences of vulnerable communities is through the development of case studies. Such an approach would engage the people in sharing their significant milestones, good practices, and challenges as they journey through the process of vulnerability reduction and resilience building. The communities’ plans and ways forward would also be given focus in the case studies to present a picture of the people’s aspirations and motives in improving and sustaining their DRRM work.
**Intensify advocacy strategies**

On the other hand, bolstering the advocacy and campaign strategies is also recommended to aid in influencing various public and private stakeholders to look into the impacts of everyday risks and identify concrete steps to reduce or mitigate them. Among the possible channels that could be employed to realize greater influencing are production of advocacy materials such as video documentaries and creation of infographics. These visual advocacy materials would help in spreading the value of knowing community small-scale and large-scale risks and threats; encouraging community actions towards sustainability; and employing a multi-sectoral and multi-hazard DRRM approach.

**Strengthen partnership at all levels**

Continuous coalition building is also deemed as a significant instrument in sustaining actions for vulnerability reduction. Strengthening partnerships with different stakeholders serves as an avenue for influencing wider groups of people. This would aid in bringing forward the advocacy of greater community and civil society participation in risk reduction and resilience building agenda. One of the concrete activities to realize this is through organizing of different learning events in the form of forum or round table discussion to facilitate sharing of good practices, challenges, and possible areas for collaboration.
References


