



**German
Red
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EXTERNAL EVALUATION

OF

Empowering Philippine Red Cross, Government Institutions and Communities to consolidate and replicate Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction in seven provinces in the Philippines (EPIC DRR Project)

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**german
cooperation**

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Limitations

The evaluation team wants to report the final financial data were not available, which limited the analysis of the efficiency criteria.

Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in this report are the exclusive responsibility of the evaluation team and do not necessarily reflect those of the Philippines Red Cross and German Red Cross.

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Acronyms

BDRRM	Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
BMZ	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development
BRC	Bangladesh Red Cross
CRA	Community Risk Assessment
CEWS	Community Early Warning System
DepED	Department of Education
DLIG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
PRC	Philippines Red Cross
EPIC DRR Project	Empowering Philippine Red Cross, Government Institutions and Communities to consolidate and replicate Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction in seven provinces in the Philippines Project
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Practice
LGUs	Local Government Units
MDRRMO	Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office
NHQ	National Headquarters
NRC	Norwegian Red Cross
NS	National Society
PNS	Partner National Society
RC	Red Cross
RCY	Red Cross Youth
RC143	Red Cross 143
PSA	Philippines Statistical Authority
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

Executive Summary

This report presents the independent evaluation of the “Empowering Philippine Red Cross, Government Institutions and Communities to consolidate and replicate Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction in seven provinces in the Philippines Project (EPIC DRR Project)” funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The evaluation was conducted between November-December 2019 by a two-member Evaluation Team (ET). The EPIC Project was a three-year Project (2016- 2019), and the second phase of a nine or twelve years Program. The total budget of this phase was 2.20 million € and it was implemented by the Philippines Red Cross (PRC) with the support of the German Red Cross (GRC). GRC was in charge of the project’s contract agreement and relations with the donor.

The overall objective of the EPIC DRR Project was to contribute to the consolidation and implementation process of the Philippine institutional and operational framework for DRRM and to increase resilience of local communities; and the project goal was that the Philippine Red Cross systematically strengthens and develops its own capacity in the field of disaster risk management and supports DM government institutions, communities and schools for the sound implementation of DRR-Measures.

The purpose of this evaluation was to identify to what degree the intended results of the EPIC DRR Project were achieved, and what have been the key lessons learned. The final evaluation examined the following areas: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability / connectedness and coherence. It used mixed methods and multiple analysis approaches to collect, analyze, triangulate data, and interpret findings. The ET conducted focus group discussions in target barangays and schools and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and PRC staff and volunteers. These methods were complemented by document review, field observation, surveys and validation workshop.

The evaluation found good evidence that the EPIC DRR Project has performed well towards the expected results. There is evidence that Barangays and Schools (Result 1 and 2) have increased capacity in disaster risk reduction (micro level), and the school toolkit will make it easier for the teacher to integrate DRR into primary and secondary school education activities. The EPIC DRR Project has strengthened the PRC capacities in DRR (meso and macro level). The Chapters involved in the project strengthened the PRC capacities through the implementation of activities and trainings (meso level); and the NHQ and the remaining chapters strengthened the PRC capacities through the development of tools and training their volunteers and staff (macro level).

Key Findings

The evaluation concludes that overall, the Project has achieved an adequate level of success across the six key areas.

Relevance and Coherence

- The Project is highly relevant and coherent at all the levels:

- At international level, the Project is strongly aligned with Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Comprehensive School Safety Framework, among others.
- At Government level, the Project is strongly aligned with government priorities and policies on DRR. The EPIC DRR Project's overall objective complements the ongoing initiative of the national and local governments as well as other stakeholders in the country toward achieving the National DRRM vision of: "safer and disaster-resilient Filipino communities toward sustainable development." Also, EPIC DRR Project supports the implementation of and aligned to DRR laws, policy frameworks and plans at various levels.
- At Red Cross Movement Level, the Project is strongly aligned with the main Movement policies and Strategies: Strategy 2020 and 2030, IFRC Framework for Community Resilience, One billion Coalition for Resilience, among other.
- At GRC Level, the Project is aligned with the GRC International Cooperation Strategy: "increasing the resilient against the consequences of natural hazards and to reducing existing vulnerabilities while building the self-help capacities of communities and strengthening the preparedness for response capacities of National Red Cross".
- At PRC Level, the Project is strongly aligned with the PRC Strategy 2017-2020 Framework and mission as specified: Goal 1, Strengthen vulnerable communities, and Goal 3, Chapters' performance; as well as the auxiliary role of the Red Cross. Additionally, it is aligned with the PRC Safe and Resilient Barangay Framework.
- The selection of the barangays and schools has been based on the results of the risk and hazard assessment both by the Government and the PRC assessment, to ensure that the Project sites are relevant and warrant the intervention. The selection of the tools and frameworks have based on the needs identified in the DRR Roadmap, Red Cross (RC)143 evaluation and best practices.
- The intervention logic is appropriate and allows for achievement of the expected results and objectives.
- The EPIC DRR Project narrows the capacity gap of the provincial and local governments in providing technical assistance to Barangay Local Government Units (LGUs) to develop their Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction Management (BDRRM) Plans. Through the Project activities, the limited resources (i.e. financial, human, and technical) to enhance their DRR capacities of Barangay LGUs and schools situated in 4th to 6th class municipalities were increased.

Effectiveness

- The Project management structure designed for the Project is in line with that of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners operating in The Philippines, with the PRC as the implementing agency, and the GRC providing funding, monitoring and technical support.
- The ET consider that the Project achieved all the expected results and the Project Goal. Although it is relevant to point out that some of the activities planned in 2018 had not been implemented

and the funds had to be returned to the donor; resulting in a reduction of the effectiveness and impact of the EPIC DRR Project.

- The Project is based on good program logic, working at a community level with key agents of change (Barangays Official, RC143¹, and schools' Focal points) to ensure the results 1 and 2 are achieved (micro level). They acquired the knowledge and skills required to identify the risks and hazards, and they can develop DRRM Plans. Also, the project is complemented with response equipment and mitigation measure to ensure the agents of change put their learning into practice.
- The teachers and barangays officials consider the Project has been effective and all of them are satisfied with the result. However, they felt overloaded with the number of activities, and the design and approval process for the project activities were too long and complicated.
- The approach used for tools development was participatory and inclusive, encouraging the participation of other departments, Partner National Societies (PNS) and International Federations of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). These tools will improve the quality of the work of the PRC, and all staff and stakeholders interviewed were satisfied with the approach used for tools development . A limitation in the analysis has been that several of the tools have not been approved or tested yet.
- The monitoring focused on ensuring all the activities and products have been carried out rather than assessing whether beneficiaries had increased their knowledge and skills in DRR.

Efficiency

- The PRC has procurement, administrative, and financial procedures; which represent a guarantee to prevent corruption and ensure the quality and low cost of the activities, services, and purchase. However, these time-consuming procedures have significantly increased the Project total cost and the time needed to implement it. The staff had to use a relevant part of the working time for administration, logistics and financial preparations, instead of spending the time on more useful activities such as discussion of the implementation strategy. The PRC has identified this problem and is trying to introduce systemic changes; although this has been a very slow process, without any real improvement so far.
- The development of the tools and the DRR Roadmap was carried out in an efficient way, leading to the development of the PRC, through technical working groups and PRC staff. Consultants were hired only when was necessary and requested by PRC. Also, the non-cost collaboration of other actors of the Movement and EU volunteers increased the efficiency of the Project.
- The Project has had a good collaboration and involvement of the Provincial and Municipal Government in most of the actions carried out in result 1 and 2. The Project activities

¹ Red Cross 143 is a community-based volunteering program of the Philippine Red Cross where one leader and a minimum of forty three (43) members form part of an active corps of capable, caring, and committed individuals. RC 143 promotes a culture of self-help in the communities by developing a formidable network of Red Cross volunteers who will predict potential risk, plan, prepare, and practice for effective community based disaster risk reduction.

complement, not duplicate, the efforts of the national, provincial and municipal government and relevant DRRM agencies.

- Coordination and collaboration with other actors of the Movement, such as Bangladesh Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, and IFRC, have been essential to achieving synergies and learning
- The Project did not have enough staff to effectively implement and monitor the activities. They felt overwhelmed and overloaded with tasks and responsibilities. Most staff have had to work overtime to be able to implement the activities. Although the Project Team was reinforced in the second year, it was not enough to perform the task without overwork, mainly at HQ level.

Impact

Despite delays in the implementation of the Project, which resulted in more than 15 % of the funds having to be returned to the donor, PRC has been able to achieve a good level of success in each of the Project's objective and results.

- The Project has activated the Red Cross 143 (RC143) in the 70 barangays; also, and as part of the Project, a work plan has been developed to strengthen RC143 Program to support community resilience effectively.
- The Barangays LGUs have improved their capacity (knowledge, awareness, preparedness) on DRR. Their participation in the Project workshops and trainings enabled them to develop their respective BDRRM Plans, which is aligned to the requirement of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). Also, Barangay LGUs improved DRRM capacity through the equipment provided and trainings facilitated by the Project. The mitigation measure implemented in Barangays will help them minimizing some of the main risks.
- The Project contributed to the DRRM capacity of 84 schools. Trainings on school-based DRRM, VCA, basic life support, and first aid have been provided to teachers, which resulted in awareness-raising. The Project provided equipment to schools, which enabled them to be prepared in the event of disasters, and some mitigations activities had been implemented to minimize the main risks. The toolkit for co-curricular and extra-curricular DRR activities will allow the teachers to have a range of activities and approaches to raise students' awareness about DRR.
- The Project contributed to the recognition of PRC Chapters (meso level) as a DRR actor at the Provincial level beyond their parochial blood services and emergency response actions. Also, it enabled the PRC Chapters to enhance their DRR capacity as well as their classification in the PRC organization.
- The implementation of the DRR Roadmap will enable PRC to become a key player in DRR in the Philippines (macro level). The DRR Roadmap details the necessary activities and the required budget. PRC must ensure its implementation so that the positive impacts go beyond the Project. It is important to notice that EPIC DRR Project has funded some of the activities, and other activities has been included in Phase 3. The main challenges are that the Roadmap is not approved, and PRC did not socialize it with the rest of the partners.

- The developing of the following tools: VCA practitioner guide, Community Early Warning System guidelines, Volunteer Services – Policies and procedure, A Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) Survey tools, Minimum DRR Package for barangay and school and Disaster law training will have an impact beyond the Project and its duration, as long as they are approved by the governing bodies and used.
- The results of the surveys show that the trainings helped volunteers and staff to improve in their daily work, and will continue having a positive impact beyond the Project. Due to the high turnover of staff and volunteers, the main risk is that staff and volunteers stop collaborating with the PRC.
- The results achieved through this Project have strengthened PRC's auxiliary role² and positioning of PRC as government partner in DRR (meso and macro level). The Provincial and Municipal Government officials interviewed were satisfied with the work done in the EPIC DRR Project (meso level), and they consider PRC good partner for DRR activities. Other government agencies such as Department of Education (DepED) also recognized the efforts of PRC in contributing to the achievement of the NDRRM vision of the country.
- On the micro-level the resilience of the population (barangays and school) has been strengthened. On the meso-level, PRC chapters involved in the project strengthened their role as DRR partner with the barangays, municipal and provincial LGUs. On the macro-level important steps have been taken towards becoming an important DRR partner at the national level; however, it will be necessary to keep working in phase 3 to achieve this objective.

Sustainability/Connectedness

- Supporting communities and government to reduce disaster risk is a long-term process; something which takes more time to achieve than what the available within the three-year timeframe of the Project. Recognizing this, the Project has adopted several strategies to sustain the project results into the longer term, such as: strengthening the capacities, working at community level with RC143, Barangays LGUs and School Teacher, developing a toolkit for the teacher, using government formats to develop the Plans, and increasing the Chapter's capacity through staff trainings and developing/updating DRR tools and framework to continue supporting the communities after the Project.
- Working through RC143 and Barangays LGUs has been considered essential to ensure that actions continue beyond the Project. RC143 and Barangay LGUs informed to the ET that they understand the risks and hazards, and they know how to minimize them; but for developing the BDRRM Plans and mitigation measure proposals, they still needed support from the PRC or the Municipalities LGUs. The Municipalities official informed us that, in spite of having limited

² The 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2007), described the auxiliary role as a relationship where: *“Public authorities and National Societies as auxiliaries enjoy a specific and distinctive partnership, entailing mutual responsibilities and benefits, based on international and national laws, in which the national public authorities and the National Society agree on the areas in which the National Society supplements or substitutes public humanitarian services [...].”*

resources, in case the PRC cannot support the barangays LGUs, they will take over, according to the national government's mandate.

- Training Schools Red Cross Youth (RCY) and DRR focal point has been a good strategy to ensure the sustainability of actions. Also, using DepEd format has allowed the teacher to know how to fulfil the department's requirement. The board game "Master of Disaster" and equipment provided will be used after the end of the Project, as explained to us by all the focal points interviewed.
- The tools, policies and framework developed in the EPIC DRR Project will be used beyond the Project, as PRC Staff and volunteers have been deemed very relevant and needed for the National Society (NS) and have been developed in a participatory way.
- Phase 3 has been approved and it will be implemented from January 2020 to December 2023, and the connection between Phase 2 and 3 is appropriate. Thus, it can be seen that several of the constraints identified in Phase 2 have been minimized in Phase 3. Also, some of the activities not completed in Phase 2, had been included in Phase 3.

Priority Recommendations

The five main recommendations are:

- Ensure that government partners, beneficiaries and other stakeholder are involved in the project design. Any achievements should be shared with them.
- MoPAs should be signed with main partners to ensure local level implementation is facilitated. E.g. DepEd, Provincial government, etc.
- Specific tools or mechanisms should be developed in order to involve communities and enable them to participate in project activities. The activity planning should take into account other activities involving communities' commitment.
- Advocacy activities should be implemented at national, provincial and local level, if PRC wants to become a key player in DRR and achieve the macro level objective.
- Effective monitoring, evaluation and learning should be central to project design and implementation

Main Lesson Learned.

The five main lesson learned are:

- Collaborate and support the Government in the implementation of the DRR framework, is an appropriate strategy to make PRC a key Player in DRR in the country (macro Level).
- Increase the capacity of the RC143 and Barangays LGUs Officials, is critical to the sustainability at the barangays of project gains

- The development of a DRR roadmap has been an appropriate tool to have a clear roadmap steps and the necessary funds to make the PRC a key player in DRR at national (macro level) and local levels (meso level).
- A well-developed and utilized monitoring, evaluation and learning system is crucial to improve project result.
- Bureaucratic and time-consuming PRC procedures generates a high cost and delays in the project implementation. It is necessary to have a balance between minimizing the risks of corruption, quality, and the time required for trips, activities, purchase and transfers approvals.

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