



MANAGEMENT OF DISASTER RISK PROGRAM IN THE FIRST DISTRICT OF ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE

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Abstract

The study aimed to look into the disaster risk program management in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte and to find out the disaster prevention and mitigation which includes knowledge and awareness of the different disasters and disaster preparedness and response. The study planned to offer recommendations that would help address disaster risk reduction brought about by the different hazards in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte. The study used the qualitative method of research which utilized the results of various studies on knowledge, preparedness and awareness on disaster in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte. It was found out that the community was less knowledgeable while the political leaders were equipped with knowledge for they have attended several trainings and seminars on disaster. Preparedness on disaster has very much to do with knowledge and awareness. There was an association between knowledge and awareness to preparedness. Disaster Risk Reduction Management should be properly employed in the community.

Keywords: *management, disaster risk program, Zamboanga del Norte*

Introduction

Management of Disaster Risk Program is important because different disaster become a hazard to the community and may kill millions of people if vulnerable people and resources are exposed to them. People who live in poverty and adverse socio-economic conditions are highly vulnerable to disasters, especially those who live in river pathways and along the most hazard-prone areas. The need to know how disaster risk program is well managed to help the risk brought by the hazard and for the local government unit to help the community in the preparation. Republic Act 10121 mandates that local government units are to form their own local disaster risk reduction and management council and create the local disaster risk reduction and management office. The council is to be the policy making body while the office will be responsible for the implementation of the programs for disaster management. Hence, there is need for the issuance of an Executive Order by the Local Chief Executive to create both the council and the office. With this law, local government units are now more empowered to address the problems posed by disasters that our country normally encounters especially natural calamities such as typhoons and storms and the devastating effects of global warming and climate change.

Some parts of the country are more prone to specific hazards than others; some parts are exposed to more hazards than others. In an analysis of natural disaster hotspots by the Hazard Management Unit of the World Bank in 2005, the Philippines is among the countries where large percentages of population reside in disaster prone areas. In the

2011 World Risk Report published by United Nations University and the Institute of Environment and Human Security, looking into the four components of risk (exposure, susceptibility, coping and adapt capacities), the Philippines is the third most disaster risk country worldwide. The passage of Republic Act 10121 “An act strengthening the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management System, Providing for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Framework and Institutionalizing the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan, Appropriating Funds therefore, for other Purposes” greatly addresses the deficiencies of Presidential Decree 1566. R.A 10121 enables LGU’s to employ proper measures that will help them to prevent loss of lives and properties to a much greater extent.

Management of Disaster Risk Program would help the community on how to deal with disasters. There are certain reasons why the Philippines should manage disaster risk program due to its exposure to disasters and hazards by reason of its geography and geology as well as the occurrence of internal disputes in some areas. Tropical cyclones and the effects of rain and windstorms, as well as floods are the most common types of disaster risks in the country. There are numerous tropical cyclones which entered the Philippine area of responsibility for the past years. The economy of the country was affected as caused by typhoon damages in agriculture, infrastructures and private properties. Some of the most floods and landslides are generated by these typhoons. Environmental factors such as denuded forests aggravate flood risks. Even now, the effects of loose soil and reduced forest cover from past forestry activities are felt in frequent landslides and floods. Recent events show that the annual monsoon season in the country has brought severe flooding in most areas. Most of the disasters that claimed the lives of people and affected properties and livelihoods of the most vulnerable were brought about by increased rainfall which caused massive flash flooding in areas which don’t normally experience such. Typhoon Sendong alone caused the lives of more than 1,000 people and damaged properties amounting to billions of pesos.

The Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan aims to create a Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO) that will be composed of one head of office, an assistant and three (3) staff responsible for a) Administration and Training, b) Research and Planning, and c) Operations and Warning. The creation of this office will have to be ratified by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan. The work and financial plans of the calamity fund will also have to be approved by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan as submitted by the local disaster risk reduction and management office. The Sangguniang Panlalawigan would also have to formulate ordinances and resolutions supporting the developmental plans of the PDRRMO to ensure the implementation of its programs. Management of the different programs to reduce the risk in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte and to find out the disaster prevention and mitigation which includes knowledge and awareness of the different disasters and disaster preparedness and response is the purpose of the study. It will look into how management takes place when it comes to disaster risk.

Methodology

The study used the qualitative method of research which utilized the results of various studies on knowledge, preparedness and awareness of the Disaster Risk Programs in the



first district of Zamboanga del Norte. This method was used to analyzed if the community is prepare, aware and equip with knowledgeable ideas about disaster which would be the basis of recommendations on management of disaster risk programs in Zamboanga del Norte.

The qualitative method used was the grounded-theory which includes a creation of a theory or paradigm through the analysis of the data. The first step was data collection through variety of methods. From the data collected, the key points were marked with codes and were grouped into similar concepts in order to make the data more workable. From these concepts, categories were formed, which were the basis in the construction of a paradigm.

Results

Knowledge on disaster in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte. People of the community in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte are likely less knowledgeable about the different disasters (Galleto and Flores, 2014). It implies that they are not educated with the necessary information about the different disasters which could possibly occur in the province. As far as Maratas and Banquiao (2014) found out in their study, political leaders in the first district of the province are knowledgeable on the different disaster and they are equipped with the different skill on how to handle these disasters. It was very vital for them to know this matter because as local government officials, they are obliged to protect the security and safety of the community people as being stress in the Local Government Code. It is the responsibility of the officials to look into the things that may affect or harm it people may it be a human-made disaster or not. Therefore, it was the community (the grass root level) who were unequipped with the knowledge about disaster.

Disaster Prevention and Mitigation provides key strategic actions that give importance to activities revolving around hazards evaluation and mitigation, vulnerability analyses, identification of hazard-prone areas and mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction Management into development plans. It is based on sound and scientific analysis of the different underlying factors which contribute to the vulnerability of the people and eventually, their risks and exposure to hazards and disasters.

Awareness on disaster in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte. Seventy-five percent of the community people in the first district in Zamboanga del Norte were unaware about the presence of the disasters in the province (Galleto and Flores, 2014). It was merely an evidenced also of the result that they were unknowledgeable of the different disasters. It is probably the reason why some of them are living in disastrous areas not knowing that their life is on danger. Everybody has the responsibility to be aware of everything that is happening in the society. The political leader in one way or another is also responsible of the awareness of their constituents to any disaster that may happen in their locality. It should be properly plan on how to disseminate information and to train the community on how to deal with those disasters. Such plans should be properly implement for the local government has an funds allotted for pre-disaster preparedness programs including training, purchasing life-saving rescue equipment, supplies and medicines and for post-disaster activities.

Preparedness on disaster in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte. According to the study of Galletto and Flores (2014), almost 75% of the surveyed residents in the first district of Zamboanga del Norte claimed that they were unprepared on the disaster to take place. It was also found out in their study that preparedness of correlated with knowledge and awareness. Personal profile along age, educational level, occupation/position, monthly family income, civil status and residency as well as type of home of the community people in the first district were not determinants of disaster preparedness according to Pangilinan and Banga (2014). It was only gender noted to have an association with preparedness for women were more likely weak than males.

Disaster Preparedness provides for the key strategic actions that give importance to activities revolving around community awareness and understanding; contingency planning; conduct of local drills and the development of a national disaster response plan. Risk-related information coming from the prevention and mitigation aspect is necessary in order for the preparedness activities to be responsive to the needs of the people and situation on the ground. Also, the policies, budget and institutional mechanisms established under the prevention and mitigation priority area will be further enhanced through capacity building activities, development of coordination mechanisms. Through these, coordination, complementation and interoperability of work in Disaster Risk Reduction Management operations and essential services will be ensured. Behavioral change created by the preparedness aspect is eventually measured by how well people responded to the disasters. At the frontlines of preparedness are the local government units, local chief executives and communities.

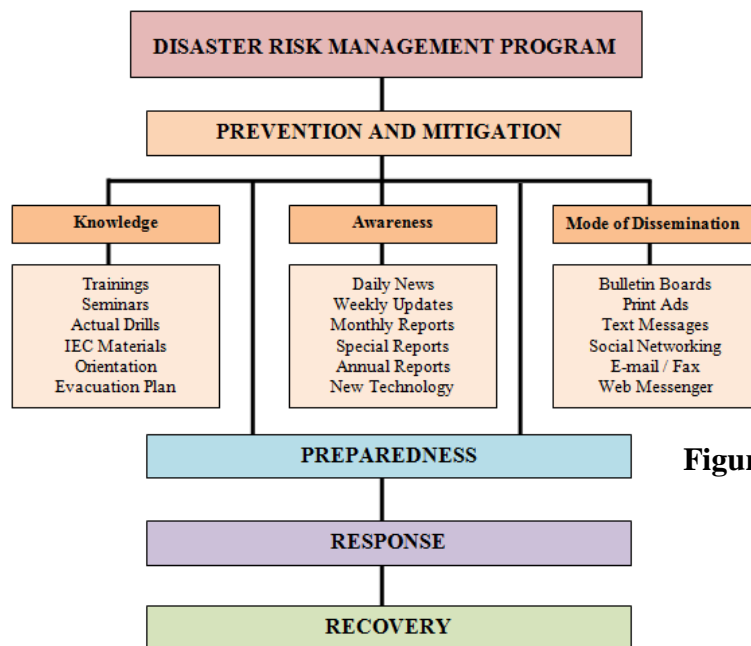


Figure 1 Disaster Risk Management Program for the First District of Zamboanga del Norte

Disaster Response gives importance to activities during the actual disaster response operations from needs assessment to search and rescue to relief operations to early recovery activities are emphasized. The success and realization of this priority area rely



heavily on the completion of the activities under both the prevention and mitigation and preparedness aspects, including among others the coordination and communication mechanisms to be developed. On-the-ground partnerships and the vertical and horizontal coordination work between and among key stakeholders will contribute to successful disaster response operations and its smooth transition towards early and long term recovery work. The Rehabilitation and Recovery priority area cover areas like employment and livelihoods, infrastructure and lifeline facilities, housing and resettlement, among others. These are recovery efforts done when people are already outside of the evacuation centers.

The preparedness activities to be undertaken before a disaster include risk assessment, prevention and mitigation measures for specific hazards (maintenance and monitoring, and formulating and implementing various disaster management policies and programs). Emergency preparedness to be undertaken before a disaster includes measures such as creating an emergency team, an evacuation plan and procedures, warning systems and drills and temporary stage. Disaster risk reduction is therefore one of the high priorities for the development to meet both the growing needs and opportunities to increase disaster resilience.

Disaster Risk Reduction Management includes Organizing and Establishing. The local disaster risk reduction and management council that will be responsible for: approval, monitoring , review and evaluation of the local DRRM plan; ensuring the integration of DRR and CCA into local development plans, programs and budgets; recommending the implementation of forced or pre-emptive evacuation of local residents, if necessary, and convening the LDRRMC once every 3 months or as necessary, and the local disaster risk reduction and management office under the office of the local chief executive , and the provincial/ city/ municipal and barangay disaster operations center.

Directing and Controlling. It sets the direction, development, implementation and coordination of disaster risk reduction and management programs within the LGU. Planning will formulate and implement a comprehensive and integrated LDRRM plan in accordance with the national, regional and provincial framework, and policies in DRR in close coordination with the local development councils. And facilitate and support risk assessments and hazard-specific and multi-sector contingency planning activities.

Budgeting and Funding includes setting aside notless than 5% of the estimated revenue from regular sources as local disaster risk reduction and management fund (LDRRMF) to support DRRM activities such as, but not limited to, pre-disaster preparedness programs including training, purchasing life-saving rescue equipment, supplies and medicines, for post-disaster activities, and for the payment of calamity insurance. It allocates 30% of the LDRRMF as quick response fund as stand-by fund for relief and recovery programs. Preparation and submission to the local sanggunian thru the LDRRMC and the LDC the annual LDRRMO plan and budget, the proposed programming of the LDRRMF, other dedicated DRRM resources and otherregular funding sources.

Discussion

Based on the results of the study it was concluded that knowledge on disaster is essential to the community people. The community was less knowledgeable while the political leaders were equipped with knowledge for they have attended several trainings and seminars on disaster. Awareness will follow when an individual is equipped with the necessary knowledge may it be on how to respond before, during or after the disaster. Preparedness on disaster has very much to do with knowledge and awareness. There is an association between knowledge and awareness to preparedness. An individual should know first to be prepared. Moreover, he will not do such preparations if he is not aware of the danger that might brought by the disaster.

There were disaster risk reduction plans of the national government and even the provincial government down to the basic unit of the government which is the barangay level. Knowing that the community is less knowledgeable, the management functions of directing and controlling needs further drive. It is where the direction, development, implementation and coordination of disaster risk reduction and management programs within the local government unit which includes implementation of the plans knowledge dissemination and awareness on the disaster for the community to lower the risk. Knowledge, awareness and preparedness could lessen the risk in the place that might be brought by the different disasters.

Preparation of information about the hazards with exposures and vulnerabilities of the inhabitants or property will direct to the development of risk management approaches using early cautions to reduce losses to lower economic fatalities and build livelihood resilience. This must also be supported by effective policies, lawful frameworks and institutional synchronization methods as well as knowledge, education and training.

Strengthening information dissemination in a form of seminars, training for the community people to be equipped with the necessary knowledge to be prepared for the different disasters that may take place in the locality should be taken consideration. Actual drills on how to deal with the different disaster will develop skills of the community people in responding. Political leaders especially in the barangay level are the provider of the necessary precautions and other essential things needed as a preparation for the different hazards which might affect humanity. It is indeed leaders in the government the one which is very much capable in helping reduce the risk brought by disasters.

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